



# DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH POLICY/PROCEDURE

SUBJECT <b>SCHEDULING INITIAL MEDICATION SERVICES</b>	POLICY NO. <b>302.09</b>	EFFECTIVE DATE <b>04/27/2015</b>	PAGE <b>1 of 3</b>
APPROVED BY:  Director	SUPERSEDES <b>202.46 02/02/2015</b>	ORIGINAL ISSUE DATE <b>02/02/2015</b>	DISTRIBUTION LEVEL(S) <b>1, 2</b>

## PURPOSE

- 1.1 To establish a policy and procedure regarding requirements for the scheduling of initial medication services.
- 1.2 To inform Legal Entities of the policy and procedure in Section 1.1 above with the expectation that similar policy and associated procedures are established in their programs.

## DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 **Initial Clinical Appointment:** The first period of time scheduled by a program with a clinician for the purpose of assessment and associated care (Reference 1).
- 2.2 **Initial Medication Services:** A period of time scheduled with a psychiatrist or psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner for the purpose of initiating an assessment and associated medication services.
- 2.3 **Urgent Medication Services:** Presenting symptoms that:
  - 2.3.1 Are currently causing significant functional impairment;
  - 2.3.2 Would likely respond to particular medications; and
  - 2.3.3 Could result in further functional deterioration without medication.

## POLICY

- 3.1 Any client with a foreseeable need for medication services, as determined by standard screening, who keeps a scheduled initial clinical appointment shall be seen by a clinician who can provide the necessary medication services.



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## PROCEDURE

### 4.1 Requirements for the Scheduling of Initial Medication Services:

4.1.1 When the initial contact is made for an appointment with the mental health center (MHC), there should be a screening for indications of probable need for medication services by asking the following question and documenting the answer, "Is the client currently taking psychiatric medication for which a refill may be necessary?"

4.1.1.1 If the answer to the screening question above is affirmative, the scheduled initial clinical appointment shall include a scheduled initial medication assessment for purposes of addressing emergent medication needs.

4.1.2 In case an individual who did not screen positive for foreseeable medication service need during the contact for purposes of scheduling an initial appointment is determined at the scheduled initial clinical appointment to have an urgent need for medication assessment, he/she shall be scheduled by the MHC for assessment by a MHC clinician who can provide medication services to occur within five (5) business days from the initial clinical appointment unless no suitable resource is available at the MHC.

4.1.2.1 In circumstances in which no suitable resource is available at the MHC, the client shall be referred to an accessible alternative program at another MHC or a Psychiatric Urgent Care Center that can provide medication services that occur within five (5) business days.

- The referring provider shall document the appointment.

4.1.2.2 If no accessible alternative program can be located to provide the appointment within five (5) business days from the initial clinical appointment, a Notice of Action-E (NOA-E) shall be issued to the Medi-Cal beneficiary (Authority 1, Attachment 1).



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- 4.1.2.3 The District Chief shall be notified in circumstances where the initial medication service is not available at the MHC within five (5) business days from the initial clinical appointment.
- 4.1.2.4 The District Chief shall provide a monthly list to the Deputy Director of all individuals for whom a clinical appointment for urgent medication assessment was not available within the timeframe of five (5) business days after the initial mental health assessment was completed at the MHC and determine a plan of correction.

**AUTHORITY**

- 1. CCR, Title 9 § 1850.201(4)(e)

**ATTACHMENT (HYPERLINKED)**

- 1. [Notice of Action-E \(NOA-E\)](#)

**REFERENCE**

- 1. LACDMH Policy No. 302.07, Scheduling Initial Clinical Appointments and Associated Documentation

**RESPONSIBLE PARTY**

LACDMH Office of the Medical Director