

Who Does DHHS Treat?

To be eligible for ongoing services from the Department of Health & Human Services-Behavioral Health (DHHS-Behavioral Health) an individual must meet criteria set by Medi-Cal to receive specialty mental health services, and the services must be “medically necessary”.

There are criteria specifically for children and adults. The determination is made by a mental health professional and involves “significant impairment” or “deterioration.” This looks different for adults and children. Significant impairment means an individual cannot do the typical activities we would expect of them, and deterioration means things are getting, or will get worse. For children there only needs to be the likelihood that things will get worse. Youth additionally may be eligible if they have experienced trauma, have involvement in the Child Welfare System or the Juvenile Justice system or are experiencing homelessness. [Very detailed information is available at dhcs.ca.gov](http://dhcs.ca.gov).

What does this actually mean? It means that individuals who are seeking mental health counseling or support can get those services from county Behavioral Health, if they have a more serious or severe condition. It also means they need a “specialized” level of treatment that only the county can provide. This can be confusing and feel complicated. If someone seeks treatment from county Behavioral Health, staff will help determine if they meet these criteria and will help connect them to the most appropriate service for their condition, including with county Behavioral Health staff or with non-DHHS providers, as appropriate.

Services not provided directly by DHHS

- Adults with mild or moderate mental health conditions may receive ongoing treatment from the Medi-Cal Managed Care Plan (MCP), in Humboldt this is Partnership HealthPlan of California (PHC)/Beacon Health Strategies, rather than DHHS.
- Children with mild or moderate mental health conditions may receive ongoing treatment from PHC/Beacon rather than DHHS.
- Some children with moderate mental health conditions receive ongoing treatment from DHHS. Most of these services are provided by community organizations such as Changing Tides or Remi Vista which contract with DHHS.

Accessing Services

How does a person access Behavioral Health services for adults?

Call Behavioral Health at 707-268-2900 and request Behavioral Health services. Clients with PHC (Medi-Cal) may also call Beacon at 855-765-9703.

How does a person access Behavioral Health services for children?

Call Behavioral Health Children’s Services at 707-268-2800. Clients with PHC may also call Beacon at 855-765-9703.

Accessing DHHS Crisis Services

DHHS assesses both adults and children who present in crisis through calls to the crisis line, visits to 720 Wood St. or through Mobile Response Team staff called out to emergency rooms or other locations. The results of the assessment determine whether the individual continues to receive treatment from DHHS-Behavioral Health (BH) or is referred to other non-DHHS providers. DHHS-BH also supports students in crisis on school campuses through the Humboldt Bridges to Success (HBTS) program.

The Behavioral Health Crisis Line is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at **707-445-7715** or toll-free at **888-849-5728**.

- Calls are triaged and appropriate services identified.
- The Crisis Line is for all ages: adults, children and youth.
- The Crisis Line is for individuals in crisis and people supporting them or by their friends and family members needing guidance.
- The Crisis Line can access multiple Behavioral Health crisis services.

Substance Use Disorder Treatment

Behavioral Health is a term that covers mental health and substance use disorder. DHHS-Behavioral Health has this name because there are services for mental health and substance use issues available. Humboldt County Programs for Recovery (HCPR) assists individuals who are experiencing substance use problems that are impacting their physical health, interpersonal relationships or causing employment or legal issues. HCPR provides substance use disorder (SUD) treatment to Medi-Cal beneficiaries who meet medical necessity for outpatient and intensive outpatient levels of care. DHHS-BH has additional SUD treatment programs with services for those with co-occurring mental health challenges and for pregnant and early parenting moms.

To be connected to treatment, an individual can call Beacon Health Options at 855-765-9703 to complete a brief screening and connect with a SUD treatment provider who offers the right level of care. DHHS staff will connect with individuals during the call to schedule an assessment if referred to DHHS's HCPR or other services.

It is easy to access services. A person can come to 734 Russ St. in Eureka to pick up an admission packet or call 707-476-4054 to have one mailed or emailed. A filled out packet can be returned prior to or during the assessment.

Frequently Asked Questions

How is it possible that the person I'm concerned about does not meet the criteria for specialty mental health services (SMHS)?

The determination of the need for SMHS is based on specific criteria defined by the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS). Some mental health conditions may not meet those criteria or the services available within SMHS may not be medically necessary for the client, based on their presentation and clinical need. Meeting criteria for SMHS involves determining if there is a medically necessary treatment needed due to significant impacts that the mental illness is having on an area of life functioning such as work, school or relationships.

How is it possible that the person I'm concerned about is not getting treatment?

Receiving treatment for SMHS is voluntary except in limited and specific circumstances. A person may appear to be showing signs of mental illness, but if they are not a danger to themselves, a danger to others or unable to care for themselves due to grave disability, they cannot be forced to accept treatment. This is true even if they have a diagnosis and would be eligible for SMHS services.

A lot of people do not meet the criteria for specialty mental health services and still need mental health treatment, so what do they do?

If a person doesn't have insurance, they can apply for health care coverage with Social Services. If they are eligible for Medi-Cal, then they will be able to access services through Beacon/PHC, the Medi-Cal Managed Care plan for behavioral health. There is a handout on applying for medical coverage, ask for it if needed. There are community providers who can offer mental health services for those who have private insurance. DHHS-BH can help individuals get connected to these services.

What does Medi-Cal have to do with any of this?

DHHS-Behavioral Health is Humboldt County's mental health plan. The services at DHHS-BH are required by and paid for by Medi-Cal. Please call if you have questions, 707-268-2900 for adults and 707-268-2800 for children. Getting services can feel complicated and DHHS-Behavioral Health wants to help.