



# **Mecklenburg County Community Support Services**

## **Substance Use Services Client Handbook**

### **Your Rights and Responsibilities as a Client**



Mecklenburg County Community Support Services (CSS) is one of many county departments that provides services to the citizens of Mecklenburg County.

As a client of CSS, you have a right to receive service information, including your rights and responsibilities.

Clients may receive covered services without concern about race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, gender, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, genetic information or medical history, ability to pay or ability to speak English.

This handbook is an introduction to rights and responsibilities and is not a resource guide for services. This handbook is given to all clients who receive substance use services and all staff who work with you.

For additional assistance, phone numbers for CSS resources are on the back of this handbook.

You are encouraged to make comments and suggestions to us about rights, accessibility, services and policies.

This handbook was approved by the CSS Client Rights Committee.

When you receive services from any Community Support Services (CSS)

Substance Use program, you have certain rights. You can expect to receive services and support that will help you recover and become more independent. You can expect to be treated with dignity,



to

acceptance and respect. You will be helped to understand your problems or conditions. You and your counselor or Case Manager will work together to develop your Person Centered Profile that you like and that meets your needs. Your Person Centered Profile will likely include the use of best clinical practices recognized as effective for treating your problem or condition.

## **DEFINITIONS**

### **What is a right?**

Something you can do by law.

### **What is a rule?**

Something set up by a program, area program or the state so things will run smoothly. You must abide by certain rules.

### **What is a responsibility?**

Something you agree to do to the best of your ability.

# **YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO A CLEARLY DEFINED PLAN FOR SERVICES/TREATMENT**

In some programs this will be called a Service Plan and in other programs it will be called a Person Centered Profile.

**Person centered planning and thinking** occurs when a service provider respects clients' wishes and goals and puts you in charge of defining the direction of your life by:

- Allowing you to make your own choices and decisions
- Honoring your choices and wishes as much as possible
- Encouraging your family members and friends to participate in planning and decision-making
- Helping you build on your strengths
- Helping you create real relationships
- Helping you become a part of your neighborhood and community
- Helping you achieve your dreams
- Helping you feel proud of who you are

**Use this checklist to make sure your planning process is person-centered.**

Your planning meeting occurs at a time and place that is convenient for you.

Yes\_\_ No\_\_



You invite the people you want to your meeting. Yes\_\_ No\_\_

You get the information you need and ask for from the people at your meeting. Yes\_\_ No\_\_

The people at your meeting listen to you and respect your opinions and your wishes about your goals. Yes\_\_ No\_\_

The people at your meeting have ideas about how you can be more independent and more involved in your community.

Yes\_\_ No\_\_

If there are difficulties getting what you want, you agree with solutions that others offer. Yes\_\_ No\_\_

People who promise to help get what you want agree to a time line to make things happen. Yes\_\_ No\_\_

You are satisfied with the final plan and agree to sign it.

Yes\_\_ No\_\_ If you are not satisfied, please bring this to the attention of your counselor or case manager.

## **What are rights restrictions?**

“Rights restrictions” limit or take away a person’s right to do something. Your rights can not be taken away without safeguards in place to protect you. If we determine that you

may harm yourself or others, your rights may be limited. The situation may involve an involuntary commitment.

Unless there is the threat of imminent danger to yourself or others, a very specific change to your **person-centered profile**:

1. Must be approved by your team before your rights are limited in any way.
2. The CSS Human Rights Committee may need to approve some restrictions.
3. May involve you or your guardian as participants in making these decisions.

A person's rights cannot be taken away because of the way others behave, because of staffing problems, because it is easier for staff, or because it will make your home, work, or community operate more smoothly.

- **Your mental health problem, disability or addiction** is only part of who you are. You have the right to choose goals that will lead to the kind of life you want for yourself. Our staff's job is to provide, within our ability, the available treatment or support that will help you meet your goals regardless of your ability to pay or your insurance benefit coverage.
- **You have the right** to develop your own **person-centered plan, profile, or service plan** with the help of persons you choose and to review it from time to time to see how you are doing. You have the right to make choices about the services and support you receive and who provides them.
- **You have the right** to receive services that give you the most freedom possible to be an independent person and have the life you want.
- **You have the right** to ask to make a change in your plan, medications, your doctor, nurse, counselor or case manager.

