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ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION
NUMBER

608

OPR: HEALTH SERVICES

STAFF TRAINING IN MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

I. GENERAL

This Alabama Department of Corrections (ADOC) Administrative Regulation (AR) establishes the policies, procedures, and responsibilities for training ADOC staff and Vendor staff on required topics of mental health services.

II. POLICY

It is the policy of the ADOC to ensure that the Vendor provides ADOC staff and Vendor staff at that facility with initial and annual trainings on required topics of mental health services to equip them with the knowledge and skills relevant to their positions.

III. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

- A. **Activity Technician (AT)**: A specially trained person who works with inmates in leisure-time, therapeutic activities facilitating adjustment. The AT serves as a member of the treatment team.
- B. **Comprehensive Mental Health Training**: A specialized yearly training for ADOC staff, contract staff, and volunteers, designed to enhance understanding of inmate mental health concerns and resources for them to obtain help.
- C. **Residential Treatment Unit (RTU)**: A specialized housing placement for treating inmates with serious mental illness who are at risk for psychiatric deterioration in a less-restrictive setting. This may be either a short-term placement for inmates to resolve crises or a long-term placement for inmates who experience persistent difficulty functioning in an outpatient setting.
- D. **Restrictive Housing Unit (RHU)**: Inmate housing placement for the purpose of separating an inmate from the general prison population. Placement is determined by ADOC.

- E. **Serious Mental Illness (SMI)**: Psychotic Disorders, Bipolar Disorders, and Major Depressive Disorder; any diagnosed mental disorder (excluding substance use disorders) currently associated with serious impairment in psychological, cognitive, or behavioral functioning that substantially interferes with the person's ability to meet the ordinary demands of living and requires an individualized treatment plan by a qualified mental health professional(s).
- F. **Specialized Mental Health Training**: An intensive course on mental health issues for designated ADOC and other non-clinical contracted staff who interact with inmates.
- G. **Stabilization Unit (SU)**: A designated residential unit that provides the highest level of intensive mental health services within the ADOC for inmates who either are experiencing severe psychiatric symptoms or remain at acute risk of harming themselves or others after crisis intervention has been insufficient to address these problems.
- H. **Structured Living Unit (SLU)**: An outpatient diversionary unit for inmates diagnosed with Serious Mental Illness who would otherwise have been placed in a restrictive housing unit.

IV. **RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. The ADOC Director of Mental Health Services is responsible for ensuring oversight of the development of this AR.
- B. The ADOC Director of Psychiatry is responsible for ensuring this AR is consistent with relevant professional standards.
- C. The ADOC Regional Psychologists are responsible for oversight and monitoring of the implementation of this AR.
- D. The Warden (or designee) at each facility is responsible for ensuring that all ADOC staff at that facility receive training on the implementation of this AR.
- E. The Vendor Mental Health Program Director is responsible for ensuring that all Vendor staff receives training on the implementation of this AR.
- F. The Vendor Psychiatric Director is responsible for ensuring that all Vendor psychiatric providers receive training on the implementation of this AR.
- G. The Vendor Director of Nursing is responsible for ensuring that all Vendor nursing staff receive training on the implementation of this AR.

- H. The Vendor Health Services Administrator and the Vendor Mental Health Site Administrator at each facility are jointly responsible for ensuring that all Vendor staff at that facility receive training on the implementation of this AR.
- I. The Vendor Clinical Education and Training Director is responsible for developing, coordinating, and documenting all staff training in mental health services.

V. PROCEDURES

The Vendor Clinical Education and Training Director will develop, coordinate, and document staff participation in the following trainings on mental health services:

- 1. Comprehensive Mental Health Training:
 - a. Required topics include:
 - (1) Confidentiality in accordance with AR 604, *Confidentiality in Mental Health Services*.
 - (2) Referral for mental health services in accordance with AR 609, *Referral to Mental Health Services*.
 - (3) Conducting reception mental health screenings in accordance with AR 610, *Reception Mental Health Screenings*.
 - (4) Recognizing heat-related illness in inmates prescribed psychotropic medication in accordance with AR 619, *Psychotropic Medication and Heat-Related Illness*.
 - (5) Restrictive Housing Unit (RHU) Mental Health Rounds in accordance with AR 625, *Mental Health Services in Restrictive Housing Unit*.
 - (6) The Disciplinary Process in accordance with AR 626, *Mental Health Consultation to the Disciplinary Process*.
 - (7) Crisis Intervention in accordance with AR 627, *Mental Health Crisis Intervention and Emergency Services*.
 - (8) Emergency Preparedness in accordance with AR 627, *Mental Health Crisis Intervention and Emergency Services*.
 - (9) Suicide Risk Assessments in accordance with AR 627, *Mental Health Crisis Intervention and Emergency Services*.

