



Ohio Department of Mental Health

NEWS RELEASE

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Governor

For immediate release: February 9, 2005

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SOQIC: A new standard in behavioral health documentation

The Ohio Department of Mental Health (ODMH) announces the introduction of standardized, integrated clinical forms to improve quality of care and compliance with funding requirements across Ohio's mental health system.

"Re-engineering clinical processes and documentation has become an urgent priority in behavioral healthcare" said Dr. Mike Hogan, Director of the Ohio Department of Mental Health. "The requirements of funders and regulators continue to evolve, and in too many cases record systems just expand to cover new requirements. Clinicians spend more time on paperwork than on providing care. SOQIC attacks that problem, and even more critically, strengthens consumer participation in treatment."

The forms cover the entire treatment process from admission into care to transfer/discharge, including assessment, treatment planning and progress notes. All are designed to accommodate the various certification, national accreditation and Medicare/Medicaid compliance requirements, as well as all ODMH and Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services (ODADAS) rules and standards.

The forms, developed through a collaborative venture between ODMH, ODADAS, boards, providers and clients, are the major focus of the Solutions for Ohio's Quality Improvement and Compliance (SOQIC) initiative. The primary objective of the initiative was to design, develop and implement - at all levels - a consistent, consumer-centered, compliant and cost-effective mental health delivery system.

"As ODMH and ODADAS continue to streamline the 'red tape' commonly expected with state-funded services, Ohio citizens will reap the benefits of enhanced mental health and addiction treatment," said ODADAS Director Gary Q. Tester.

The benefits of standardized documentation include:

- Provides a client-centered focus to enhance recovery
- Reduces redundant collection of clinical information
- Enhances measurement of outcomes
- Enhances accessibility to services
- Enhances cost efficiency by simplifying and standardizing documentation
- Provides electronic conversion of forms
- Enhances system-wide accountability
- Meets certification and national accreditation compliance guidelines
- Reduces use of multiple forms/processes statewide
- Supports more objective reviews/audits
- Reduces non-compliance with funding and audit requirements

The paper forms and manual are currently available on the SOQIC Web site and are also available on CD-Rom by request. Simple electronic forms will also be available soon at no cost to providers. These forms will be "smart" forms - they will have drop-down boxes and expandable text fields. Providers will be able to download these forms, fill them out and save them to their desktop or system.

For more information on the SOQIC initiative, visit the SOQIC Web site at <http://www.mh.state.oh.us/initiatives/soqic/soqic.home.html>

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