



## DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

*Your Partner For A Stronger Arizona*

# DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Sent on Behalf of DES/DDD

## Quality Management Bulletin - June 2024

Target Audience - Qualified Vendors and Providers

Transmittal Date - 6/28/2024

Welcome to summer and the monsoon season! Today's bulletin discusses Health and Safety visits, remediation follow-up, and language access.

### Investigating Quality of Care Concerns

As you know, the Quality Management Unit receives many incidents. Our triage team reviews them for a preliminary assessment to determine if any immediate actions are needed. Those that meet the criteria become Quality of Care Concerns (QOC), and a QOC Investigation begins.

A key tool of the QOC investigation is the Health and Safety Visit. The Health and Safety Visit is an unannounced site visit where a DDD Staff Member visits the incident setting to assess the circumstances of the reported incident. These usually occur in licensed residential settings. In addition, the health and safety nurses may also interview members or other involved persons in other venues, including hospitals or schools. Health and safety visits are not conducted in private homes. If an interview must be conducted at a private home, it is only done with permission from a guardian or member.

The Division also conducts telephone interviews when an on-site visit is not warranted. These are used to conduct fact-finding and interview individuals involved with the reported incident. We have experienced some challenges with our ability to connect with Qualified Vendor staff. The Division wants to remind the vendor community this is an integral part of our investigative process and Qualified Vendors must make staff available for these interviews. This is the opportunity for Qualified Vendors to provide as much information and clarity about the incident under investigation as possible.

### Language Access

The Division has recently received a few incidents related to language barriers between members and their prospective direct support professional. This is a reminder of the requirements for providing language access. The Qualified Vendor Agreement contains several provisions outlining the scope of work and service requirements about communication:

- Page 2- 5.1.9
  - *As needed to effectively implement the service, the Qualified Vendor shall communicate effectively with the Division member and the member's representative, as appropriate (e.g., American Sign*

*Language or Spanish). Minimally, establishing an effective communication strategy is a primary consideration in accepting a referral. This may include utilizing alternative communication strategies (e.g., written versus spoken language), using a volunteer or paid translator, or recruitment of staff who speak different languages. The Qualified Vendor shall comply with all applicable requirements of state and federal law. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, 42 United States Code (“U.S.C.”) § 2000d et seq., prohibits discrimination based on national origin. Failing to take reasonable steps to ensure meaningful access to Medicaid services for persons with limited English proficiency is a form of national origin discrimination prohibited by Title VI.*

- Page 7- 5.4.3.3
  - *Delivered in a manner that takes into consideration the primary language of the member and member’s representative as well as any cultural diversity issues.*
- Page 9- 5.6.4.1
  - *Assess the referred member for the service(s) in the referral. Ensure that direct service staff identified to provide the service has the necessary skills and training as identified in the member’s planning document (i.e. as Prevention and Support, language skills) to provide services to the member.*

[Provider Manual Chapter 26](#) also has information about interpretation and translation requirements and the [Rate Book](#) has information about reimbursement for Sign Language and Oral Interpretive Services.

If you have any questions for Quality Management, please reach out to one of the District emails below:

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