

Title of Manual: Mid-South Substance Abuse Commission Policy and Procedures			<b>Page 1 of 4</b>	
			<b>History</b>	
Policy Number: A009	Subject/Title: Customer Service		<b>Replaces:</b>	9/2007
			<b>Last Reviewed:</b>	8/2009
Issued By: Executive Director	Approved By: Board of Directors Date: 08/24/2009	Scope: All Medicaid Contracted Providers	<b>Effective:</b>	08/24/2009

## **1. POLICY**

Mid-South and its contracted substance use disorder (SUD) treatment providers identify staff personnel to act as customer service representatives to be accessible to clients, provide information, and answer clients' questions. Customer service representatives help clients understand available services and assist in making the best use of the services that are offered.

## **2. PURPOSE**

- 2.1. This policy applies to Medicaid clients and is issued to comply with State and Prepaid Inpatient Health Plans' criteria for customer services specific to Medicaid clients. However, it is encouraged that it be applied to all populations. It contains general information about services, access and contact information, description of the customer service representatives' role, and training information.
- 2.2. The customer service representative provides an overview of services, explains various benefit systems, and provides contact information to people who wish to receive or clients who currently receive SUD services within the Mid-South region. The customer service representative provides services to clients' families, friends, and people who support them.
- 2.3. Clients may contact their local customer service representative at any of Mid-South's providers. Clients may reach Mid-South's customer service representatives at the following telephone numbers: (888) 230-7629, extension 121, 122, 123, or 118 or (517) 853-0495, extension 121, 122, 123, or 118. Mid-South offers customer service telephone coverage 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at (888) 230-7629.

## **3. PROCEDURE**

- 3.1. Any staff person may be a customer service representative. For the most part, Mid-South's Utilization Coordinators (UC) act as customer service representatives. Providers may designate their customer service representative(s) within their own agency. The representative will provide clients with an orientation to Mid-South's system and services. If requested, the representative will explain the clients' benefits or any problems relating to benefits, along with any charges, co-pays or fees. The representative will also listen to complaints or problems with any services the clients are receiving provide information about providers who are accepting new clients, and provide a Mid-South Member Handbook to clients.
- 3.2. The customer service representative will provide available information, upon request, including information on the structure and operation of Mid-South. If a provider is closing, applicable clients will be notified within fifteen (15) days after Mid-South learns of the closing.
- 3.3. Customer service hours at Mid-South are 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday at the following numbers: toll free at (888) 230-7629 and locally at (517) 853-0495, with extensions 121, 122, 123, or 118 for both telephone numbers. Mid-South offers customer service telephone coverage 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at (888) 230-7629.
- 3.4. The customer service representative is to have up-to-date knowledge regarding benefits, the provider network, applicant and network policies/procedures regarding access, service authorization, grievance/appeal procedures, and be skilled in customer relations. They are to have additional knowledge of the following:
  - 3.4.1. Accessing Services

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- 3.4.1.1. Mid-South serves clients who have Medicaid insurance, clients who are enrolled in the MICHILD and Adult Benefit Waiver (ABW) programs, or have no insurance and cannot pay for services.
- 3.4.1.2. Mid-South does not deny services to clients with physical disabilities, hearing and/or vision-impaired, limited-English speaking, and/or need different methods of communication. Services are to be culturally sensitive.
- 3.4.1.3. The customer service representative is aware of Mid-South funded providers' information and informs clients they may access SUD services at each provider. Clients may also receive health information, referrals to community resources, and/or be scheduled for a face-to-face assessment. Clients may contact the SUD provider of their choice to receive information about services.
- 3.4.1.4. Clients who are hearing impaired, hard-of-hearing, or speech-impaired may receive assistance from one of two places, Michigan Relay Center or Voices for Health.
  - 3.4.1.4.1. Michigan Relay Center
    - 3.4.1.4.1.1. A keyboard device or Teletypewriter (TTY) to contact a Michigan Relay Representative is an option to use when a client presents. Placing a TTY call is how these clients may communicate to obtain access for substance abuse services. The Michigan Relay Center is a communications system that allows hearing clients and hearing-impaired, hard-of-hearing, or speech-impaired clients to communicate by telephone.
    - 3.4.1.4.1.2. The Relay Representative puts the TTY caller in touch by giving the caller the TTY message verbally. The representative literally "voices" the message verbatim and waits for a response. The Relay Representative then types the response back to the caller.
    - 3.4.1.4.1.3. Clients "talk" to TTY users by calling the Center. Hearing clients may also use the service. To communicate with someone who is hearing-impaired, hard-of-hearing, or speech-impaired, call the Michigan Relay Center toll-free at (800) 649-3777 or dial 711.
    - 3.4.1.4.1.4. Tell the Relay Representative the name, area code and phone number of the person you would like to reach. You may also have to tell the Relay Representative the name of your long distance company if it is a toll call so it may be properly billed. While clients talk as though they are speaking directly to the TTY user, the Relay Representative relays the conversation via the TTY system.
    - 3.4.1.4.1.5. Charges for calls through the Center, whether local or long distance, are charged to Mid-South. Clients do not pay for this service. The Relay Representative will provide information on a call's charges upon request. Calls made through the Center are not edited by Relay Representatives. Relay Representatives are also forbidden to disclose any information from the calls and no records of conversations are kept.

