

## FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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This information was put together by Process Improvement Team 2 as part of the Integrated Family Services Plan. To learn more about Integrated Family Services, please contact the Lehigh County Information and Referral Unit at (610) 782-3200 or visit our website at [www.lehighcounty.org](http://www.lehighcounty.org).

*Reference: Suggestions for parents when your child receives a diagnosis within the autism disorders—Lehigh County.*



Helpful suggestions for parents whose child has been diagnosed with a mental health illness.

County of Lehigh  
Department of Human Services  
Lehigh County Government Center  
17 South 7th Street  
Allentown, PA 18101

Phone: 610-782-3200  
[www.lehighcounty.org](http://www.lehighcounty.org)

Tips from  
Parents for  
Parents



Helpful suggestions for parents whose child has been diagnosed with a mental health illness.

Lehigh County Children's Mental Health Unit

## Helpful Suggestions

It is very difficult and emotionally stressful for parents when their son or daughter has been diagnosed with a mental health illness. Parents' main concern is keeping their child safe while seeking the appropriate treatment. At times parents are faced with the difficult decision of taking their son or daughter to a hospital emergency room for a possible psychiatric inpatient hospitalization; or an out of home mental health treatment facility.

If your son or daughter should ever require a psychiatric inpatient hospitalization or an out of home mental health placement, it is important to be prepared in advance. The hospital emergency room, psychiatric hospital, and other mental health treatment agencies usually request similar information. Being prepared can help your child receive the appropriate level of care, and reduce the stress you may experience. **Keeping a file of the necessary information may be helpful.**

If you choose to share medical information with others remember that the information is private and confidential and should only be shared with individuals who are assisting you in the treatment of your child.

## TIPS FROM PARENTS FOR PARENTS

- Keep a calendar of appointments. Be prompt and reliable. Missing or being late for appointments can give the impression that you are not committed to your child's treatment.
- Call prior to appointments to find out what records, information, insurance referrals, and prescriptions you will need for the appointment.
- Don't burn bridges! There is a difference between being assertive and aggressive. Try to keep your composure at all times for the sake of your child. If you feel that you may lose your temper at a meeting or appointment, take someone along who can help you keep your emotions in check.
- It may be helpful to seek the assistance of an advocate.
- Find a support system for yourself. Attend a local support group or network with a parent. If needed seek therapeutic support for yourself. This information can be obtained on the County website.
- Accept help from family and friends. If someone offers to baby-sit, GO out! Access tips for selecting appropriate child care at the following: [http://www.lehighcounty.org/human/hs.cfm?doc=cy\\_tipsforchildcare.htm](http://www.lehighcounty.org/human/hs.cfm?doc=cy_tipsforchildcare.htm)
- If you have other children, try to spend one on one time with them. Try not to spend all of your time on the phone, online or talking about your child's diagnosis.
- Keep a current photo/photo identification of your child.
- Keep a current photo copy of information regarding your child's medical insurance plan(s) in your portfolio.
- Review MH services on Lehigh County website, [http://www.lehighcounty.org/human/hs.cfm?doc=if\\_behavioralhealthservices.htm](http://www.lehighcounty.org/human/hs.cfm?doc=if_behavioralhealthservices.htm).
- Under Act 147 a parent or guardian can consent to outpatient mental health examination & treatment for minors 14-17 years of age.

- Parent can consent to inpatient mental health examination and treatment for minors 14–17 years of age on the recommendation of a physician who has examined the minor. For more details visit; <http://jlc.org/files/publications/consent2ndedition.pdf>

**Primary Insurance:** Private insurance through parents' employer(s)

Group Number  
ID Number  
Effective Date  
Name of Subscriber  
Managed Care Organization (MCO) for Physical Health Plan  
MCO for Behavioral Health Plan  
Is there a deductible? Is there a co-pay?  
Does the insurance plan require a pre-authorization or a referral?  
Does your child have a Primary Care Physician (PCP)?  
PCP name, address, and telephone number  
Prescription Plan Information

**Secondary Insurance:** Medical Assistance Insurance

Recipient Number on Access card  
Member Number  
Card Issue Number on Access card  
Your child's Social Security Number  
Managed Care Organization (MCO) for Physical Health Plan: (Gateway, Med Plus+, AmeriHealth Mercy)  
MCO for Behavioral Health Plan: Magellan Behavioral Health

**HIPP: Health Insurance Premium Payment Program**

Active MA recipients who have access to medical insurance through employment are referred to HIPP to conduct a cost analysis. If the available employer health insurance is determined to be cost effective, the client is required to participate in the HIPP Program. The client maintains the ACCESS card to be used as Fee for Service, but the employer insurance is used as the primary medical resource. For additional information visit, [www.dpw.state.pa.us](http://www.dpw.state.pa.us).