

<b>CHELAN-DOUGLAS RSN/PIHP POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL</b>		Chapter:	1.8
Title:	INTRODUCTION AND ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES	Page:	1 of 3
		Date Effective:	July 1, 2002
Subject:	STAFF QUALIFICATIONS AND MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL REQUEST	Date Revised:	August 6, 2007
		Authorizing Signature:	

**AUTHORITY:** Guiding Principle(s): Effectively Managed  
WAC 388-865-0150, Definitions--Mental Health Professional  
WAC 388-865-0260, Mental Health Professionals and Specialists  
WAC 388-865-0265, Mental Health Professional--Exception  
WAC 388-865-0405, Competency Requirements for Staff  
RCW 71.24, Community Mental Health Services Act  
DSHS Title XIX Contract and Federal Waiver

**SCOPE:** This policy applies to Chelan-Douglas Regional Support Network/Prepaid Inpatient Health Plan (CDRSN/PIHP) and its contractors (agencies/providers), and subcontractors (referred to as contractors or agencies or providers throughout this policy).

**PURPOSE:** This Policy provides standards and a mechanism for individuals to obtain status as a mental health professional under WAC 388-865-0150, upon review of a written request from Provider Network agencies to the CDRSN/PIHP.

**DEFINITIONS:** A. Clinical Services. Those direct age and culturally appropriate consumer services which either assess a consumer's condition, abilities, or problems; or provide therapeutic interventions which are designed to ameliorate psychiatric symptoms and improve a consumer's functioning.

B. Mental Health Professional. 1) A psychiatrist, psychologist, psychiatric nurse or social worker as defined in chapter 71.05 and 71.34 RCW; 2) A person with a masters degree or further advanced degree in counseling or one of the social sciences from an accredited college or university. Such person shall have, in addition, at least two years of experience in direct treatment of persons with mental illness or emotional disturbance, such experience gained under the supervision of a mental health professional; 3) A person who meets the waiver criteria of RCW 71.24.260, which was granted prior to 1986; 4) A person who had an approved waiver to perform the duties of a mental health profession that was requested by the regional support network and granted by the mental health division prior to July 1, 2001; or 5) A

person who has been granted a time-limited exception of the minimum requirements of a mental health professional by the mental health division consistent with WAC 388-865-0265.

POLICY:

A. CDRSN/PIHP affirms the value of experienced and appropriately educated staff to deal in the direct treatment of persons with mental illnesses. While formal academic degrees in behavioral sciences do not ensure clinical competency, they are one measure of a knowledge base in understanding this population.

B. Staff Qualifications. Contractors shall assure all clinical services are provided by a mental health professional (MHP) or under the supervision of an MHP.

C. The CDRSN/PIHP may request from Mental Health Division an exception of the requirements of a mental health professional for a person with less than a master's degree level of training. Mental Health Division may grant an exception of the minimum requirements on a time-limited basis and only with a demonstrated need for need for an exception under the following conditions:

- 1) The CDRSN/PIHP will submit a written request to MHD requesting an exception which includes the following: a) a demonstration of the need for an exception; b) The name of the person for whom the exception is being requested; c) The functions the person will be performing; d) a written statement from the CDRSN/PIHP that the person is qualified to perform the required function based on verification of required education and training, including: i) Bachelor of Arts or Science Degree from an accredited college or university; ii) Course work or training in making diagnoses, assessments, and developing treatment plans; and iii) Documentation of at least five years of direct treatment of persons with mental illness under the supervision of a mental health professional.
- 2) The written request shall assure that periodic supervisory evaluations of the individual's job performance are conducted.
- 3) The written request includes a plan of action assign the individual becomes fully qualified within two years from the date the exception is approved by MHD. The CDRSN may apply for

renewal of the exception. The exception may not be transferred to another RSN or to be used by an individual other than the one named in the request for exception letter.

SEE ALSO:      Mental Health Professional Waiver Request form  
                  Mental Health Professional Waiver Request Instruction Sheet  
                  Glossary of Terms and Acronyms