

CHAPTER 37J
PROGRAMS OF ASSERTIVE COMMUNITY
TREATMENT

Authority

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Chapter Historical Note

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SUBCHAPTER 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

10:37J-1.1 Scope and purpose

(a) The rules in this chapter shall apply to all Programs of Assertive Community Treatment (PACT).

(b) The purpose of PACT is to provide comprehensive, integrated rehabilitation, treatment and support services to those individuals who are most challenged by the need to cope with serious and persistent mental illness, as evidenced by repeated hospitalizations, and who are at serious risk for psychiatric hospitalization. PACT, provided in vivo by a multi-disciplinary service delivery team, is the most intensive program element in the continuum of ambulatory community mental health care. Services to an individual may vary in

type and intensity. Treatment has no predetermined end point. These rules provide a description of the consumers for whom the services are targeted, the range of services to be provided, the requirements and responsibilities of the PA's and their staff, and the procedures required to provide the services.

(c) PACT teams shall be guided by the following principles:

1. It is possible for most adults with a severe and persistent mental illness to engage in the process of recovery and live successfully in normal community settings when adequate supports and services are provided.
2. The efficient provision of these supports and services is best accomplished through a self-contained clinical program that is the fixed point of responsibility for providing treatment, rehabilitation, and support services which are tailored to the unique needs and choices of individual consumers.
3. Using the integrated service approach and with the purpose of assisting consumers to develop skill competencies, PACT programs shall merge clinical and rehabilitation staff expertise (for example, psychiatric, nursing, ATOD abuse counseling, employment) within one service delivery team, managed by a qualified program director/coach. Accordingly, there will be minimal referral of consumers to other program entities for specialized treatment, rehabilitation, and support services.
4. Treatment/rehabilitation is based on maximizing the function of consumers in normal adult roles.

10:37J-1.2 Definitions

The words and terms in this chapter shall have the following meanings unless the content clearly indicates otherwise.

“Assessment” means the ongoing process of identifying and reviewing a consumer’s strengths and needs based upon input from the consumer, significant others, family members and health professionals. The assessment process continues throughout the entire length of service.

“ATOD” means alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs of abuse.

“Boarding home” means a building containing two or more units of dwelling space arranged or intended for single room occupancy, exclusive of any such unit occupied by an owner or operator, offering no financial or personal services other than a room, food service, and laundry to two or more residents unrelated to the operator. Such facilities shall be licensed by the Department of Community Affairs, pursuant to P.L. 1979, c.496 (Rooming House/Boarding House Act of 1979).

“Crisis assessment and intervention” means in-home or in-community emergency care provided by a PACT team member(s) who has direct access to other PACT team members, including the psychiatrist and PACT director/coach, for consultation and assistance.

“Development and support of recreational and social activities and relationships” means provision of skill training, including supervised teaching activities and experiences, provided individually or in small groups to improve communication and facilitate appropriate interpersonal behavior.

“Direct assistance to ensure that each consumer obtains the basic necessities of life, such as food, clothing, physical health and dental care, shelter and safety,” means that the PACT team will maximally assist clients in meeting their concrete needs. To the extent possible, the team will assist enrollees in securing and maintaining safe, affordable housing in settings that are clean, attractive and promote stability and well-being.

“Direct assistance with structuring and performing basic daily living activities” means the provision of hands-on assistance with a wide range of independent living tasks.

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

“In vivo” means assistance is provided in the consumer’s home and other community settings. Direct assistance, individualized support, supervision, problem solving and the teaching of independent living skills are provided in the consumer’s natural settings.

“Level I standards” means those standards with which mental health programs must be in full compliance in order to be granted or to continue to receive a Department license. Level I standards include those standards which relate most directly to client rights, safety, and staffing. With specific reference to the PACT program, Level I standards are: N.J.A.C. 10:37J-2.4, Program intensity; 10:37-2.5, Services to be provided and service coordination; 10:37-2.7, Terminations and discharges; and 10:37J-2.8, Staff requirements . .

“Medication prescription, administration, monitoring, and documentation” means psychiatric assessment and the prescription of appropriate medication. PACT staff, under the direction of the team psychiatrist, shall participate in the education, delivery, administration including observed self-administration, monitoring and documentation of medication. Staff shall assess and document the consumer’s mental illness symptoms and behavior in response to medication and monitor for psychotropic medication side effects. Staff shall report observations to the team psychiatrist.

“Minimizing consumer involvement with the criminal justice system” means that the PACT team collaborates with police, court personnel, and jail and prison officials to ensure appropriate use of legal and mental health services. The team informs and educates the court, corrections and police officials in regard to the consumer’s needs.

“Observed self-administration of medication,” means a procedure in which any medication is taken orally, injected, or topically or otherwise administered by a PACT enrollee to himself or herself. The complete procedure of self-administration includes removing an individual dose from a previously dispensed (in accordance with the New Jersey State Board of Pharmacy rules, N.J.A.C. 13:39), labeled container (including a unit dose container), verifying it with the directions on the label, and taking orally, injecting, or topically or otherwise administering the medication.

“PACT” means Programs of Assertive Community Treatment.

“Provider agency” (PA) means a public or private organization which has a contract or an affiliation agreement with the Division to provide PACT services.

“PACT director/coach” means a designated manager within the administrative structure of the PA whom, although not a PACT team member, is dedicated to the success of the team(s). The director/coach provides leadership, support, guidance, networking, and advocacy efforts on behalf of the team(s) and the consumers that it serves.

“Primary consumer” means, for the purposes of this rule, a person who is most challenged by the need to cope with a serious and persistent mental illness and who meets the eligibility requirements set forth in this subchapter.

“Provision of ATOD services” means assistance to maintain a lifestyle free of substance abuse, with services to include assessment of each consumer’s substance use, provision of, or referral to, substance abuse treatment, education and other related ATOD services.

“Provision of support to consumer’s family and other members of the consumer’s social network” means that the PACT team directly provides support, consultation and education to the consumer’s family, for example, spouses, siblings, parents and significant others.

“Rehabilitation and support to assist consumers to find and maintain employment” means assistance to consumers in choosing, obtaining, and keeping employment.

“Residential health care facility” or “RHCF” means a facility that provides food, shelter, supervised health care and related services to four or more persons 18 years of age or older who are unrelated to the owner or administrator.