- **You have the right** to ask questions and to make suggestions about the CSS's rights and responsibilities policies that are described in this brochure.



- **You have the right** to receive the information you want about the CSS's services, your rights and responsibilities, and how to make a complaint or an appeal.
- As a client, you have **the right** and **responsibility** to understand your problems, illness, addiction or developmental disability. Some conditions improve with medicine, counseling or case management.
- If taking medicine is part of your **person centered profile, you have the right to:**

1. Understand how the medicine may help you and what the possible side effects may be.

2. Take the lowest possible dose that is effective for you. You have the right to refuse to take the medicine that is suggested or to request to change your medicine. Your doctor or nurse can to explain the risk or harm to you if you refuse to take the medicine suggested.

Medicine may never be used to punish you or be given to you because it is more convenient for the staff members who work with you.

## **YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO CONFIDENTIALITY**

Your right to confidentiality about your treatments or services is protected by law. Except in a few limited circumstances, your records and other information about you will not be shared with other agencies or

persons without your signed permission. You can withdraw your written permission at any time. You can ask that only certain parts of your record be shared. Sometimes the law may require the CSS to share information about you and the services you receive.

- In special situations, if a family member is involved in your treatment or service, they may be allowed to know some information about your services.
- A **Client Representative** or other advocate may review your record when he or she is asked to work on your behalf.
- The court may order us to release your records.
- Our attorney may need to see your record in special legal situations.
- If your treatment or service changes to another public agency, they may need to receive your records.
- If you go to jail or prison, we may share your files with prison officials if they believe you need mental health or substance abuse services, or support for a developmental disability.

## **MORE ABOUT CONFIDENTIALITY**

In an emergency, another doctor, nurse or counselor who is treating you may see your records.

If a doctor or psychologist referred you to CSS, he or she may see your files.

If you seem to be a danger to yourself or to others, or if we



believe that you are likely to commit a crime, we are required by law to tell the police or a judge (for example, in a commitment situation).

Special confidentiality rules may apply if you have a legal guardian, are under age 18, or are receiving treatment for drugs and/or alcohol.

CSS staff members are required by law to report suspected abuse or neglect of children, teens, older or disabled adults.

If you feel that your right to confidentiality has been violated, you have the right to complain to the **CSS Client Advocate at (704) 614-3000** or to the **LME/MCO Concern Line at 1-888-213-9687**. You have the right to ask someone you trust to help you make a complaint.

## **YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REFUSE TREATMENT**

Before you agree to your **person-centered plan or profile** and sign it, you will be told of the benefits and risks involved in the services you will receive. You have the right to consent to your plan and you also have the right at any time to refuse the services offered. The risks or harm of refusing treatment or services will be explained to you by your counselor or case manager.

You cannot be discharged from a program for refusing treatment or a service unless the treatment or service is the only viable treatment/habilitation option available at the facility.

The only time you can be treated without your consent is in an emergency situation. Some examples of an emergency situation are if you are thought to be a danger to yourself or others, treatment has been court-ordered, or you are a minor and your parents have given permission.

## **YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO REQUEST TO SEE YOUR OWN RECORD**

If you wish to see your record, you have the right to do so except in some situations described in law. You have the right to have those situations explained to you.

## **YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO PRIVACY**

You have the right to be free from any search of your person or property without just cause. Some programs of CSS have special procedures about Search and Seizure which will be explained to you before you receive services from these programs.

## **YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO KNOW THE COST OF SERVICES**

Fees for your services will be discussed with you at your first visit. If this does not occur, please let our staff members know. You may ask for a list of charges for services. You may appeal the fee set for services by completing a request to lower the fees. You will never be denied necessary emergency or inpatient services because you are unable to pay the fees.

# YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO MAKE ADVANCE INSTRUCTIONS

In North Carolina, Advance Instruction for Mental Health Treatment is a legal document that tells doctors and health care providers what mental health services or treatment you would want and what services or treatment you would not want if you later become unable to decide for yourself.

You can name a person to make health care decisions for you if you are not able to make them yourself. This must be done legally as part of a Health Care Power of Attorney.

Your counselor, case manager, therapist, nurse, doctor or the LME Client Representative can tell you more. A client advocate may help you file the papers for advance instructions.

**[pad.duhs.duke.edu/templates](http://pad.duhs.duke.edu/templates)**

- **Health Care Power of Attorney  
GS 32A-25**
- **Advance Instruction for MH Treatment  
NCGS 122C-77**

# YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE TREATED WITH RESPECT

◆ **Special restrictive interventions are not used in our programs.** We will call 911 in an emergency if you become a danger to yourself, others, or property.

◆ To protect you, there are very strict rules for staff

## **YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO MAKE A COMPLAINT**

Please talk to CSS staff about your problem first to give them a chance to help solve it. If you are dissatisfied with a service or feel you have not been treated fairly, you have the right to make a complaint at any time. You may ask anyone you choose to help you make a complaint. Then, if you are not satisfied, contact your program's Complaints / Client Rights Representative at **704-614-3000** or a supervisor to complain or make suggestions.

At any time, if you are not satisfied with the answers you are receiving about your complaint, you can call the **LME /MCO Care Line at 1-888-213-9687**

**You may also contact the N.C. Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services at 919-715-3197 in Raleigh or Disability Rights North Carolina (DRNC) at 1-877-235-4210 or TTY at 1-888-268-5535**

You have **the right** to appeal decisions made by the governing LME/MCO about the services you receive.

## YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES



It is our responsibility to inform you about your rights and work to protect your rights. **You have responsibilities** as a client. These are ways you can be a responsible client:

- Give us all the facts about the problems you want help with and bring a list of all doctors providing care for you and tell us about any other problems you are getting treatment for.
- Follow your person-centered plan or profile once you have agreed to it.
- Keep all appointments or call us 24 hours before an appointment if you cannot come in.
- If you receive medicine from us, bring in your medicine you get from other doctors.
- If you have Medicaid or Medicare, bring in your card each time you come for an appointment
- Let us know about changes in your name, insurance, address, telephone number or your finances.



- Pay your bill or let us know about problems you have in paying.
- Treat staff and other clients with respect and consideration.
- Follow the rules of the program where you receive services.
- Let us know when you have a suggestion, comment or complaint so we can help you find an answer to the problem.
- Respect the confidentiality and privacy of other clients.
- Be very involved in developing and reviewing your **person-centered profile**. Ask for information about your problems.
- Talk to your counselor, case manager, and others on your planning team **often** about your needs, preferences and goals and how you think you are doing at meeting your goals.

## INTERNET AND OTHER RESOURCES

- Many Client Rights are from Provisions of Article 3, Chapters 122C of the NC General Statutes [www.ncleg.net/Statutes/GeneralStatutes/HTML/ByChapter/Chapter\\_122C](http://www.ncleg.net/Statutes/GeneralStatutes/HTML/ByChapter/Chapter_122C)



- Rules that apply to the Division of State Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services <http://www.ncdhhs.gov/dhsr/mhics/mhpage.html>
- State website with more information for clients, families and providers about client rights, appeals and local resources <http://www.ncdhhs.gov/consumerdirectedsupports/consumers.htm>
- Explore help resources and services by visiting the client page at [mecklink.charmeck.org](http://www.mecklink.charmeck.org)  
<http://www.cardinalinnovations.org/consumer-families>
- **Alcoholics Anonymous Hotline—(704) 332-4387**
- **Narcotics Anonymous Hotline—(704) 366-8980**  
[www.na.org](http://www.na.org)
- **Celebrate Recovery at [www.celebraterecovery.com/find-a-group/north-carolina/](http://www.celebraterecovery.com/find-a-group/north-carolina/)**
- **Forest Hill Church Pastoral Services 704-716-8775**
- **Carolinas Poison Center—1-800-222-1222**  
**Website: [www.ncpoisoncenter.org](http://www.ncpoisoncenter.org)**

## LOCAL ADVOCATES

An **advocate** is someone who is not directly involved with

your treatment or service but who has the knowledge and ability to speak with you about your rights. The advocates listed provide their advocacy services free and most phone calls are free. In most cases the hours are from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday.



