CHAPTER 2: Site Staffing

Policy: Each site shall demonstrate that it has an adequate staffing model for assuring that all Waiver services are provided. Certain staff functions, responsibilities and qualifications must be met to fulfill the program's assurances to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) that safeguards have been taken to protect the health and welfare of the participants. Failure to meet these assurances could result in recovery of funds.

Modifications to the staffing model or staff qualifications require written CDA approval prior to implementation.

Purpose: This chapter outlines the minimum qualifications, functions and responsibilities for staff that provide services to MSSP participants. This chapter also encompasses paid and unpaid support staff criteria, the exemption process and enrollment levels.

References:

- Home and Community-Based Services Waiver #0141.R07.00, Appendix C: Participant Services. Quality Improvement: Qualified Providers
- CDA Standard Agreement (Site Contract)

2.000 MSSP Staff

2.010 Minimum Qualifications

The following qualifications apply to care management staff (including outside vendors, such as temporary agencies) who may provide temporary care management services to MSSP participants.

2.010.1 Site Director

Bachelor's degree in administration, a health or human services specialty or related field, and managerial or administrative oversight experience.

2.010.2 Supervising Care Manager (SCM)

Master's degree in social work, nursing, psychology, counseling, gerontology, sociology, public health, health care administration, or rehabilitation and two years' experience working directly with frail older adults. The candidate should demonstrate expertise and ability as a care manager, as evidenced by experience successfully carrying out these job duties and ability to supervise and train staff.

2.010.3 Social Work Care Manager (SWCM)

Bachelor's degree in social work, psychology, counseling, rehabilitation, gerontology, sociology, or related field, plus two years' experience working with frail older adults.

2.010.4 Nurse Care Manager (NCM)
California Department of Consumer Affairs Board of Registered Nursing license that is current and in good standing, plus one year of clinical nursing experience, preferably with frail older adults or one year of case management experience.

2.010.5 Care Manager Aide (CMA)
Two years' experience working with frail older adults or a Bachelor's degree in a human services discipline.

2.020 Functions and Responsibilities

2.020.1 Site Director
The Site Director has overall responsibility for the operation of the local MSSP site. The Site Director shall:

- Maintain overall responsibility for ensuring the day-to-day operations and compliance with program, Waiver and CDA Standard Agreement standards.
- Define lines of authority and develop the roles and parameters of responsibility for site staff to ensure clear lines of responsibility, equitable workloads, and adequate supervision.

2.020.2 Supervising Care Manager (SCM)
Under the direction of the Site Director, the SCM is responsible for providing clinical oversight to ensure all care management activities and documentation meet CDA Standard Agreement and Waiver requirements. The SCM position combines both administrative duties and clinical supervision responsibilities. The SCM's primary responsibilities include:

- Supervision of care management staff.
- Recommend and implement policy changes.
- Community outreach.
- Review and approval of all participant care plans.
- Verification of monthly documentation of care management activities.
- Oversight and authorization of purchases utilizing Waiver Services including verification that all other resources have been exhausted.
- Monitoring and tracking of waiver expenditures.
- Management of vendor issues.
- Implementation and evaluation of the effectiveness of site Quality Assurance processes to ensure continuous quality improvement, in collaboration with the Site Director.

2.020.3 Social Work Care Manager (SWCM)
The SWCM is responsible for the following activities:

- Conducting assessments and reassessments.
- Collaborating and consulting with the NCM in the development of the participant's individualized care plan.

- Arranging, coordinating, and verifying services/interventions identified on the care plan.
- Monitoring of participant's needs and provisions in the care plan.
- Identifying and developing support systems for the participant.
- Ensuring participant record documentation meets program requirements.
- Ensuring that prior to purchasing and authorizing Waiver Services all other resources have been exhausted.

2.020.4 Nurse Care Manager (NCM)

The NCM is responsible for the following activities:

- Predetermining level of care.
- Conducting assessments and/or reassessments.
- Collaborating and consulting with the SWCM in the development of the participant's individualized care plan.
- Implementing the services detailed in the care plan.
- Monitoring of participant's needs and provisions in the care plan.
- Identifying and developing support systems for the participant.
- Collaborating with physicians and other health professionals.
- Ensuring participant record documentation meets program requirements.
- Ensuring that prior to purchasing and authorizing Waiver Services, all other resources have been exhausted.

2.020.5 Care Manager Aide (CMA)

The CMA position function is defined by the site but may include a combination of administrative and data entry tasks as well as components of care management. The CMA may **assist** in the care management process under the supervision of the SCM but is not the primary care manager and is precluded from conducting re/assessments or signing off on the care plan.

