

## NORTHCARE NETWORK

<b>POLICY TITLE:</b> Customer Education & Marketing Orientation	<b>CATEGORY:</b> Customer Services/Recipient Rights	
<b>EFFECTIVE DATE:</b> 2/6/13	<b>BOARD APPROVAL DATE:</b> 2/6/13	
<b>REVIEWED DATE:</b> 10/22/25	<b>REVISION(S) TO POLICY STATEMENT:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<b>OTHER REVISION(S):</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>RESPONSIBLE PARTY:</b> Customer Services Specialist	<b>CEO APPROVAL DATE:</b> 11/4/25 Megan Rooney, CEO	

### **APPLIES To**

NorthCare Network Personnel  
Member CMHSPs  
SUD Providers

### **POLICY**

It is the policy of NorthCare Network and all Network Providers to ensure that approved informational materials are available throughout the communities it serves in places frequented by its beneficiaries to educate them about Specialty Mental Health and Substance Use services available to them and how to access those services.

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to outline requirements to ensure that all customer educational materials (both written and on the NorthCare Network website) and other general written communication accurately and clearly represent the activities/services provided by NorthCare Network and Network Affiliates. Documents, as appropriate, will indicate that they were paid for with funds from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

### **DEFINITIONS**

1. ***Customer Education Materials:*** written brochures and flyers that detail what the Prepaid Inpatient Health Plan can do and how to access services.
2. ***Marketing:*** Marketing and advertising practices are defined as those activities used by NorthCare Network to educate the public, provide information to the community, and increase awareness of services, and recruit employees or contractual providers.
3. ***NorthCare Network Customer Handbook:*** A written publication that details to the beneficiary in an understandable manner their behavioral health benefits, how to access care, who the network providers are, how beneficiaries can make complaints, file grievances and appeals and informs the beneficiaries of their rights and responsibilities.
4. ***NorthCare Network Provider Directory:*** The contact information and services offered by Providers that are part of NorthCare Network are listed in the Provider Directory; paper directories are updated at least monthly. The most recent version can be located on the NorthCare Network website: [www.northcarenetwork.org](http://www.northcarenetwork.org)

5. **Plain Language:** Communication that uses short words and sentences, common terms instead of medical jargon, and focuses on the essential information customers need to understand. All attempts will be made to develop forward facing materials in a 6.9 grade reading level.
6. **Health Literacy:** The degree to which individuals have the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health information and services needed to make appropriate decisions regarding their health.

## **REFERENCES**

- Balanced Budget Act
- MDHHS Policies & Practices Guidelines – Customer Service Standards  
[https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/0,5885,7-339-71550\\_2941\\_4868\\_4900---,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/0,5885,7-339-71550_2941_4868_4900---,00.html)
- Medicare Managed Care Regulations Chapter 4 Section 110.2.4

## **HISTORY**

REVISION DATE: 9/12/13, 11/27/13, 5/19/14, 8/27/14, 4/13/16, 12/20/17, 10/23/18, 7/16/19, 7/19/21, 5/26/22, 4/19/23, 8/26/24, 10/22/25

REVIEW DATE: 1/30/13, 9/12/13, 11/27/13, 5/19/14, 8/27/14, 5/27/15, 4/13/16, 2/21/17, 12/20/17, 10/23/18, 7/16/19, 7/28/20, 7/19/21, 5/26/22, 4/19/23, 8/26/24, 10/22/25

CEO APPROVAL: 1/30/13, 9/12/13, 11/27/13, 5/22/14, 8/27/14, 6/2/15, 5/16/16, 3/8/17, 1/8/18, 11/6/18, 9/16/19, 8/4/20, 8/3/21, 6/9/22, 5/2/23, 9/3/24, 11/4/25

BOARD APPROVAL: 2/6/13

## **PROCEDURES**

- A. Each new beneficiary to the region will be given a NorthCare Network Customer Handbook at the time of intake orienting them to the covered services, how to access the services, a statement of their rights and responsibilities including the right to Person Centered Planning, Grievance and Appeals Process including numbers to call if they have questions and offered a list of network providers.
- B. NorthCare Network will implement safeguards to ensure that all Customer marketing, information, and other general communications material accurately and clearly represent the activities/services provided by NorthCare Network and delegated entities.
  1. All marketing, informational and general communication materials will accurately represent:
    - a. Benefit plans
    - b. Participating provider availability and accessibility
    - c. Plan coverage, including any exclusions and limitations.
    - d. Administrative requirements
  2. Materials that are routinely created by NorthCare Network (for example conference brochures or newsletters) will be reviewed by the subject matter expert for accuracy and other NorthCare Network staff as deemed necessary.
  3. Marketing, information, and communication materials intended to be distributed to beneficiaries or potential beneficiaries will be reviewed by the appropriate standing Customer Service Committee. Determination of the clarity and accuracy of the materials will be documented in the committee minutes.

