



Bulletin

NUMBER

#15-76-01

DATE

January 27, 2015

OF INTEREST TO

County Directors
Social Services Supervisors
and Staff
Case Managers and Care
Coordinators
All DHS staff
State Court Judges
County Attorneys
Consumers of
Developmental Disabilities
Services, their families,
advocates, and legal
representatives

ACTION/DUE DATE

Please read information
and prepare for
implementation

EXPIRATION DATE

January 27, 2017

Successful Life Project

TOPIC

The Successful Life Project provides on-going consultation and follow-up for people previously served at the former Minnesota Extended Treatment Options (METO) program from July 1, 1997 through May 1, 2011 or the Minnesota Specialty Health System (MSHS)-Cambridge program. The Successful Life Project furthers the provisions and spirit of the Jensen Settlement Agreement, the Comprehensive Plan of Action, and subsequent Court Orders.

PURPOSE

Provide information about the Successful Life Project and the initial and ongoing follow-up of Jensen Class Members and people previously served at MSHS-Cambridge.

CONTACT

Successful Life Project Clinical Coordinator
dhs.dhs.Successful.Life@state.mn.us

SIGNED

Anne M Barry
Deputy Commissioner

TERMINOLOGY NOTICE

The terminology used to describe people we serve has changed over time. The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the use of "People First" language.

I. Background

A. Jensen Settlement Agreement

The Jensen Settlement Agreement (JSA) is the result of a lawsuit filed in 2009 against the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) and others alleging that residents of the former METO program were unlawfully and unconstitutionally secluded and restrained. The lawsuit was settled in 2011. The JSA allowed DHS and the plaintiffs to resolve the claims in a mutually agreeable manner.

To fulfill the requirements of the JSA, the Court approved a Comprehensive Plan of Action (CPA) on March 12, 2014. The CPA outlines the path that DHS will take to achieve substantial compliance with the terms of the JSA. DHS agreed to eliminate the use of restraints and seclusion and to assist Class members and people who previously received services at METO or MSHS-Cambridge to move towards more integrated community settings.

B. Closure of MSHS-Cambridge Program

DHS officially closed the METO program on June 30, 2011. The MSHS–Cambridge program replaced the METO program. As part of the Jensen Settlement, DHS also agreed to close MSHS-Cambridge. On August 29, 2014, the last person transitioned out of MSHS-Cambridge and DHS closed the facility on August 30, 2014.

The successor program to MSHS-Cambridge is Minnesota Life Bridge, which provides community based services for people with developmental disabilities who exhibit severe behaviors that present a risk to public safety.

II. Therapeutic Follow-Up of Class Members and Clients Discharged From METO/MSHS-Cambridge

The CPA includes an ongoing therapeutic follow up with the Jensen Class members and people previously served at MSHS-Cambridge to assess their status and services. The group of people being reviewed includes people designated in the CPA, regardless of where they live, including hospitals, Anoka Metro Regional Treatment Center (AMRTC), Minnesota Security Hospital (MSH), Minnesota Sex Offender Program (MSOP), and other facilities and locations.

Evaluation Criteria 98 in the CPA states:

“DHS will maintain therapeutic follow-up of Class Members, and clients discharged from METO/MSHS-Cambridge since May 1, 2011, by professional staff to provide a safety network, as needed to help prevent re-institutionalization and other transfers to more restrictive settings and to maintain the most integrated setting for those individuals.”

The JSA defines a Class Member as *“All individuals who were subjected to the use of any aversive or deprivation procedures, including restraints or seclusion while a resident at the Minnesota Extended Treatment Options program at any time(s) from July 1, 1997 through May 1, 2011.”*

The therapeutic follow-up includes an initial assessment to determine whether the person is in a safe environment and is receiving needed services, and on-going assessments and availability to assist the person and their team to:

- identify needs and choices to avoid re-institutionalization or moves to a more restrictive setting,
- identify choices for receiving services in a more integrated setting, and
- consultation and training for the person and their team to understand the requirements of the JSA and the CPA.

Successful Life Project

The Successful Life Project (SLP) was created to maintain therapeutic follow-up of Class members and people who were served at MSHS – Cambridge. The Successful Life Project is run by Minnesota Life Bridge.

The initial assessments of Successful Life Project members happened between October 1 and November 30, 2014. The first full assessment of those people will occur between January 2015 and December 31, 2015. Follow-up is ongoing, and will be based on the person’s situation and results of the initial and later assessments. Successful Life Project activities will occur in close collaboration with case managers, Regional Resource specialists from DHS Disability Services Division, the person’s support team, and any other interested parties.

