COMPETENCIES, SKILLS AND QUALITIES FOR HBEX ENROLLMENT/CALL CENTER STAFF:
HOW BEST TO SERVE UNDERSERVED AND VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

We are proposing four sets of core/essential competencies for persons working in new HBEX registration sites and call centers; within each set there are more specific skills and qualities that are described. While some are general competencies that apply broadly, others are specific to the needs of individuals/families with substance use and mental health treatment needs.

CiMH has developed a curriculum to address the training needs of this new workforce. It is divided into four modules that parallel the competencies specified below. This curriculum/instruction can be provided to trainees in 3-4 hours of classroom or webinar instruction

Basic Knowledge of Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders

Enrollment staff should be able to

- understand the prevalence of various mental health disorders and substance use disorders in the U.S. and the impact of stigma in their communities;
- understand that mental illness is a real organic disease from which recovery is possible;
- understand the etiology of substance use disorders and their classification as a treatable brain disorder from which one can recover.
- appreciate the complexity inherent in understanding mental illness and addiction along with other co-occurring conditions;
- explain simply how mental health and substance use disorder parity and equity laws as they apply to qualified health plans;
- explain simply the scope of mental health and substance use disorder benefits typically available to consumers by QHPs and public coverage option;
- work with the eligibility requirements, exceptions, and processes, for multiple insurance product lines that patients may be moving between;

Ability to Reach Out and Engage Clients

Enrollment staff should be able to

- listen nonjudgmentally using active listening skills that include confirming understanding;
- create a comfortable, safe and respectful environment where the individual feels free to divulge sensitive or difficult personal information;
- utilize approaches to outreach that have been found to be effective in engaging hard to reach populations;
- work in non-traditional settings as guided by leaders of diverse communities;

Sensitivity to the Role of Culture/Diversity in the population seeking help

Enrollment staff should be able to

- be respectful of and responsive to the health beliefs, practices and cultural and linguistic needs of diverse and vulnerable populations
- consider the role of cultural, social, and behavioral factors in the accessibility, availability, acceptability and delivery of benefits enrollment services.
- know the cultural and linguistic composition of the communities they serve;
- recognize community linkages and relationships among multiple factors affecting health;

Generalized Work Skills

Enrollment staff should be able to

- respect the ability and right of individuals to make their own decisions;
- understand complex topics and communicate the information in plain language;
- solve problems quickly and capably;
- practice good judgment and be willing to ask for help and/or advice with complex issues from supervisor;
- be patient with complex processes and procedures, and persistent with processes that are redundant;
- innovate, and develop rationales for assisting exceptional circumstances into traditional processes;
- direct and assist the applicant in gathering needed documentation.