



STATE OF MARYLAND

DHMH

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

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Provider Alert

Outcomes Measurement System (OMS) Completion Rates

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In a recent review of Outcomes Measurement System (OMS) questionnaire submissions, the Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) has noticed a significant increase in the number of missing OMS items. By reviewing the pattern of missing responses, it appears that several provider agencies are systematically failing to ask their clients many of the OMS items included in the OMS questionnaire. Even though not all items are required for service authorization purposes, BHA's expectation is that ***all*** OMS questions be asked of the client or caregiver during the OMS interview (unless the Beacon Health Options system or questionnaire directs that a question be skipped). Since there are a number of providers new to the OMS, it is possible there is a lack of clarity regarding this expectation. Experience has shown that cases where the client refuses to participate in the interview are rare exceptions. While a given individual may decide not to answer one or two items, the likelihood of the person refusing to participate in the entire interview is very small when the OMS interview is conducted in its proper context.

To assist in correcting this issue, BHA has provided local authorities (Local Behavioral Health Authorities, Core Service Agencies, and Local Addictions Authorities who are not service providers) with information regarding OMS completion rates for the agencies within their jurisdictions. The local authorities have been asked to work with those agencies that are having completion rate issues. If you are a substance use provider in a jurisdiction where the Local Addiction Authority is also a service provider, you will be contacted separately if there is an issue.

In addition, BHA and Beacon Health Options (BHO) have prepared a variety of tools and documents that can assist in conducting the OMS interview. These can be found on the Beacon Health Options Web site (http://maryland.beaconhealthoptions.com/provider/prv_oms.html). We strongly urge that administrators share these resources with their staff, establish a policy expressing the expectations regarding OMS requirements, and distribute at least the OMS Interview Guide Reference Sheet as well as Chapter Two of the Interview Guide to their clinical personnel who conduct OMS interviews.

Over the coming weeks, BHA and BHO will also offer several training opportunities regarding OMS Interview Administration. The dates/times for those are posted in a separate Provider Alert.

If you have any questions, please forward them to susan.bradley@maryland.gov.