The site may determine if, under the supervision of the SCM, the CMA may perform in the following care management activities:

- Conduct the initial intake/screen on MSSP applicants.
- Complete the intake and application process.
- Provide information and assistance to the participant as needed.
- Purchase and deliver items requested by the primary care manager.
- Complete monthly care management contacts.
- Complete Quarterly Contacts.
- Document activities in the participant record.

2.030 Requesting an Exemption to Minimum Qualifications for Care Management Staff

If efforts to recruit qualified applicants for a staff vacancy have been unsuccessful, the site may request an exemption to hire a candidate who does not meet the minimum

qualifications. This request must be submitted to and approved by CDA **prior** to extending an offer to hire.

2.030.1 Prerequisites for an Exemption

A site must first submit evidence of recruitment efforts.

2.030.2 Procedure for Requesting an Exemption

Contact CDA to discuss potential exemption request. A formal exemption request must include all of the following:

- The candidate's resume.
- The appropriate Orientation Checklist, if applicable (Appendix 53 or 56).
- Documentation detailing the recruitment process.
- An outline of the Training and Development Plan (Appendix 52 or 55).

2.030.3 CDA Exemption Approval Process

Submission should be made to the site's assigned CDA analyst.

CDA will acknowledge receipt of the request for the staff exemption and provide a response within two business days.

2.030.4 Duration of Exemption

The exemption will remain in effect for the duration of the Training and Development plan. The exempted employee must be listed on the Quarterly Report form with documentation regarding the status of the Training and Development plan.

CDA retains the right to rescind an exemption at any time program review findings demonstrate that the exempted employee has not complied with minimum program standards.

2.100 Unpaid Staff

2.100.1 Student Interns

Although not a funded staff position under the MSSP contract, sites offer graduate and undergraduate student internship assignments in collaboration with institutions of higher education.

Student interns doing casework must be supervised directly by the MSSP Site Director, Supervising Care Manager, or the Social Work or Nurse Care Manager. The supervising staff must countersign any casework documented by an intern.

Student interns in administrative assignments will be supervised by staff consistent with their field placement.

Student interns must be provided with Security Awareness Training and follow agency protocols regarding confidentiality (Chapter 7, Section 7.110, CDA Privacy and Information Security Awareness Training).

2.100.2 Volunteers

Volunteers may be utilized in a variety of positions. Assignments should be commensurate with the educational level and demonstrated skills and abilities of the individual volunteer. Successful utilization of a volunteer is dependent upon the ability of site staff to provide adequate supervision and oversight. The supervising staff must countersign any casework documented by a volunteer.

Volunteers must be provided with Security Awareness Training and follow agency protocols regarding confidentiality.

2.300 Ratio

MSSP operates with a ratio of 40 participants to one care manager (40:1). The acceptable range for the ratio is 38:1 to 42:1. Sites are not allowed to permanently operate at a different participant to care manager ratio without prior approval from CDA. CDA recognizes that there are normal fluctuations in monthly enrollment levels and temporary events may result in varying ratios for a short period of time. CDA will consider site-specific circumstances (e.g., care management positions that are not funded by MSSP, NCMs that do not carry a caseload, etc.) when determining whether it is acceptable that a site operates outside the approved ratio.
The ratio is computed by counting all care management staff positions and dividing that number into the funded slots. Care management staff includes social workers, nurses and case aides that perform care management activities.

To obtain an accurate ratio, the following guidelines may apply in certain situations:

- Care management positions funded by other resources must also be included in the ratio.

- For an individual that performs both care management and care management support duties, only the percentage of time assigned to care management duties is calculated into the ratio.

- The SCM is included in the ratio only if carrying cases for longer than six months.

For example: a site with 160 funded slots with a staffing model of three social workers and one nurse (a total of four care management staff) would have a ratio of 40:1. The ratio would remain 40:1 if the site employed three social workers and two half-time nurses. Although this model represents five care management staff, the full-time equivalent (FTE) totals four. If the enrollment level at a site with four care managers dropped to 152, however, the ratio would become 38:1.

The organizational chart, which is submitted with the Exhibit B Budget each Fiscal Year, should align with the positions on the budget as well as include the positions critical to the MSSP that are funded through other funding streams. The Quarterly Report tracks staffing throughout the year and automatically calculates the ratio based on data that is being reported. The Quarterly Report also provides a section for comments.