



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

## OFFICE OF COMPREHENSIVE SERVICES

*Administering the Comprehensive Services Act for At-Risk Youth and Families*

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### **ADMINISTRATIVE MEMO #14-06**

**TO:** CPMT CHAIRS  
CSA COORDINATORS

**FROM:** SUSAN CUMBIA CLARE

**DATE:** July 30, 2014

**SUBJECT:** STANDARD SERVICE NAMES

In March 2013 the State Executive Council established a workgroup to identify standard service names and descriptions to be utilized statewide to report services purchased under the Comprehensive Services Act. The workgroup completed its task and reported to the SEC in March 2014. The SEC expressed its support for implementation of standard service names.

The need to standardize service names across localities was highlighted in part by a proof-of-concept project in which data on CSA purchased services were collected from seven localities. Analysis of that small subset of data revealed in excess of 4,000 service names. This extreme number was attributed not only to the common practice of using an open text field in the data system used to track purchased services, but also to the wide variance in service names used across the local CSA programs. Additionally, the use of a single, generic name to describe widely dissimilar services was identified as a common issue across the state.

As the Office of Comprehensive Services has initiated the routine collection, integration, and analysis of data regarding client-specific services, the need to standardize service names and ensure common definitions is essential to ensure meaningful analysis and reporting. The comprehensive list of service names and definitions, created by the workgroup and refined through consultation with partner state agencies and local stakeholders, is attached. It is important that localities understand the following regarding use of these service names:

1. The description of each service is designed to distinguish the uniqueness of the service from all other services, while at the same time be broad enough to allow flexibility to match the

service to a particular child's strengths and needs. For example, an outpatient therapy using a particular modality, such as "art therapy," would be reported under the service name "Outpatient Services."

2. Where particular limiting requirements are applicable to a service, e.g., licensing or eligibility requirements, those requirements are reflected either in the definition or through a footnote referencing the regulatory authority.
3. There exists an "Other" service name to enable reporting of a service that is of such a unique nature that it does not fit an identified service name and definition. Reporting of a service as "Other" is expected to be infrequent and will be monitored on a regular basis. OCS will, on an annual basis, add a service name to the list if there is sufficient evidence to suggest it is a commonly used service that cannot be appropriately reported under an existing service name. Adequate notice will be provided to enable updating of local data reporting systems prior to implementation of any new service name.
4. Local governments will be required to begin reporting using only the standard service names effective July 1, 2015. This implementation date provides time for localities to adjust local practices and update data reporting systems to implement use of the standard names. It is anticipated that local data systems will include the service names in a "drop down" list to ensure the integrity of data submission. OCS will implement data quality standards to reject service names that do not conform to the standard service names.

A review of all data elements reported to OCS is currently underway and recommendations to establish consistency in reporting across localities will be forthcoming. The standardization of data, including the use of standard service names, will enhance the integrity of data analysis and reporting. Resulting data analyses will increase state and local capacity to make data-informed decisions to improve program performance.

Questions about the standard service names may be directed by e-mail to [csa.office@csa.virginia.gov](mailto:csa.office@csa.virginia.gov) or by phone to one of the program consultants listed below:

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