



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

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ALISON G. LAND,
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COMMISSIONER

v

To: Bill Howard, Director of Crisis Supports and Services
Mary Begor, Crisis Services Coordinator

From: Jae Benz, Director, DBHDS Office of Licensing

Date: November 22, 2021

Re: Request to utilize the Behavioral Health Link Assessment (BHL) as the standardized state assessment tool for licensed crisis stabilization services

The DBHDS Crisis Services office has requested the use of the BHL for both the initial and comprehensive assessment used by all licensed crisis stabilization programs. This tool will be initiated prior to or at admission to the service and with the participation of the individual and, as appropriate, the individual's authorized representative.

In accordance with 12VAC35-105-650, providers may utilize standardized state or federally sanctioned assessment tools that do not meet all the criteria outlined in 12VAC35-105-650 as long as the tool assesses the individual's health and safety issues and substantially meets the requirements of the regulation.

Over the past six months, the Office of Licensing met regularly with the Director of Crisis Supports and Services and the Crisis Services Coordinator. Discussions focused on the implementation of the BRAVO crisis service model as well as review of the licensing requirements for assessment, admission and discharge. Both the Director of Crisis Supports and the Crisis Services Coordinator are thoroughly versed in the new crisis model and are considered to be the Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) for the agency. They have reviewed the assessment tool with various workgroups, both internally and externally, and determined the proposed tool appropriately assesses the individual's health and safety issues and provides sufficient information in which to develop an individualized service plan.

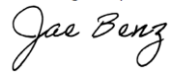
The Office of Licensing has reviewed the tool and determined it will meet the assessment needs of the individuals receiving crisis stabilization services while reducing undue administrative burdens.

Please note providers of short-term intensive services must still develop written policies for completing comprehensive assessments within the time frames appropriate for those services. The policy must define how assessments will be conducted and documented. It will be important that

providers receive clear instructions from the Crisis Services Office related to specific requirements you expect to see in those policies.

Providers receiving Medicaid payments should also ensure compliance with DMAS regulations and requirements related to assessments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jae Benz".

Jae Benz, Director
Office of Licensing
DBHDS