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**LME/MCO Communication Bulletin # J309**

Date: October 18, 2018

To: Local Management Entities/Managed Care Organizations (LME/MCOs)

From: Kathy Nichols, Associate Director of Services and Supports, DMH/DD/SAS  
Deb Goda, Behavioral Health Unit Manager, NC Medicaid

Subject: Submission of Individual Placement Support (IPS) Fidelity Evaluation Reports to the LME/MCO

This bulletin amends [Joint Communication Bulletin #J235](#) distributed February 14, 2017, regarding information on the timeline for IPS fidelity evaluations and guidance for contesting the preliminary fidelity report. This bulletin updates the timeline to reflect the following changes:

- **As of July 1, 2018, full IPS fidelity reports will be submitted to the LME/MCO at the same time the IPS provider is notified.** This is a change from when reports were sent only when an IPS team scored less than 74.

The Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Services (DMH/DD/SAS) believes it is critical for LME/MCOs to have access to full reports to identify quality improvement initiatives they can develop to support their network - improving the service they provide. It will also give LME/MCOs an opportunity to look at how their internal processes and procedures surrounding authorization, referral, oversight and monitoring impact their network.

- LME/MCOs will also be notified if an IPS team misses the data submission deadline prior to the scheduled fidelity evaluation. This information will allow LME/MCOs to provide additional monitoring related to fidelity proceedings.

DMH/DD/SAS continues to partner with the Institute of Best Practices at the UNC-Chapel Hill Center for Excellence in Community Mental Health on the growth of IPS. Fidelity evaluations are not only a part of the Transitions to Community Living Initiative, they are also a required part of the DMH/DD/SAS State funded IPS for Adult Mental Health/Adult Substance Use Service Definition and a critical component of quality improvement planning.

For our evaluators to complete their evaluations in a timely and accurate manner, they must have access to data both prior to, and if requested, after the on-site evaluation. Where noted, timelines

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involving days are business days as opposed to calendar days. Moving forward, it is expected that LME/MCOs and IPS providers adhere to this timeline:

Step or Function	Timeframe for Completion/Submission	Responsible Party
IPS team is notified of upcoming evaluation	4-6 weeks before the on-site evaluation is scheduled	Fidelity Evaluation team
Pre-visit data and spreadsheets are completed and returned to the IPS evaluation team	2 weeks before the first day of the onsite evaluation	IPS team
LME/MCO is notified when IPS team does not meet the data submission deadline, as applicable	2 weeks before the first day of the onsite evaluation	DMHDDSAS Adult Mental Health (AMH) team staff
On-site Fidelity Evaluation	2-day on-site review	IPS providers and partners, and Fidelity Evaluation team
IPS preliminary fidelity score is provided to the IPS team*	15 days after the completion of the onsite evaluation	Fidelity Evaluation team
Draft IPS fidelity evaluation report is provided to the IPS team	30 days after the IPS preliminary fidelity score has been provided to the IPS team	Fidelity Evaluation team
IPS team review draft IPS fidelity evaluation report and option to contest up to three scoring points <sup>^</sup>	10 days after receipt of draft IPS fidelity evaluation report	IPS team
Complete, final evaluation report is sent to the IPS team <sup>^</sup>	Report not contested: 5 days Report contested: 15 days	Fidelity Evaluation team
Full fidelity evaluation report will be sent to the LME/MCO	At the time the final evaluation is sent to the IPS team	DMH/DD/SAS AMH team staff

\*If an evaluation team finds they need information after the on-site review has been completed, the IPS team has five business days after the information is requested to submit it to the lead evaluator. This process can lengthen the time to receive the preliminary score and full report.

<sup>^</sup>All IPS teams will be provided 10 business days to review their report and have the opportunity to contest no more than three scoring points with objective data. Any data to support contested scoring points must be provided at the end of the 10 business day review. If no information is submitted during this timeframe, the score will be finalized. If a team contests any items, it will add 15 days to the receipt of the full, final report.

It is ultimately the IPS team's responsibility to ensure that the fidelity evaluation team has timely access to all data required and requested. If evaluators do not have access to the above listed data sets in the timeframes identified, the evaluation team will complete their scoring based on the information they have. Please note that the Timeframe for Completion/Submission is a requirement, not a recommendation. LME/MCOs will be notified if an IPS team does not submit the required and requested data by the submission deadline.

If you have any questions, please contact Stacy A. Smith at [stacy.smith@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:stacy.smith@dhhs.nc.gov) or 919-715-2368.

Previous bulletins can be accessed at: <http://www.ncdhhs.gov/divisions/mhddsas/joint-communication-bulletins>

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