



BARBARA FERRER, Ph.D., M.P.H., M.Ed.
Director

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MEGAN McCLAIRE, M.S.P.H.
Chief Deputy Director

DEBORAH ALLEN, Sc.D.
Deputy Director, Health Promotion Bureau

GARY TSAI, M.D.
Division Director
Substance Abuse Prevention and Control
1000 South Fremont Avenue, Building A-9 East, 3rd Floor, Box 34
Alhambra, California 91803
TEL (626) 299-4101 • FAX (626) 458-7637

www.publichealth.lacounty.gov

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SAPC INFORMATION NOTICE 22-12

June 29, 2022

TO: Los Angeles County Substance Use Disorder
Pregnant and Parenting Women Contracted Treatment Providers

FROM: Gary Tsai, M.D., Division Director #7
Substance Abuse Prevention and Control

**SUBJECT: INTEGRATING SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH SPECIALISTS
IN SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER TREATMENT SETTINGS PROJECT**

The Los Angeles County, Department of Public Health, Division of Substance Abuse Prevention and Control (DPH-SAPC), through funding received from the Coronavirus Response and Relief Appropriations Act (CRRSAA), developed the Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) Specialists staffing item, intended to be embedded into Pregnant and Parenting Women (PPW) substance use disorder (SUD) treatment settings to ensure integration of SRH services for patients in treatment.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

DPH-SAPC began working with the PPW network in March 2019 to ensure that meaningful conversations about sexual and reproductive health and pregnancy intention were taking place as part of the patient’s current treatment plan. PPW providers are being trained to use pregnancy intentionality tools to identify, assess, and better serve women through referrals and direct linkages to services. The SRH Specialist Project will co-locate part-time (0.5 Full-Time Equivalent [FTE]) staff that offer services to patients at PPW contracted treatment providers in Los Angeles County who have elected to participate in the Project. The SRH Specialists will receive focused training to assist patients in integrating their SRH needs with their SUD treatment goals through enhanced care coordination.

The SRH Specialist position may be filled by a registered or certified SUD counselor or a Health Educator with at least one year's experience providing SRH services.

The SRH Specialist will coordinate SRH services for patients at their PPW site, working closely with other SUD counselors and Licensed Practitioners of the Healing Arts (LPHA) who have completed SRH training to offer individualized care to patients in their decisions about their reproductive health needs, and to coordinate SRH services at their agency. In addition, the SRH Specialist will work with other trained staff at their agency to help patients access and navigate a comprehensive array of SRH services, support an integrated continuum of care, and assist with connecting patients with community partners and other ancillary services. For PPW agencies with multiple treatment sites, the SRH Specialist will ensure that SRH programming is developed and available to patients receiving treatment at all of the agency's PPW sites.

PROJECT TERM

Based on availability of funds, the project term covers July 1, 2021, through June 30, 2023.

PERSONS TO BE SERVED

In accordance with the Substance Abuse Block Grant Perinatal Practice Guidelines (PPG) requirements, all PPW providers must serve and treat the family as a unit and admit both women and their children into treatment services. All women who are in SUD treatment in PPW settings will be eligible for services provided by the SRH Specialist.

SPECIFIC SERVICES TO BE PROVIDED

As their agency's point person for working with SUD counselors to integrate SRH services into each patient's individualized SUD treatment plan, the SRH Specialist's responsibilities include:

1. Outreach and Engagement

Work with all SUD counselors and LPHAs who interact with PPW populations in treatment to ensure they are integrating discussions of patients' SRH needs with their substance use treatment needs.

2. SRH Education Services

Coordinate all SRH services for their agency related to each PPW participant's needs, including but not limited to: ensuring that agency staff are trained in assessing SRH patient needs; establishing relevant referral networks for family planning, prenatal and postpartum care; and coordinating with the SAPC SRH Services Manager for project updates by attending SRH Specialist meetings.

3. Client Screening, Appointment Scheduling, Reminders and Follow-Up

Work with SUD counselors to ensure that they initiate discussions with all patients about their SRH needs, provide patients with appropriate referrals depending on their individual needs, follow up with patients to remind them of their upcoming appointments and coordinate with them to provide transportation, if needed, and provide referrals to ancillary services and brief intervention services when indicated.

4. Service Navigation, Referral and Linkages

Act as a resource for staff when making referrals to external services (e.g., other SUD treatment agencies, community partner entities and health clinics), and assist individuals in navigating and linking to physical and mental health and social service systems of care to access needed services.

DOCUMENTATION AND REPORTING

The SRH Specialist must make sure all staff at their agency complete and submit the Reproductive Health data form and any other required elements in the electronic health record - Sage in a timeframe determined by DPH-SAPC, ensuring that all data elements, which include, but are not limited to demographics, screening, referrals, education sessions, and engagement, are complete and accurate. Late or non-submission of required documentation may delay approval of payments and reimbursement of services. Further guidance on documentation requirements will be provided by DPH-SAPC.

REIMBURSEMENT

Providers may bill for up to 20 hours of services each week for providing the SRH activities described at a staff hour rate of \$73.70/hour for each participating site. Providers must submit the *Integrating Sexual and Reproductive Health Specialist Invoice* (Attachment I) by the 10th of each month to receive reimbursement for incurred costs for the prior month. The invoice must include a narrative justification of activities conducted to support the costs. These services will be reimbursed on a monthly basis and although a cost report will be required, there will be no end of year cost settlement. The attached documents should be sent to Carina Dominguez cdominguez@ph.lacounty.gov and Teresa (Tere) De Anda tdeanda@ph.lacounty.gov.

START UP COSTS

During the initial period of project implementation in Fiscal Year 2021-2022, providers may be reimbursed for approved startup costs, including:

- Staff Recruitment & Hiring Costs
- Personnel Costs including development and training

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Startup costs will be billed via the *Integrating SRH Specialists in Treatment Settings Line-Item Reimbursement form* (Attachment II). All requests for reimbursement for start-up costs are subject to review and approval by DPH-SAPC. Additional information may be requested to ensure and confirm appropriateness of claims.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

For more information, please contact Elizabeth Norris-Walczak, PhD, Youth and Family Services, at enorris@ph.lacounty.gov.

GT:enw

Attachments