

## **Topic 19: How to Make a Community Care Referral**

Link to [CPS Assessment Procedure](#)

When the Department receives a child abuse report:

- ◆ The 20 working day period for the child protection worker to complete the assessment begins, and
- ◆ The 45-day period for referring eligible cases to community care services begins.

NOTE: Family-centered safety plan services are available during the assessment, regardless of the final determination, if the family meets criteria for eligibility.

If you determine that it is necessary to put services in the home during the course of the assessment, you must complete form [470-3055, Referral and Authorization for Child Welfare Services](#), to authorize family-centered safety plan services. You must get supervisory approval to have services initiated.

At the completion of the assessment, make the appropriate referral to:

- ◆ Department services, or
- ◆ Community care services

If the case does not meet criteria for a referral for Department services or community care services, you may provide information or provide information and referral to close the case.

Consider a community care referral if you check "yes" for all three need consideration questions on the case disposition decision tree. (However, a check in all three boxes doesn't mean the case automatically must be referred to community care.)

Community care is a voluntary service. All families who agree to community care must sign a release of information to the community care contractor.

Give the family form 470-4128, *Community Care Explanation and Referral*, and obtain a signed release of information. (The release of information form to be used for community care is attached to form 470-4128 in Outlook under Public Folders/State Approved Forms/Service/Community Care.)

You must receive the signed release of information and place it in the case file before making a community care referral. Verbal agreements or faith that a client will return a signed release is not sufficient. The community care contractor cannot legally contact the family unless a release has been signed.

For families that meet criteria for community care services, make entries in STAR to generate the referral date and through the Case Flow system to send the referral. The process is as follows:

1. On the STAT2 screen, select one of the three risk levels by entering an 'X.' This entry must correspond to the final risk level on the *Family Risk Assessment*.
2. Select the "SERVICE ELIGIBILITY CATEGORY" based on the report finding, risk level, and age of the child victims. The SERVICE ELIGIBILITY CATEGORY FIELD has an F2 lookup. STAR has built-in edits that will assist you in selecting the appropriate service category.
3. Following the SERVICE ELIGIBILITY field is an EXCEPTION REASON entry field. This F2 look-up provides you with exception reasons for not making a referral to the service category. Some exception reasons may be used only if the child victim is the only child in the home.

The EXCEPTION REASON entry field for community care will remain open for entry, the same as the RELEASE OBTAINED field and the REFERRAL DATE after supervisory approval. If release is obtained and the contractor can receive the referral within 45 days from the date of intake, you may delete the exception reason and enter a 'Y' entered in the RELEASE OBTAINED field.

4. If the SERVICE ELIGIBILITY CATEGORY is "Community Care," you must enter a 'Y' in the RELEASE OBTAINED field **unless** there is an exception reason listed for not making a community care referral.

NOTE: Information provided to the community care contractor is not considered a "referral" unless **all** required information is provided. Under the existing contract, we must strictly adhere to the 45-day time limit. Therefore, unless **all** required information is provided within the 45 days, the case will be deemed ineligible for community care services.

5. Enter the referral date when the *Child Protective Services Assessment Summary* has been approved by a supervisor, thus completing the assessment. (You can "fast path" directly to the STAT2 screen.) Once the report has been approved, you will receive an alert to make the community care referral.

- ◆ If the referral date is not entered within 36 calendar days from the date of intake, STAR will issue a second alert to you and will also issue an alert to your supervisor that a community care referral needs to be made.
  - ◆ If the referral is not is not entered within 45 calendar days from the date of intake, no referral can be made.
6. When you have entered the referral date on the STAT2 screen, you should go immediately into the Case Flow system.
- ◆ Type in the INCIDENT NUMBER.
  - ◆ To the far right of the Case Flow screen is a section titled "SEND COMMUNITY CARE REFERRAL." Click on the option "ASSESS SUMMARY & FAM RISK" and then click GO. This will pull up your completed report.
  - ◆ At the top right of the screen, click on the button that says "EMAIL REFERRAL TO COMMUNITY CARE." This sends the referral. Please note that the REFERRAL DATE entry and the date that you send the email referral to the community care contractor **must** be the same date.

NOTE: If there is no referral date listed on the STAT2 screen, you will not be able to email your referral. An error message will appear stating there is no referral date on STAR.

Once a community care referral is made, the assessment worker's involvement ends. The two-way release is for the purpose of data sharing only.

### **Effect of Assessment Addendum on Community Care Eligibility**

If an addendum is completed due to new or additional information within six months of the intake date, a community care referral can be made **if**:

- ◆ The addendum information changes the risk level and service eligibility of the original report, and
- ◆ The family was not eligible for community care following the original report.

If the family was eligible for and referred to community care and the new information nullifies that eligibility, an exception may be entered and community care can continue.

### **New Abuse Report on a Family Receiving Community Care**

If a new child abuse referral is assigned on a family that is currently receiving community care services, and the assessment determines that the family is again eligible for a community care referral:

- ◆ On the STAT2 screen, use exception reason "F" (family does not need additional supports), and
- ◆ On the INCIDENT SUMMARY line, type in "Community care currently involved."

If the outcome of the current assessment is that the family is eligible for Department services, you must contact the community care contractor. Email the contractor stating that the Department will now serve the family. Community care services will end and the community care provider will assist with the transition of the case.