

Subject: Role of Medical Director

Requirements

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1. **Programs Affected:** All CCBHC Demonstration participants.
2. **Background and Purpose:** Community Mental Health Clinics (CMHCs) designated by the Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH) as Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs) are required to have a medical director included part of the management team. Per the CCBHC criteria, Medical Directors have specific oversight requirements outlines in the policy bulleting. ***This bulletin describes the role of the CCBHC Medical Director.***
3. **SAMHSA CCBHC Criteria Authority**
 - 3.1. SAMHSA CCBHC certification criterion 1.a.3 requires the CCBHC to have a Medical Director as part of the CCBHC management team. The Medical Director will provide guidance regarding behavioral health clinical service delivery, ensure the quality of the medical component of care and provide guidance to foster the integration and coordination of behavioral health and primary care. *The Medical director does not need to be a full-time position.*
 - 3.1.1. If a CCBHC is unable, after reasonable efforts, to employ or contract with a psychiatrist as Medical Director, a medically trained behavioral health care professional with prescriptive authority and appropriate education, licensure, and experience in psychopharmacology, and who can prescribe and manage medications independently, pursuant to state law, may serve as the Medical Director. In addition, if a CCBHC is unable to hire a psychiatrist and hires another prescriber instead, psychiatric consultation will be obtained regarding behavioral health clinical service delivery, quality of the medical component of care, and integration and coordination of behavioral health and primary care.
 - 3.1.2. Per CCBHC Criterion 1.b.2 if the Medical Director is not experienced with the treatment of substance use disorders, the CCBHC must have experienced addiction medicine physicians or specialist on staff, or arrangements that ensure access to consultation on addiction medicine for the Medical Director and clinical staff.
 - 3.2. Per Criterion 4.g.1 the Medical Director establishes the protocols that conform to screening recommendations with the scores of A and B, of the US Preventive Services Task Force Recommendations for the following conditions:
 - HIV and viral hepatitis
 - Primary care screening pursuant to CCBHC Program Requirement 5 Quality and Other Reporting and Appendix B.
 - Other clinically indicated primary care key health indicators of children, adults, and older adults receiving services, as determined by the CCBHC Medical Director and

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based on environmental factors, social determinants of health, and common physical health conditions experienced by the CCBHC person receiving services population.

3.3. Per CCBHC Criterion 4.g.2 the Medical Director will develop organizational protocols to ensure that screening for people receiving services who are at risk for common physical health conditions experienced by CCBHC populations across the lifespan. Protocols will include:

- Identifying people receiving services with chronic diseases;
- Ensuring that people receiving services are asked about physical health symptoms; and
- Establishing systems for collection and analysis of laboratory samples, fulfilling the requirements of 4.g.

3.4. Per CCBHC Criterion 5.b.1 the Medical Director is involved in the aspects of the CQI plan, that apply to the quality of the medical components of care, including coordination and integration with primary care.

4. Alabama CCBHC Requirements for the Role of the Medical Director

4.1. All CCBHCs must designate a Medical Director, listed as Key Staff with ADMH and on all CCBHC documents. ***If unable to designate a Medical Director as referenced above in section 3.1.1., the CCBHC must inform the ADMH immediately.***

4.2. *If the CCBHC is unable to locate a psychiatrist to serve in this role, they must document attempts to locate and document the behavioral health experience of the physician hired into the role of Medical Director. This information must be made available to ADMH at site visits or upon request.*

4.3. The CCBHC Medical Director will establish primary care protocols in writing to be made available to ADMH at site visits or upon request.

4.4. The CCBHC Medical Director will establish organizational screening protocols for primary care screening and monitoring. The protocols must include how to identify CCBHC participants with chronic disease, and protocols to ask about physical health symptoms as part of the assessment process and establishing sample collection policies and procedures. Protocols will be made available to ADMH at site visits or upon request.

4.5. The CCBHC Medical Director will establish measures and monitor the ongoing quality improvement efforts related to medical care. The CCBHC Medical Director or designee will co-chair the CQI committee. CQI policies and minutes will be made available to ADMH at site visits or upon request.

4.6. The CCBHC will maintain liability/malpractice insurance adequate for the staffing and scope of services provided.

Disclaimer: The information contained in this implementation bulletin is for general information purposes only. For more details on the specific subject area covered in this bulletin, please refer to the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) Certification Updated March 2023.