

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH CARE SERVICES
AUDITS AND INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION
MEDICAL REVIEW BRANCH

SEMPERVIRENS PSYCHIATRIC HEALTH FACILITY (HUMBOLDT COUNTY)
SPECIALTY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES TRIENNIAL REVIEW
FY: 2020-2021
9/15/2021 through 9/29/2021

FINDINGS REPORT

CATEGORY 10.2: MEDICAL CARE EVALUATIONS (MCEs)

FINDING 10.2.5 – 10.2.6:

- One or more submissions did not meet federal requirements for Medical Care Evaluation or equivalent studies (42 C.F.R. § 456.243)
- At least one MCE or equivalent study was not completed each year (42 C.F.R. § 456.245).

Summary of Findings:

The Humboldt County MHP submitted three Medical Care Evaluations for the fiscal years 2018-19 through 2020-21:

2018-19: The Use of Receptive Music as an Intervention to Enhance Trauma Informed Care and Decrease the Use of Seclusion and Restraints

Goal: “to determine if music-assisted relaxation of agitated adults on the psychiatric inpatient unit can enhance our overall goal of providing greater trauma informed care and lower instances and length of time in seclusion and/or restraint.”

Results/Conclusions: “Though the results were not statistically conclusive, it was interesting to see the impact that the use of headphones had on our patients. This intervention provided for a new way for staff to understand and empathize with our patients, helping to build our understanding of trauma informed care. It is interesting to note, in the third graph above, during this MCE study period admissions went up and S&Rs went down.”

2019-20: *Continuing Professional Development Program*

Goal: “to improve employee retention in order to improve consistency in staffing by providing monthly trainings. Having staff who are familiar with the facility’s processes generally means fewer training-related errors with regard to patient care and also having more peers to turn to when questions arise.”

Results: Inconclusive

2020-21: *Continuing Professional Development Program*

Goal: “to improve employee retention in order to improve consistency in staffing by providing comprehensive onboarding. Having staff who are familiar with the facility’s processes generally means fewer training-related errors with regard to patient care and also having more peers to turn to when questions arise.”

Results: Inconclusive

During the Review, DHCS staff had a chance to discuss MCE submissions with Humboldt County MHP and Sempervirens staff. It was brought to light that Humboldt County and surrounding areas which utilize Sempervirens were experiencing difficulties related to the COVID-19 Pandemic. According to staff, throughout the year 2020 and into 2021, the Psychiatric Health Facility experienced strained resources, including, limited beds (social distancing), difficulty maintaining full staff, and ultimately a hiring freeze. Since the MCEs for these fiscal years were related to nursing staff retention in the psychiatric health facility, the MHP was not able to complete the MCE study in 2019-2020 or their second attempt at a similar study in 2020-21.

CORRECTIVE ACTION PLAN:

The MHP shall provide a corrective action plan which states how it will ensure that Medical Care Evaluations meet federal requirements and that at least one MCE or equivalent study is completed each year.