4. If the materials are determined to be appropriate for distribution, the materials will then be printed and distributed to appropriate outlets (e.g., Member CMHSPs).
  5. If materials require additional editing it will be documented, and correction will be implemented. Once materials are corrected based on feedback, the materials will be reviewed again by the Customer Service Committee prior to distribution.
  6. If the materials/information are required to be available in an electronic format the following will be applied:
    - a. It must be in a form that is readily accessible,
    - b. It must be on the NorthCare's website in a location that is prominent and readily accessible,
    - c. it must be in an electronic form which can be electronically retained and printed,
    - d. NorthCare must inform the customer that the information is available in paper form without charge upon request and provide it upon request within five (5) business days.
- C. NorthCare Network Customer Services Specialist will review all beneficiary materials for use of plain language.
1. Plain language will be used in beneficiary marketing materials and written materials provided to beneficiaries, when possible, to strive for a 6.9 grade reading level.
    - a. Customer documents will be scanned for reading level (Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level). If documents are above 6.9 grade reading level, documentation will be kept as to why the grading level cannot be met and/or the documents will be reviewed/edited by the NorthCare Customer Services Specialist with feedback from the NorthCare Network Customer Services Committee.
- D. NorthCare Network Customer Services Specialist will ensure that all marketing material produced for customers is in 12-point font.
- E. NorthCare Network Customer Services Specialist will maintain documentation of all approved and distributed material for monitoring and tracking of the material. The Customer Service Specialist will review the material at least annually to monitor all the approved existing materials for accuracy. If the materials become outdated, otherwise misrepresent NorthCare Network or delegate services, or other problems with the material are detected, the NorthCare Network Customer Services Specialist will take immediate action to correct or rescind the material as needed.
1. Each Member CMHSP will be responsible for keeping the places in the community they designate supplied with NorthCare Network marketing materials.
  2. The NorthCare Network Customer Service Specialist is responsible for having the materials designed and disseminated to each Member CMHSPs.

- F. NorthCare Network will ensure that all individuals receiving Specialty Mental Health services in the region are issued a current NorthCare Network Customer Handbook and offered a list of approved providers at intake for services, or no longer than three (3) business days after a request is made for one. The NorthCare Network Customer Handbook and the Member CMHSP Provider Directory will also be given to individuals receiving services no less than annually at the Individual Plan of Service meeting.
1. All NorthCare Network Member CMHSPs and designated network providers will present a NorthCare Network Customer Handbook at Intake and annually and answer questions, as necessary. The Handbook is also available at any time, upon request.
- G. Each Member CMHSPs will ensure that current NorthCare Network marketing/education materials are placed at sites where beneficiaries may frequent, at minimum:
1. Drop In Centers
  2. All NorthCare Network's network provider facilities within the coverage area
  3. Customer Services will mail materials to any person within the coverage area who requests such within three (3) business days.
- H. The NorthCare Network Customer Service Specialist will ensure that the NorthCare Network Customer Handbook and marketing materials are understandable to beneficiaries and contain what they need by:
1. Including beneficiary suggestions from Satisfaction surveys or other communications.
  2. Including the NorthCare Network Customer Service Committee in a review of the NorthCare Network Customer Handbook annually.
- I. The NorthCare Network Customer Handbook will be updated and approved as needed. The Provider Directory will be updated according to the Provider Directory Policy and posted to the NorthCare Network website at: [www.northcarenetwork.org](http://www.northcarenetwork.org)
1. The NorthCare Network Customer Services Specialist will review the Customer Service Standards in the MDHHS/PIHP Contract annually and include the changes in the most current edition of the NorthCare Network Customer Handbook.
  2. The NorthCare Network Customer Service Committee will review the handbook more often, or as needed, if there are significant changes to the document.
  3. The NorthCare Network Customer Services Specialist will ensure that handbooks are available in print, and an audio version is available on the NorthCare Network website at: [www.northcarenetwork.org](http://www.northcarenetwork.org)