

Government of the District of Columbia
Department of Mental Health



Office of Programs and Policy

February 16, 2007

Dear Mental Health Rehabilitation Services Providers:

On March 3, 2006, the Department of Mental Health (DMH) issued notice of a moratorium on applications to certify as a Mental Health Rehabilitation Service (MHRS) provider. Justification for that decision was based on the number of MHRS certified providers (currently XX), pending applications, and the number of enrolled consumers; those numbers did not appear to justify accepting additional applications to certify as an MHRS provider.

One of DMH's strategic goals for FY 07 is to improve access to child/youth services, particularly access to intensive home and community based services (CBI) intended to help children remain in their home/community, thus avoiding an out-of-home or other institutional placement. The Child/Youth Services Division has set a goal of enhancing system capability in order to reduce time from referral to initiation of CBI services (providing clinical criteria for authorization are met) to 72 hours. The referral to CBI indicates that the child/youth needs intensive services, generally within the context of the family system, and the services are needed now. Clearly a number of system issues must be addressed to achieve these goals.

Access is one of these system issues. There are a number of reports that the wait time to initiate services is well in excess of the 72-hour measure. As well, we are working actively to educate the Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) about the role of CBI in stabilizing children and their families and, ultimately, in reducing out-of-home placements. MCO referrals to CBI, which are now very rare, should increase dramatically in the next 12 months. To assure we can meet the need for these services and initiate services quickly, DMH has elected to lift the moratorium for certification as a CBI provider for all currently certified Child/Youth Providers.

Currently certified child/youth providers that are interested in certifying as a CBI provider should contact the Office of Accountability ([contact information here](#)) to initiate the MHRS certification process. Supplemental training requirements for CBI providers (Level I and Level II) are provided in Bulletin 23, issued February 5, 2006 and attached to this letter. The Office of Accountability can answer any questions you may have about the certification process. If you have program questions, please feel free to call me (202-673-4443) or e-mail shauna.spencer@dc.gov.

Sincerely yours,

Shauna Spencer
Associate Deputy Director
Division of Child/Youth Services