**Arc of Mecklenburg County, Inc.**

Advocacy, information and support for persons and their families living with mental retardation and developmental disabilities **704-332-4535 [www.arcmeck.org](http://www.arcmeck.org)**

**Council for Children’s Rights, Inc.**

Advocacy for individual and groups of children  
**(704) 372-7961 [www.councilforchildreninc.org](http://www.councilforchildreninc.org)**

**Exceptional Children’s Assistance Center (ECAC)**

Parent training and information  
**(704) 892-1321 [www.ecac-parentcenter.org](http://www.ecac-parentcenter.org)**

**Mental Health Association of the Central Carolinas**

Advocacy, education and referral  
**(704) 365-3454 [www.mhacentralcarolinas.org](http://www.mhacentralcarolinas.org)**

**NAMI Charlotte, (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill)**

Advocacy, education and support for persons and their families living with severe and persistent mental illness  
**(704) 333-8218 [www.nami-charlotte.org](http://www.nami-charlotte.org)**

**ParentVOICE** A group for parents of youth with significant behavioral issues, emotional problems, or mental health problems **(704) 336-7128**



## STATE ADVOCATES



**Disability Rights North Carolina (DRNC)** is a state agency established to protect and advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities. [www.disabilityrightsncc.org/](http://www.disabilityrightsncc.org/)

**Toll Free: 1-877-235-4210**

**TTY Relay 711 (for those who are Deaf & Hard of Hearing)**

**Mental Health Association of North Carolina** is an organization To promote mental health, prevent mental disorders and eliminate discrimination against people with mental disorders. **1-919-715-3197** [www.ncdhhs.gov/mhddsas/](http://www.ncdhhs.gov/mhddsas/)

**NC Mental Health Consumers Organization, Inc.** is a non-profit organization made up of mental health clients who provide support and advocacy for other mental health clients. **1-800-326-3842** [www.naminc.org](http://www.naminc.org)

**The Arc of North Carolina** is a non-profit organization advocating for rights of persons with developmental disabilities. **1-800-662-8706** [www.arcnc.org](http://www.arcnc.org)

**National Alliance for Mentally Ill - North Carolina (NAMI)** is a nonprofit, non-governmental organization made up of mental health clients and their families. **1-800-451-9682** [www.naminc.org](http://www.naminc.org)

**IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

**Therapist/Counselor/Case Manager Name:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Location:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Program Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Program Supervisor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Room:** \_\_\_\_\_

**My Doctor and/or Nurse:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Pharmacy/Medical Clinic:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Advocate/Support Person/Guardian:**

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**NOTES**

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# CSS CONTACTS



CSS Director, Stacy Lowry  
(704) 336-3784

Substance Use Services Manager, Yvonne Ward  
(704) 617-3401

CSS Privacy Coordinator/Client Advocate,  
Ginger Little (704) 614-3000

Women's Shelter Treatment Program,  
Chinita Craighead (704) 562-7259

Men's Shelter Treatment Program,  
Chinita Craighead (704) 562-7259

Client Records Information, Summer Varalli  
(704) 336-7100

Financial Services  
(704) 336-5653

24 Hour Psychiatric Emergency Dept: CMC-Randolph  
(704) 444-2400 or 800-418-2065

CMC Behavioral Health Call Center  
(704) 444-2400 or 800-418-2065

Mobile Crisis Unit  
(704) 566-3410

CSS Website:

[http://charmack.org/mecklenburg/county/  
CommunitySupportServices/Pages/Home.aspx](http://charmack.org/mecklenburg/county/CommunitySupportServices/Pages/Home.aspx)