

CHAPTER 37I
FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

Authority

N.J.S.A. 30:4-177.43 et seq., specifically 30:4-177.52.

Source and Effective Date

R.2003 d.475, effective November 12, 2003.
See: 35 N.J.R. 3011(a), 35 N.J.R. 5553(b).

Chapter Expiration Date

Chapter 37I, Family Support Services, expires on November 12, 2008.

Chapter Historical Note

Chapter 37I, Family Support Services, was adopted as R.1999 d.39, effective February 1, 1999. See: 30 N.J.R. 3891(b), 31 N.J.R. 434(a).

Chapter 37I, Family Support Services, was readopted as R.2003 d.475, effective November 12, 2003. See: Source and Effective Date. See, also, section annotations.

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SUBCHAPTER 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

10:371-1.1 Purpose; authority

(a) Pursuant to P.L. 1995, c.314, the Division of Mental Health Services of the Department of Human Services shall

establish a program of family support services designed to strengthen and promote families who provide care in the community for a family member with a serious mental illness.

(b) A Statewide family support policy for persons with a serious mental illness shall acknowledge that families themselves are able to define their own needs and select their own services; these family supports shall be chosen by families, controlled by families and monitored by families.

(c) The system of family support shall vary in scope and intensity based upon the needs of a particular family unit and shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

1. Service coordination;
2. Estate and transition planning;
3. Housing assistance;
4. Homemaker assistance;
5. Accessing vocational and employment services;
6. After-school care;
7. Transportation;
8. Respite care;
9. Family education and training;
10. Medication education;
11. Self-advocacy training;
12. Entitlement training; and
13. Other services as identified by the family.

(d) Adults with a serious mental illness should be afforded the opportunity to make decisions for themselves, live in typical homes and communities and exercise their full rights as citizens. When families serve as the primary provider of care for a family member with a serious mental illness, the families should be provided with the supports they need to sustain that family member with dignity in a community setting, within available funding limits.

(e) No more than 10 percent of funds disbursed to a PA shall be allocated for administrative purposes.

(f) The Division and any agency funded by the Division to provide family support services shall assist families in obtaining all other sources of funding before using funds appropriated pursuant to and available for the purposes of P.L. 1995, c.314.

(g) The services provided pursuant to this act shall not supplant any existing rights, entitlements or services for which the family or family member with a serious mental illness may be eligible.

(h) Notwithstanding the provisions of any law to the contrary, the family support services provided pursuant to P.L. 1995, c.314 shall be considered a State benefit and shall not be counted as income for the purposes of State taxation or eligibility for other State benefits.

10:37I-1.2 Scope

The provisions of this chapter shall apply to all families who reside in the State of New Jersey and who are actively involved in caring for, or supporting, a family member with a serious mental illness.

10:37I-1.3 Definitions

The following words and terms, when used in this chapter, shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

“Adult” means any individual 18 years of age or older and those who are transitioning into adult systems of care.

“Advocacy” means staff activities that, in cooperation with families, help the community and other professionals understand and respond to the needs of families with a mentally ill member (for example, technical assistance to other service providers or community organizations; supporting family members to participate and influence mental health policy formation, assertiveness training for family members on how to present themselves to professionals); or staff activities on behalf of a specific family (for example, meeting with employers to encourage flexible work schedules or emergency leaves).

“Commissioner” means the Commissioner of the Department of Human Services.

“Department” means the Department of Human Services.

“Division” means the Division of Mental Health Services in the Department of Human Services.

“Engagement” means the process of establishing a collaborative relationship with a family built on caring and trust whereby the IFSS program establishes its value to the family by addressing its immediate needs, conveying a sense of hope and “being there” for the family in times of need.

“Family” means persons related to the family member with a serious mental illness by blood, marriage, adoption, guardianship, foster care or other significant care giving relationship.

“Family concern” means the objective and subjective experience of families coping with the acute and long-term responsibilities associated with community care and treatment. Family concerns may include disrupted family life, worry, stigma and sense of loss, as well as tangible costs in savings spent, time lost, and social isolation.

“Family concerns survey” means a valid and reliable instrument that measures objective and subjective pressures that a family experiences in caring for their mentally ill member.

“Family satisfaction with services” means a measurement of a family’s experience with a particular PA as to the quality, impact, accessibility and relevance of IFSS.

“Family support group” means a time-limited or ongoing group in which families meet together to provide mutual support, information and opportunity to interact with other families having similar concerns and to help ease the isolation and stigmatization that many families feel.

“Family support services” means a coordinated system of on-going public and private support services which are designed to maintain and enhance the quality of life of a family.

“Family unit” means the family member with a serious mental illness and his or her family.

“Intensive family support services (IFSS)” means a range of family driven supportive activities designed to improve the overall functioning and quality of life of families with a mentally ill relative.

“Level of family concern” means the results achieved through administration of the Family Concerns Survey.

“NAMI New Jersey” is the name of a New Jersey State-wide self-help and advocacy organization dedicated to improving the lives of people with mental illnesses and their families.

“NAMI New Jersey Family to Family Education Program” means a family to family education program given by families of people with mental illness for families of people with mental illness.

“Program” means the program of family support services established pursuant to this chapter.

“Provider agency (PA)” means a public or private organization which has a contract with the Division to provide intensive family support services, and which meets the requirements contained in N.J.A.C. 10:37.

“Psychoeducation group” means a multi-family group which meets on a regularly scheduled, time-limited basis for the purpose of providing families with a greater knowledge of mental illness, treatment options and skills useful in managing the illness within the family and supporting the recovery process.