



County of San Diego

NICK MACCHIONE, FACHE
AGENCY DIRECTOR

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES
3255 CAMINO DEL RIO SOUTH, MAIL STOP P-531
SAN DIEGO, CA 92108-3806
(619) 563-2700 • FAX (619) 563-2705

ALFREDO AGUIRRE
DIRECTOR, BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

November 1, 2018

Regarding Authority and Role of Patient Advocacy Programs

Dear Provider Partners:

The County of San Diego Behavioral Health Services Division has delegated two agencies, Jewish Family Service (JFS) Patient Advocacy Program and the Consumer Center for Health Education & Advocacy (CCHEA), a program of the Legal Aid Society of San Diego, to be patients' rights advocates for beneficiaries as required by the Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) Title 42, Part 438, Subpart F – Grievance System.

JFS Patient Advocacy Program and CCHEA provide advocacy services for clients who receive mental health and/or substance use disorder services under the contract between the County and State of California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to be the Mental Health Plan (MHP) and the Drug Medi-Cal Organized Delivery System (DMC-ODS). The JFS Patient Advocacy Program provides advocacy services for clients receiving inpatient and/or residential care. CCHEA provides advocacy services for clients receiving outpatient care.

In accordance with this Federal mandate, please be advised that the JFS Patient Advocacy Program and CCHEA are required to conduct grievance investigations and appeals pursuant to State and Federal law. These processes may include, but are not limited to, consulting with facility administrators, interviewing staff members, requesting copies of medical records, submitting medical records to independent clinical consultants for review of clinical issues, conducting staff member trainings, suggesting policy changes, submitting requests for Plans of Correction (POC), and preparing resolution letters.

There are mandated timelines for grievances and appeals. Your quick and efficient cooperation will ensure compliance with these requirements. When requested, please provide copies of medical records to the JFS Patient Advocacy Program and CCHEA within seven calendar days from the date of the medical record request. The Advocate Agencies will provide the program with a signed release of information from the client with the request.

If you have any questions about this guidance, please email your question to QIMatters.hhsa@sdcounty.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

The Quality Management Leadership Team – MHP and SUD-DMC
Behavioral Health Services