

## Attachment to MBHP Provider Alert 37

May 7, 2008

Dear Provider,

Beginning **November 30, 2008**, MBHP will require a uniform behavioral health assessment process that includes a comprehensive needs assessment employing the Child Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) tool. The mandate to use the CANS tool is consistent with the Commonwealth's plan under the newly-formed Children's Behavioral Health Interagency Initiative (CBHI) to more reliably identify the behavioral health needs of MassHealth Members under the age of 21.

The CANS tool provides a standardized way to organize information gathered during the comprehensive clinical evaluation that is part of a behavioral health assessment. The CANS is intended to be used as a *treatment decision support tool* for behavioral health providers serving MassHealth Members under the age of 21.

Two tasks must be completed in order for a behavioral health clinician to obtain access to the CANS tool:

- (1) The clinician must become trained and certified in the use of CANS;
- (2) The clinician's provider organization must designate the clinician to the EOHHS Virtual Gateway as a user.

These two tasks are independent of each other; both must be completed before November 30, 2008. We recommend clinicians and provider agencies act early in order to ensure readiness by the November deadline.

### *Clinician Training and Certification in CANS*

By November 30, 2008, clinicians who provide behavioral health assessment and treatment to MassHealth Members under the age of 21 in certain levels of care must be trained and certified in the use of CANS. Re-certification will be required every two years.

Clinicians who perform behavioral health diagnostic assessments (i.e. *psychiatric diagnostic interview examinations* - CPT code 90801) for members under the age of 21 in licensed mental health clinics and hospital outpatient departments are among those who must be trained in the CANS. The CANS will be reviewed and modified at minimum every 90 days when the treatment plan is reviewed and updated. Clinicians who provide ongoing treatment and who review treatment plans and the CANS will also be required to be trained and certified in the use of the CANS. Specific information related to other levels of care that will be impacted by this change will be sent to providers in a subsequent communication.

CANS certification training is now available at multiple locations throughout the Commonwealth. Training is provided by UMASS Medical School, free of charge. Free

Continuing Education Units (CEU) credits are offered. On-line, web-based training will also be available beginning this summer. However, providers are encouraged to take advantage of the comprehensive, in-person training opportunities if they can.

An on-line, web-based examination will be required in order to become certified. Individuals who pass the certification exam will receive documentation of certification. Provider organizations should ensure that all clinicians who must receive CANS certification are certified prior to November 30, 2008.

Beginning May 12, 2008, behavioral health clinicians should visit the CANS training website at <https://masscans.ehs.state.ma.us/> for additional information and to register for training and certification. If you have questions regarding the CANS training and certification process, you can contact the CANS training group either by calling (508) 856-1016 or by email at [mass.cans@umassmed.edu](mailto:mass.cans@umassmed.edu).

If you have questions regarding which clinicians require CANS training, contact the MBHP Community Relations Department at **1-800-495-0086 (press #3 then #1 to skip prompts)**

#### *Provider Organization Designation of Users to the Virtual Gateway*

The Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) plans to deploy a web-based application through the EOHHS Virtual Gateway (VG) at which certified CANS assessors will access the CANS tool and enter the information they collect during the assessment. Access to the CANS application on the Virtual Gateway will be provided to individuals through their provider organizations. Only individuals who have received CANS certification will be able to access the CANS application. More information about this system will be available in the future.

Over the next few months, a representative from the VG Deployment Team will be contacting provider organizations to prepare them to access the web-based CANS application on the VG. This preparation will include identifying individuals within the organization who will need access to the CANS tool, and designating them as users for the CANS application on the VG. This coordinated effort between providers and EOHHS will help to ensure that users of CANS are properly identified and given access to the CANS application on the VG before the requirement takes effect on November 30<sup>th</sup>.

If you have questions regarding the CANS application on the Virtual Gateway, you can contact the VG Help Desk by calling 1-800-421-0938.

EOHHS recognizes the ambitious timeframe for this agenda and appreciates your cooperation and support.