Intensive Mental Health Treatment in Foster Care

Minnesota has a new service offering intensive outpatient mental health services for children’ in foster care. A provider certified to offer this service works with counties and foster families to offer a high degree of clinical mental health care at home and in the community.

**Background**

Intensive Treatment in Foster Care was developed in 2012 through a series of stakeholder groups with counties, tribes, treatment foster parents, mental health providers, advocacy organizations and parents. Keeping in mind the demographic and service needs of the children, it was determined that this needed to be a flexible service package that could be provided to all the members of the child’s family, and foster family in any family foster home.

The new Intensive Treatment in Foster Care benefit:

- Helps children get an intensive clinical mental health service while maintaining the child’s foster care placement
- Supports placement with relatives, education stability and timely permanency planning
- Creates more flexible, coordinated service delivery among all of the child’s team members (parents, foster parents and professionals)
- Strengthens treatment and permanency planning with consultation, psychoeducation and therapy services to support successful out-of-home placements
- Promotes evidence-based practices and outcome measures to improve results.

**Services**

Intensive Treatment in Foster Care makes it possible for the service to be available in a traditional or treatment foster home, relative or kinship foster home, or a home licensed by a county, tribe or child caring placing agencies.

Services for the child include:

- Psychotherapy (individual, family, multifamily and group)
- Psychoeducational Services (individual, family, multifamily and group)
- Crisis Assistance
- Clinical Care Consultation.

Eligible providers have a state certification and a service contract with a county or tribe.

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The need

Children in foster care tend to utilize mental health services extensively. Nationally, it has been shown that while children in foster care are under 10 percent of the children enrolled in Medicaid, they utilize 38 percent of child Medicaid expenditures. Children in foster care require higher levels of mental health services and coordinated care due to the complexity of their situation.

How to receive services

Intensive Treatment in Foster Care is a Minnesota Health Care Program (MHCP) benefit available for children living in family foster care.

To be eligible, the child must:

- Be a recipient of MHCP
- Be between the ages of 0 to 21
- Have a diagnostic assessment within the past 180 days that documents a mental illness
- Live in a licensed family foster home (where the license holder lives in the home, including licensed pre-adoptive and pre-kinship placements)
- Need a level of care that demonstrates the need for intensive services without 24-hour medical monitoring.

Treating childhood trauma

Intensive Treatment in Foster Care focuses on treating trauma. In recent years, a greater understanding has been developed on how to effectively treat children who are suffering from trauma.

In 2007, the legislature passed the Governor’s Mental Health Initiative, which included training for early childhood mental health and evidence-based practices infrastructure development. Through the infrastructure grants, DHS has been able to promote and develop clinicians trained in Trauma Informed Child/Parent Psychotherapy (TI-CPP) and Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT). As a result, approximately 500 therapists have been trained in TF-CBT across the State and 100 licensed clinicians have been or are in the process of being trained in TI-CPP.

For more information, visit mn.gov/dhs/childrens-mental-health
Mental Health Division, Department of Human Services

651-431-2225

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