

## What is a Psychotropic Medication Review?

STAR Health conducts a review for children in foster care who receive medications for mental or behavioral health conditions to ensure the medication practices are in compliance with the “Psychotropic Medication Utilization Parameters for Foster Children” as developed by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

## How are members referred for screenings and reviews?

There are several ways that a member may receive a screening and then a review

- All members age four and under and those on multiple psychiatric medications were screened during the first six months of the contract,
- IMHS routinely monitors the medications prescribed through data transfers from the State and through our ongoing service management for members, and
- Referrals for a review can be made by any caseworker, judge, foster parent, medical consentor or other concerned entity.

## What does this review involve?

The first step of the review process is a screening to ensure that any child receiving psychotropic medication:

- Has received a thorough assessment including a diagnosis of a psychiatric condition
- Is not receiving five or more psychotropic medications at the same time
- Is not receiving multiple medications for the same condition(s)
- Is not receiving medication consistent with the stated diagnosis
- Is not receiving multiple medications for a condition without a trial on a single medication
- Is not receiving medication dosages exceeding manufacturers recommendations
- Is receiving appropriate medications if of a very young age; and
- Ensuring that primary care physicians are consulting with a psychiatrist when treating conditions other than Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD), uncomplicated Anxiety Disorders or uncomplicated Depression.

## Who conducts this screening?

The clinical staff (nurses and licensed behavioral health professionals) at Integrated Mental Health Services (IMHS), the contracted behavioral health management vendor for STAR Health, is responsible for conducting these screenings.

## What do I do if I (the prescriber) receive a request for information during the screening process?

Requests for information by the IMHS clinical staff do not require a separate release of information. Both the Department of Family and Protective Services and the Department of State Health Services support the Psychotropic Medication Review process, and encourage your participation.

## What happens when the screening finds that one of the conditions above is not met?

When the screening indicates that a foster child’s medication regimen falls outside the Parameters, IMHS gathers any additional information needed from the prescriber, Child Placing Agency, DFPS caseworker, medical consentor or others. The case then is referred to the IMHS Medical Director to

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determine the need for a formal review. Please be aware that triggering of a medication review based on the Parameters is not a provider complaint.

### **How is the review conducted?**

During this review, the Medical Director or other qualified child psychiatrist will contact the prescriber to obtain more detailed information about the child's current diagnoses, medication regimen, and rationale for treatment. The prescriber's participation in the review is encouraged, and a separate release of information is not required.

### **Must I change my prescribing of medications to foster children because of the review?**

The prescriber will never be told to change medications during a Psychotropic Medication Review. Being "outside the Parameters" does not necessarily mean being outside the standard of care. IMHS realizes that many physicians may have just begun to see a foster child, or the child may have come to them on multiple medications; therefore, the only psychotropic medications that are subject to review are medications which have been prescribed for 60 days or more. During the Psychotropic Medication Review, psychiatrists are available for consultation, and can discuss the child's medication history, symptom status, and response to treatment. In some instances, there may be opportunities to reduce polypharmacy.

### **What happens to the information after the review?**

If a psychiatrist conducts a review, the results (including recommendations) will be written and included in the member's record at IMHS. Copies of the results will be sent to any referring entity and will be available to caseworkers and/or medical consenters at their request. The Psychotropic Medication Review findings are documented and cases may be referred to the DFPS Medical Director for further intervention.

### **How do I make a referral?**

Referrals can be made by calling IMHS' main number **(866) 218-8263**.