- (10) Safety Planning in accordance with AR 627, *Mental Health Crisis Intervention and Emergency Services*.
 - (11) Correctional Risk Factors in accordance with AR 627, *Mental Health Crisis Intervention and Emergency Services*.
 - (12) Suicide Prevention in accordance with AR 629, *Inmate Suicide Prevention Program*.
 - (13) Suicide Watch placement and observation in accordance with AR 630, *Suicide Watch*.
 - (14) Use of clinical restraints for mental health purposes in accordance with AR 631, *Use of Clinical Restraints for Mental Health Purposes*.
 - (15) Mental Health Observation placement and observation in accordance with AR 638, *Mental Health Observation*.
- b. Required expectations of applicable trainings on the topics included in Sections V.A.1.a.(1)–(15) above include:
 - (1) Goals and structure of mental health services.
 - (2) Goals and strategies for communicating with inmates with serious mental illness.
 - (3) Early warning signs of mental illness.
 - (4) De-escalation of agitated mentally ill inmates.
 - (5) Recognizing acute signs of intoxication and withdrawal.
 - (6) Recognizing signs of adverse reactions to medication.
 - (7) Legal issues with mental health services in correctional facilities.
 - c. Separate, additional, updated annual trainings on the topics included in Sections V.A.1.a.(1)–(15) above.
 - d. The Vendor Mental Health Site Administrator at each facility will conduct the Comprehensive Mental Health Training as an eight (8) hour module at least one (1) time each month.

- e. The Vendor Mental Health Program Director (or designee) will conduct the additional trainings for all ADOC staff and Vendor staff at each facility at least annually.

2. Emergency Preparedness (Man-Down) Drills Training:

The ADOC security staff and the Vendor staff at each ADOC major facility will conduct Emergency Preparedness Drills on a quarterly basis, which will include role-playing scenarios involving self-injury and suicide attempts.

3. Mental Health Observation Training:

- a. The Vendor Mental Health Site Administrator at each facility will train all Vendor staff at that facility on mental health observation, including:
 - (1) Positioning to maintain necessary visual contact with each inmate in a Crisis Cell.
 - (2) Accessing assistance from ADOC security staff or Vendor staff if an inmate requires medical care or there is an emergency.
- b. The Vendor Mental Health Site Administrator at each facility will conduct the mental health observation training within seven (7) working days from the Vendor staff's first date of employment.

4. Group Programming Training:

The Vendor Mental Health Site Administrator at each facility will train all Vendor staff at that facility on independently and collaboratively leading, documenting, and scheduling Group Programming.

- a. The Vendor Mental Health Site Administrator at each facility will ensure that Vendor mental health staff will collaboratively lead a minimum of three (3) days of Group Programming with experienced Vendor staff.
- b. The Vendor Mental Health Site Administrator at each facility will ensure that Vendor ATs at that facility will collaboratively lead a minimum of five (5) days of Group Programming with an experienced Vendor AT.

5. Additional Specialized Mental Health Training:

- a. The Vendor Mental Health Site Administrator at each facility will provide Specialized Mental Health Training for all Vendor QMHPs on suicide prevention, suicide intervention, suicide risk assessment, suicide

risk assessment tools, safety planning, and evidence-based suicide-specific treatments in accordance with both AR 627, *Mental Health Crisis Intervention and Emergency Services*, and AR 629, *Inmate Suicide Prevention Program*.

