

## What If the Treatment Plan Isn't Working?

It can take some time for all of the parts of a treatment plan to be put in place. It will also take some time to determine if the treatment and support services are making things better for your child. **This will require patience on the part of you and your family.** However, sometimes things change, and even the best plan doesn't work as expected. If some part of your child's treatment plan isn't working, tell your case manager or service coordinator. He or she will work with you and the other members of your team to determine if alternative plans are needed.

For some children, treatment plans based on traditional methods of intervention are not successful. Sometimes there is conflict or disagreement between team members; sometimes there is competition for scarce resources; and sometimes a special service or accommodation is needed that does not currently exist in the system.

### Allegheny County Interagency Review

In cases where every other route to success has been tried and been unproductive, the Allegheny County Interagency Review Team is convened to bring together the family and all providers and systems interacting with the child. A discussion is held to determine:

- The reason for the problem or issue
- The needs of the child
- What can be done or changed to resolve the problem

A plan of action is developed at this review process, and a 30-day follow-up is made to determine progress.

If you wish to request an Allegheny County Interagency Review, call 412-350-3374, or notify your service coordinator who will start the review process for you.

### Health Insurance Maze

Fortunately, you live in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. To date, Pennsylvania has been one of the most progressive states in understanding that a child with serious emotional disturbances must have access to the services they need, regardless of insurance coverage and the family's ability to pay for them. The services your child may need can be very expensive. Ongoing therapy, medications, treatment and support services could very quickly financially ruin a family if they were required to pay for these services out-of-pocket. Here is some information that you need to know about health insurance:

#### Private Health Insurance

If your child's health care coverage is provided by a private health insurance plan that you receive as a benefit through your employer, it is important for you to get a description of the mental health coverage (also called behavioral health coverage) that your plan provides. In most health plans, general health care coverage is different than the mental health coverage. Insurance companies typically set a limit on the services that can be used in a year, or even during a lifetime. There are often higher co pays or deductibles, and a care manager may be assigned by the insurance plan to help and coordinate coverage for services that have been recommended for your child. Most private health insurers also develop "networks" of doctors, therapists and service providers that you can select to treat your child. Usually these networks are fairly comprehensive, but you may find that the doctor or hospital you want to use is not in the network. The key is to learn about and understand what your health insurance plan does and does not cover, and to understand your appeal rights.

Call your health insurance company and ask for information about your child’s mental health coverage.

**Public Health Insurance (Medical Assistance)**

In Pennsylvania, your child (up to 18 years) may be eligible for Medical Assistance coverage for mental health services **regardless of your family income**. Medical Assistance coverage is extensive and comprehensive for children with serious emotional disturbances.

To apply for Medical Assistance for your child with serious emotional disturbances, call the Department of Public Welfare at 412-565-2146 and ask for an “advocate” to help you through the application process.

If your child receives Medical Assistance coverage, and lives in Allegheny County, your child is automatically a member of Community Care Behavioral Health (also known as Community Care). This organization manages the health insurance coverage for Medical Assistance recipients in Allegheny County, and covers treatment and support services related to mental health, as well as drug and alcohol problems.

To learn more about the Community Care Behavioral Health and the services it covers, call 1-800-553-7499.

**Allegheny Health Choices, Inc. (AHC) and Ombudsman Services**

Allegheny Health Choices, Inc. is an organization that monitors the service provided by Community Care. They work to assure that children with serious emotional disturbances receive the services they need.

If you are a member of Community Care and are having problems getting the services your child needs, or with the care your child is receiving, or if you need help in filing a complaint or grievance, an “ombudsman” can help you. An ombudsman is a person who helps solve problems. To contact the ombudsman at Allegheny Health Choice, Inc., call 1-877-787-2424.

**Supplemental Security Income (SSI).**

Depending on your income, resources, and family size, your child may be eligible for Supplemental Security Income (SSI). This is a federal income assistance program through the Social Security Administration for qualified disabled individuals (including infants and children). Your child does not have to be permanently disabled to receive help. For more information, call the Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213.