A. Initial Assessment and Recommendations

On October 7, 2014, the Successful Life Project team began initial assessments of all Successful Life Project members statewide. Prioritization for the initial assessments was determined by criteria identified below. After the person or guardian gave consent, an Initial Assessment Tool was used to conduct a brief face-to-face meeting with each Successful Life Project member to:

- Assess the general status of the person in his or her home, and
- Find out if there are any critical or immediate health or safety issues, and immediately refer critical matters to the provider, county, or other entity as appropriate.

These initial assessments have taken about an hour or less. If the Successful Life Project staff identified a concern for a person's health, safety, and/or well-being during the initial assessment, Successful Life Project staff noted that and immediately contacted the person's case manager and guardian, if applicable, to assure a plan is developed to address the areas of concern.

The outcome of the initial assessment will provide the Successful Life Project team with information to help determine ongoing follow up and completion of a full assessment for each person, scheduled based on the Prioritization Criteria below.

Prioritization Criteria

The prioritization criteria for timing of assessments are:

- Persons known to be in crisis, as referred by:
 - Citizens
 - Court Monitor
 - Minnesota Department of Health
 - Minnesota Department of Human Services
 - Family members and/or guardians
 - Lead agency representatives
 - Minnesota Office of the Ombudsman for Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities
 - Plaintiff Class Counsel
 - Providers
- Persons previously supported by METO or MSHS-Cambridge who were or are considered to be high profile individuals as determined by the results of the Successful Life Project initial assessment, and subsequent assessments
- Persons who were admitted to METO or MSHS-Cambridge multiple times
- Persons who had the longest tenures of residence in METO or MSHS-Cambridge
- Persons discharged from METO or MSHS-Cambridge for the longest time without return
- Persons most recently discharged from MSHS-Cambridge

B. Full Assessment and Recommendations

The Successful Life Project team will do full assessments to review whether the Successful Life Project member is receiving services in the most integrated setting appropriate to meet that person's needs, and that the Successful Life Project member chooses. If the Successful Life Project Member is not receiving services in the most integrated setting appropriate to meet his or her needs, and that he or she chooses,

Successful Life Project staff will provide recommendations to the Successful Life Project Member and their support team. The Successful Life Project team may also request outside support for person-centered plan development, program improvement, and capacity building from:

- DHS Community Support Services (CSS)
- DHS Disability Services Division (DSD) Regional Resource Staff
- Metro Crisis Coordination Program (MCCP)
- Lead agency staff
- Other local providers who demonstrate person centered and positive intervention strategies

The first full assessment period will begin in early 2015 and is expected to be completed by December 31, 2015. The therapeutic follow-up and assessment process is ongoing and will continue indefinitely, in compliance with the JSA and CPA. The frequency of Successful Life Project visits and assessments may vary by person, according to their needs and prioritization level.

C. Oversight and Implementation of the Recommendations

Successful Life Project staff may engage with the Successful Life Project members and their teams at various levels as a consultant to:

- Assure recommendations or referrals are understood by the persons' support team, the Successful Life Project team, CSS and others
- Assist the Successful Life Project member and their team to locate resources for supports
- When necessary, provide training or consultation to the person or their team to understand the requirements of the JSA and the CPA
- Provide a safety network, as needed, to prevent re-institutionalization and other transfers to more restrictive settings by providing limited technical assistance, referral, and training when placement stabilization is at issue when other resources are not available
- Assist the Successful Life Project member to help him or her identify the most integrated setting appropriate to his or her needs, which he or she chooses.
- When it is identified that the Successful Life Project member is not living in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs and choices, assist the person and the team to identify options
- If for any reason a Successful Life Project member is at risk of or moves to a less integrated setting, the case manager, care coordinator, or other lead agency staff should contact the Successful Life Project team immediately at dhs.dhs.Successful.Life@state.mn.us. The situation will be reviewed by the Successful Life Project team to identify which supports are available within the State for diversion efforts. The Successful Life Project team is available for support and follow-up as needed.

QUESTIONS

Questions regarding the Successful Life Project should be directed to dhs.dhs.Successful.Life@state.mn.us.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Advisory

This information is available in accessible formats for people with disabilities by calling (651) 431-3676 (voice) or by using your preferred relay service. For other information on disability rights and protections, contact the agency's ADA coordinator.