

The Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services A Healthcare Service Agency

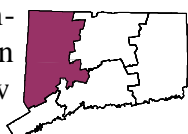
John G. Rowland
Governor

Thomas A. Kirk Jr., Ph.D.
Commissioner

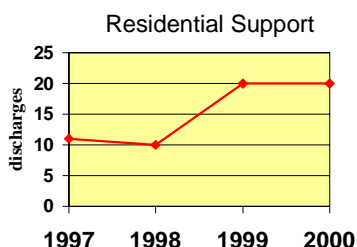
Creating Access

Utilization Management (UM) is a clinical process for reviewing the appropriateness of a person's treatment and support services. UM matches people with the right services, makes sure they receive them promptly, and makes sure that when a different level of care is needed, the proper adjustments are made in that person's service plan. The previous care level is then made available for someone else who needs it. The Western Connecticut Mental Health Network (WCMHN) is a good example of an effective UM program.

WCMHN coordinates clinical, fiscal and administrative oversight for DMHAS supported mental health programs in the western part of Connecticut. WCMHN works with three state operated Local Mental Health Authorities, twenty-eight private non-profit agencies and five general hospitals to provide mental health services to more than 5,000 people at any time. WCMHN started its UM program in 1997. Clinicians review each person's care at regular intervals based on criteria written in concert with service providers, and approved by the WCMHN Executive Committee. An established appeal process is available if the person receiving services or the service provider disagrees with the UM clinician's decision. Since its start, WCMHN's UM program has issued 11,000 authorizations for 3,000 persons in 56 programs.

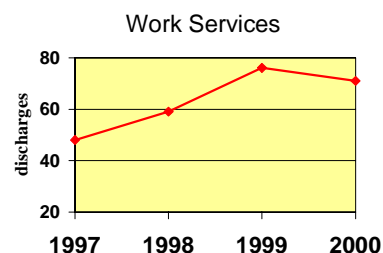


Measuring Utilization Management at WCMHN



Discharge rates in selected programs

Upon initiation of UM, discharges increased, then leveled off, and did not return to previous low level. This has allowed more persons to access residential support and work services.



Persons who no longer need these services will move into a more appropriate level of care. For example, a former residential support client may move into independent living or may move into a supported apartment program that is more intensive than residential support.

Next Steps



The WCMHN is collaborating with the Office of the Commissioner in the process of including its efforts into the DMHAS **state-wide UM initiatives**. Replicating this effective UM process throughout the state will contribute to two major strategic goals set by Commissioner Kirk – establishing a **state-wide quality of care** management system and improving the organizational and **management effectiveness** of DMHAS.