



Regional BHO Procurement

June 24, 2011

A key element of the New York State Medicaid agenda is to increase the quality and efficiency of the Medicaid program and reduce Medicaid costs. To accomplish these objectives, Governor Cuomo created a Medicaid Redesign Team (MRT). The MRT consists of representatives from the Legislature, health care industry, patient advocacy groups, and State executive staff including the Commissioners of the Office of Mental Health and the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services, and the New York State Medicaid Director. Many recommendations from the MRT were adopted into New York State law.

One of the enacted recommendations gives the Commissioners of the Office of Mental Health and the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services the authority to jointly select and contract for the services of one or more regional Behavioral Health Organizations (BHOs).

We are pleased to announce that we are now accepting applications for five regional BHOs. Implementation of the BHOs is being divided into two phases. Phase I of the BHOs is the first step in improving the coordination of behavioral health services and reducing system fragmentation. Phase I BHOs will be tasked with:

- Monitoring behavioral health inpatient length of stay;
- Reducing unnecessary behavioral health inpatient hospital days;
- Reducing behavioral health inpatient readmission rates;
- Improving rates of engagement in outpatient treatment post discharge;
- Better understanding of the clinical conditions of children diagnosed as having a Serious Emotionally Disturbance (SED); and
- Profiling provider performance.

Additionally, this procurement will allow the state and stakeholders to begin testing more dynamic and useful metrics of behavioral health system performance.

Phase II requirements are still to be developed and will be the subject of a later selection process.

More information on BHOs, including the BHO Selection Process document, is available on both the OMH and OASAS website.

Sincerely,

Arlene González-Sánchez,
Commissioner
Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services

Michael F. Hogan, PhD
Commissioner
Office of Mental Health