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- 3.4.1.4.1.6. Providers and the Care Coordination Center (CCC) who receive calls from the Michigan Relay Center should not hang up. To find out more about the Michigan Relay Center, access Ameritech's Relay Web site at [www.michiganrelay.com](http://www.michiganrelay.com).
- 3.4.1.4.2. Voices for Health
  - 3.4.1.4.2.1. Clients who are hearing-impaired, hard-of-hearing, or speech-impaired may go through Voices for Health, a language agency that specializes exclusively in healthcare. To access services, dial 1-800-650-0310, press 2 to request an on-site interpreter, and have the access code, if known, and client name available. To obtain the access code, providers should contact Voices for Health to register.
- 3.4.1.5. Customer service representatives are aware that everyone who asks for substance abuse treatment is to be screened for severity of use, co-occurring, and whether in need of an assessment for SUD treatment services. Screenings may be performed over the telephone, however, clients whose screening determines need to receive an assessment must be assessed in person/face-to-face. The assessment includes the American Society of Addiction Medicine Patient Placement Criteria. This criterion determines if clients are eligible for services based on medical necessity. Clients are given a choice as to which provider they would like to attend for SUD treatment services.
- 3.4.1.6. If clients do not qualify for services through Mid-South, the customer services representative may actively assist clients, at no cost to the client, in finding other agencies in the community that may be of assistance.
- 3.4.1.7. Once clients qualify for services, they are approved for a number of specific sessions and, if clients have Medicaid, they will receive a Medicaid notification letter that tells them what is authorized over a period of time. If clients disagree with a decision about eligibility to receive services and/or the amount and type of services authorized, they may contact the customer services representative to seek clarification and, if not satisfied, file a grievance.
- 3.4.1.8. Clients' input in this process is important. Clients may volunteer information about services or process improvement, whether provided individually, through Mid-South's Focus Groups, or Advisory Council. Mid-South has a process in place whereby services or process improvement suggestions from clients are routed in a timely manner through the Program Development Committee.

#### **4. IMPORTANT THINGS TO KNOW**

- 5.1. Clients have a right to receive information about available treatment options and other choices in a way or form that they may understand.
- 5.2. If clients do not speak or read English, Mid-South will provide free interpretation and written material in the language needed. Clients may ask staff for help if necessary. Some of the agencies that provide services through a contract with Mid-South may have staff who speaks languages other than English. If clients would like assistance in finding agency staff that is fluent in other languages, they are to contact the local Customer Service Representative.

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- 5.3. If clients have a disability that affects their ability to hear or read, the customer services representative may provide assistance. For example, a sign language interpreter or written material in large print. There is no cost for this service.
- 5.4. No one will be denied services due to inability to pay. Mid-South uses the Standardized Sliding Fee Scale Policy which means clients' fees are based on their ability to pay. Clients will be asked to provide financial information. This information will be kept confidential. If clients disagree with the amount they are asked to pay, clients have the right to appeal the amount or ask that it be reduced.
- 5.5. If clients are interested in receiving more information about the administrative structure or policies and procedures of Mid-South, they may contact a Customer Service Representative at 1 (888) 230-7629.
- 5.6. While clients are receiving services, there may be changes in Federal, State, or local laws or policies that could affect services. If clients have a question or want information about changes that are happening or being planned, they may call their Customer Service Representative.

## 6. SUPERVISION AND TRAINING

Mid-South's Quality Assurance Manager is responsible for supervision of Mid-South customer service representatives. A representative is available to answer customer service calls during working hours. If busy, calls are trunked to the next customer service representative. Customer service training is provided annually at staff meetings. Providers are to have a back-up system in place whereby a customer service representative is available and always answers customer service calls during working hours. Providers are to have customer service training annually.

## 7. MONITORING AND REPORTING

The QA Manager monitors the categorized customer service calls; looking for trends and improving processes as necessary.

### References:

Mid-South Member Handbook

Michigan Relay Center - Ameritech's Relay Website at [www.michiganrelay.com/](http://www.michiganrelay.com/)

Voices for Health

American Society of Addiction Medicine - Patient Placement Criteria (PPC-2R)

Mid-South Standardized Sliding Fee Scale Policy F004, on Mid-South's Website