



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

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JACK BARBER, M.D.  
INTERIM COMMISSIONER

March 29, 2016

To: Community Services Board Executive Directors

From: Jack Barber, M.D., Interim Commissioner *JMB*  
DBHDS

Subject: **Certification of CSB/BHA Preadmission Screening Clinicians**

While the purpose of this Memorandum is to notify you of new and expanded requirements for the emergency service evaluators, I wanted to first take this opportunity to thank you and your staff for the quality services you provide to individuals in psychiatric crisis. The public system of behavioral health care has been under great scrutiny during the past two years and our emergency services system has been the primary focus of concern and attention. In FY 2015, our emergency services staff completed 83,701 face to face evaluations, and when compared to FY 2013, in FY 2015 overall TDOs for adults increased by 15%. In the face of increased demands and significant pressures, you have ensured that every individual who needed involuntary inpatient care had access to a hospital bed. Along with this demonstration of our joint effort to continue strengthening our system of care, DBHDS and the VACSB leadership have collaboratively developed expanded requirements for our emergency services evaluators.

As you know, the Virginia law requires that Community Services Boards and Behavioral Health Authorities evaluators who provide recommendations and prepare preadmission screening reports for the courts pursuant to Article 16 of Chapter 11 of Title 16.1, Chapters 11 and 11.1 of Title 19.2, and Chapter 8 of Title 37.2 in the Code of Virginia must complete a certification program approved by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS). These new requirements enhance the standards for pre-service education, specify levels of required continuing education and clinical supervision, increase standards for those who provide this supervision and specify a lengthy orientation process prior to certification.

In addition to enhancing the qualification of evaluators and their supervisors, these new requirements increase oversight and establish quality review criteria to increase consistency and assure ongoing quality improvement efforts.

I want to thank DBHDS staff, the Virginia Association of Community Services Boards and the Institute of Law Psychiatry and Public Policy at the University of Virginia for their work on various aspects of these enhancements.

All this will require significant changes and present some challenges. We recognize there will be a period of transition and we appreciate the commitment of the VACSB and its members to work with us on full implementation.

The new requirements are attached and will be available on the DBHDS website along with the required forms that support this new process. They are effective July 1, 2016.

We are also updating and revising on line training modules that must be completed by all Preadmission Screening Clinicians. You will receive separate notice when these are available. Individuals certified before this memorandum updating requirements, must complete any new or updated modules within 60 days of DBHDS posting them. Individuals undergoing their first certification must complete these before they will be certified.

c:     Emergency Service Managers  
       State Mental Health Hospital Directors  
       Kathy Drumwright, Interim Deputy Commissioner  
       Jennifer Faison, Executive Director, VACSB  
       Stacy Gill  
       Daniel Herr  
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