- b. The Vendor Mental Health Site Administrator at each facility will provide Specialized Mental Health Training for ADOC security staff and Vendor staff assigned to the SU, RTU, SLU, and RHU on relevant topics of mental health services.
- c. The Vendor Mental Health Site Administrator at each facility will provide Specialized Mental Health Training for Vendor nursing staff on triaging referrals to mental health services in accordance with AR 609, *Referral to Mental Health Services*.
- d. The Vendor Mental Health Site Administrator at each facility will provide Specialized Mental Health Training for Vendor nursing staff on conducting Reception Mental Health Screenings in accordance with AR 610, *Reception Mental Health Screening*.
- e. The Vendor Mental Health Site Administrator at each facility will provide Specialized Mental Health Training for Vendor nursing staff on conducting RHU Pre-Placement Screenings in accordance with AR 625, *Mental Health Services in Restrictive Housing Units*.
- f. The Vendor Mental Health Site Administrator at each facility will provide Specialized Mental Health Training for Vendor mental health staff on additional relevant topics of mental health services, including:
 - (1) SMI;
 - (2) Medication education and associated risks, including identifying and responding to related medical emergencies;
 - (3) Medication non-adherence;
 - (4) Psychotropic medications in accordance with AR 616, *Psychotropic Medication*;
 - (5) Heat-related illnesses and psychotropic medication in accordance with AR 619, *Psychotropic Medication and Heat-Related Illness*.
- g. The Vendor Mental Health Site Administrator at each facility will provide Specialized Mental Health Training for Vendor ATs on additional relevant topics of mental health services, including:

- (1) SMI;
 - (2) Structured Therapeutic Out-of-Cell Activities.
- h. The Vendor Mental Health Site Administrator at each facility will provide Specialized Mental Health Training for the ADOC staff serving as a disciplinary Hearing Officer and Vendor mental health staff, including:
 - (1) The disciplinary procedures and sanctions, including sanctions other than restrictive housing, in accordance with AR 403, *Procedures for Inmate Rule Violations*.
 - (2) Conducting a mental health consultation on an inmate subject to the disciplinary process in accordance with AR 626, *Mental Health Consultation to the Disciplinary Process*.
 - (3) Determining when an inmate on Suicide Watch placement may receive information regarding a disciplinary sanction in accordance with AR 630, *Suicide Watch*.
 - (4) Determining when an inmate on Mental Health Observation placement may receive information regarding a disciplinary sanction in accordance with AR 638, *Mental Health Observation*.
- i. The Vendor Mental Health Program Director (or designee) will provide Specialized Mental Health Training for all ADOC staff, Vendor staff, or other contracted staff assigned to the MHITC in accordance with AR 640, *Advanced Inpatient Mental Health Care*.
- 6. Annual in-service trainings on:
 - a. Updated topics of mental health services, including suicide prevention, for all Vendor staff.
 - b. Different trending topics of mental health services for ADOC security staff in accordance with AR 219, *Training*.
- 7. Other training on topics of mental health services as required by the ADOC Director of Mental Health Services or the Vendor Mental Health Program Director.
- 8. Scheduling:

- a. The Vendor Mental Health Site Administrator at each facility will develop a schedule for all required mental health trainings for all ADOC staff and all Vendor staff at that facility.
- b. The Vendor Clinical Education and Training Director will develop a schedule for all required mental health trainings for all ADOC staff, Vendor staff, or other contracted staff assigned to the MHITC.

VI. DISPOSITION

Any forms used will be disposed of and retained according to the Departmental Records Disposition Authority (RDA).

VII. FORMS

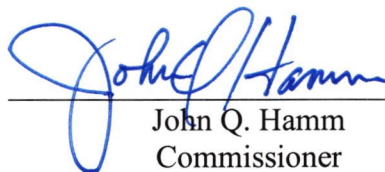
There are no forms prescribed in this regulation.

VIII. SUPERSEDES

This Administrative Regulation supersedes AR 608, *Staff Training in Mental Health*, dated June 21, 2005, and any related changes.

IX. PERFORMANCE

- A. Code of Alabama 1975 § 14-1-1.1 *et seq.*
- B. Braggs v. Hamm, No. 2:14-cv-00601-MHT-JTA (M.D. Ala. filed June 17, 2014).
- C. NATIONAL COMMISSION ON CORRECTIONAL HEALTH CARE, STANDARDS FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES (2015).
- D. NATIONAL COMMISSION ON CORRECTIONAL HEALTH CARE, STANDARDS FOR HEALTH SERVICES IN PRISONS (2018).



John Q. Hamm
Commissioner