

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This information was put together by Process Improvement Team 2 as part of the Integrated Family Services Plan. To learn more about Integrated Family Services, please contact the Lehigh County Information and Referral Unit at (610) 782-3200 or visit our website at www.lehighcounty.org.



Helpful suggestions for parents whose child has been diagnosed with a mental health illness.

County of Lehigh
Department of Human Services
Lehigh County Government Center
17 South 7th Street
Allentown, PA 18101

Phone: 610-782-3200
www.lehighcounty.org

Tips for Parents



Helpful suggestions for parents whose child has been diagnosed with a mental health illness.

Lehigh County Children's Mental Health Unit

Helpful Suggestions

It is very difficult and emotionally stressful for parents when their son or daughter has been diagnosed with a mental health illness. Parents' main concern is keeping their child safe while seeking the appropriate treatment. At times parents are faced with the difficult decision of taking their son or daughter to a hospital emergency room for a possible psychiatric inpatient hospitalization; or an out of home mental health treatment facility.

If your son or daughter should ever require a psychiatric inpatient hospitalization or an out of home mental health placement, it is important to be prepared in advance. The hospital emergency room, psychiatric hospital, and other mental health treatment agencies usually request similar information. Being prepared can help your child receive the appropriate level of care, and reduce the stress you may experience. **Keeping a file of the necessary information may be helpful.**

WHAT TO KEEP IN YOUR FILE

- Keep a listing of 2-3 emergency contact names, addresses, and telephone numbers.
- Keep a current photo/photo identification of your child.
- Keep a current photo copy of information regarding your child's medical insurance plan(s) in your portfolio.

Primary Insurance: Private insurance through parents' employer(s)

Group Number

ID Number

Effective Date

Name of Subscriber

Managed Care Organization (MCO) for Physical Health Plan

MCO for Behavioral Health Plan

Is there a deductible? Is there a co-pay?

Does the insurance plan require a pre-authorization or a referral?

Does your child have a Primary Care Physician (PCP)?

PCP name, address, and telephone number

Prescription Plan Information

Secondary Insurance: Medical Assistance Insurance

Recipient Number on Access card

Member Number

Card Issue Number on Access card

Your child's Social Security Number

Managed Care Organization (MCO) for Physical Health Plan: (Gateway, Med Plus+, AmeriHealth Mercy)

MCO for Behavioral Health Plan: Magellan Behavioral Health

- Keep a calendar of appointments. Be prompt and reliable. Missing or being late for appointments can give the impression that you are not committed to your child's treatment.
- Call prior to appointments to find out what records, information, insurance referrals, and prescriptions you will need for the appointment.
- Don't burn bridges! There is a difference between being assertive and aggressive. Try to keep your composure at all times for the sake of your child. If you feel that you may lose your temper at a meeting or appointment, take someone along who can help you keep your emotions in check.
- It may be helpful to seek the assistance of an advocate.
- Find a support system for yourself. Attend a local support group or network with a parent. If needed seek therapeutic support for yourself. This information can be obtained on the County website.
- Accept help from family and friends. If someone offers to babysit, GO out!
- If you have other children, try to spend one on one time with them. Try not to spend all of your time on the phone, online or talking about your child's diagnosis.

Reference: Suggestions for parents when your child receives a diagnosis within the autism disorders—Lehigh County.