**Service Referral Policy**

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| **CONTEXT** | Persons experiencing unsheltered homelessness may experience some ambivalence around being connected to services. Many have traumatic histories of interacting with the services systems while others may be in early stages of change regarding the need for assistance in certain areas. The policy below is to educate and assist outreach staff regarding how most effectively to make a service referral that truly assists people experiencing unsheltered homelessness.  |
| **POLICY** | Outreach workers will accompany and remain with consumers on intake and assessment visits at healthcare agencies including behavioral health or primary care clinics as needed and follow up with agency personnel regarding outcome of visit.  |
| **PURPOSE** | To ensure best possible use of available resources by people experiencing unsheltered homelessness on their own behalf. |
| **PROCEDURE** | When workers encounter an individual, who is ready to take the next step, support should be offered, whenever possible, to help solidify consumer connection to services. 1. Outreach workers will assess the need for remaining with people who they have referred to healthcare intake sites for healthcare treatment. If such a need has been determined to be in the person’s best interest, wherever possible, the outreach worker will arrange to remain at the site as long as necessary to support the person’s connection to needed services.
2. The worker will contact dispatch to inform them of their whereabouts and ascertain the availability of alternate teams to meet response need.
3. The outreach worker will follow up the next day to assure appropriate placement and connection to services, and will remain available for further contact with the agency on the person’s behalf, as needed.
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