

HAMILTON CENTER, INC. OPERATIONS MANUAL

Section:	CONSUMER AND FAMILY	Policy No.:	OP.09.13.00.00
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Policy:	CONSUMER CHOICE OF CLINICAL PROVIDER	Date Originated:	06/01
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PURPOSE

To ensure that a consumer's preference for a provider or request for a change in assigned clinician is reviewed with the consumer and accommodated, if possible, considering the consumer's benefit plan and within the organization's guidelines.

POLICY

Hamilton Center, Inc. (HCI) will make reasonable efforts to accommodate a consumer's preference for a clinical provider or request for a change in assigned clinician. Such requests will be evaluated and accommodated, if possible, in the absence of specific constraints, including the consumer's benefit plan, geographical accessibility, agency resources, and treatment efficacy.

POLICY COMPONENTS

- A. When scheduling an initial appointment, HCI staff shall document the reason for the presenting phone call, selected demographics, consumer's address and contact numbers, and benefit plan information. If the consumer is in crisis, he/she will be advised of the crisis procedures/locations to obtain immediate care. If an outpatient level of care is determined based on the presenting problem, the consumer will be advised of walk-in times at his/her preferred service location. If the consumer requires an appointment, the consumer will be scheduled at his/her preferred location.
- B. If during the initial contact, the consumer expresses a preference for a specific clinician, and requires a scheduled time, HCI will inform the consumer, that their request might influence available appointment times, locations or expense to the consumer. Intake staff will then schedule the initial appointment as determined in conjunction with the consumer. If client walks in for assessment, the site will do their best to accommodate consumer preference of clinician. During the consumer's initial visit, the office staff and the clinician, as appropriate, will explain confidentiality and scope of services, client rights, treatment consents, and rights to medical records, therapist's credentials, and potential cost of treatment.

- C. If at any time the consumer wishes to change HCI clinicians, he/she can submit a verbal or written request to the attending clinician, program supervisor, and/or office staff. The consumer can also contact the Indiana Mental Health Ombudsman program for assistance in changing providers.
1. A consumer may initiate a request for a change in providers for the following reasons, which include, but are not limited to:
- a. Ethnic, cultural, gender or spiritual issues;
 - b. Disagreement in theoretical approach to the treatment process;
 - c. Inability to establish a therapeutic alliance;
 - d. Match of clinical expertise; and/or
 - e. Lack of progress in treatment.
- D. Requests for change in providers shall be reviewed by the clinician involved and his/her supervisor. The clinician and/or program supervisor will review the request with the client and discuss any potential disadvantages affecting current treatment, insurance benefits, or other clinically pertinent issues. If all parties agree to a change in provider, the assigned clinician will promptly complete the medical record transfer to accepting clinician.
- E. If the consumer is not granted a change in clinician, he/she will be informed verbally and in writing why the request was denied and how the consumer can access the HCI complaint and appeals process, other possible treatment options, and the Indiana Mental Health Ombudsman program.
- F. The Client Rights statement shall include information on how to submit a grievance, including how to express concerns about treatment or treatment caregiver(s), including how to request a change in assigned providers.