



*Creating solutions, **One** person at a time*

February 16, 2009

To: PBH Stakeholders
From: PBH Director of Community Relations
Subject: Reductions in Community Support Services effective March 8, 2009

Dear Stakeholders,

The economic conditions in our nation have resulted in North Carolina State budget cuts that are the result of reduced tax revenues. This has and will continue to impact PBH's ability to provide funding for services to our consumers. PBH has had to make some difficult decisions about what services to reduce or freeze in order to meet the budget reduction target assigned to our LME. In order to address the budget reductions imposed by the State, PBH will freeze new referrals for State funded Community Support Services effective immediately. Consumers referred for services will be placed on a waiting list. Consumers that have a current authorization for Community Support services will be able to continue until the authorization runs out. However, they will be subject to the same limitations in hours of service as Medicaid funded Community Support, as described below.

The State imposed a limit on the amount of Community Support hours that can be provided based on a revised Medicaid service definition that includes this restriction. A maximum limit for the number of hours of Community Support of 8 hours (32 units) per week was established.

Effective March 2009, PBH will implement the state's maximum limit of 8 hours (32 units) per week for consumers currently receiving Community Support Services whether funded by Medicaid or state funds. This limit will be a hard limit on Medicaid funded services, which means that consumers will not be entitled to appeal rights for the denial of authorizations for more than 8 hours. Medicaid children under age 21 may receive more than eight hours if they meet Early Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) criteria. If this is requested, PBH will require additional clinical justification to verify EPSDT criteria are met.

PBH is aware of the impact that these actions will have on people with mental illness and substance abuse problems. We impose these restrictions with deep regret. It is our hope that the economic conditions of our nation will improve. Until then, we will continue to meet as many of the critical needs of our consumers as possible given the circumstances.

Sincerely,

Stephan Tomlinson
Director of Community