STATE OF CALIFORNIA--HEALTH AND WELFARE AGENCY PETE WILSON, GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH
1600 - 9TH STREET
SACRAMENTO, CA 95814
916) 654-2378

October 27, 1997

DMH INFORMATION NOTICE NO.: 97-17

TO: LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH DIRECTORS
LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAM CHIEFS
LOCAL MENTAL HEALTH ADMINISTRATORS
COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS
CHAIRPERSONS, MENTAL HEALTH ADVISORY BOARDS

SUBJECT: CLIENT AND SERVICE INFORMATION (CSI) SYSTEM

EXPIRES: Retain Until Rescinded

The purpose of this letter is to advise you of significant changes in statistical reporting to the Department of Mental Health (DMH) which will be effective July 1998. The most significant change will be the replacement of the Client Data System (CDS) with the Client and Services Information (CSI) System.

This change to the CSI System is the culmination of work done over the past few years by several state and county committees and work groups. These groups have included the Decision Support Systems Project (DSSP) funded by a Mental Health Statistics Improvement Program grant from the Center for Mental Health Services, the Ad Hoc Management Information System (MIS) Committee of the California Mental Health Directors Association, and the Encounter Data Collection System (EDCS) Work Group. These, as well as other data, fiscal, and administrative committees, have addressed the following issues: simplification and consolidation of data systems as required in realignment; standardized minimum data sets to be used for decision support in the DSSP; consistency with Department of Health Services (DHS) and the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) reporting requirements for Medi-Cal managed care; implementation of unique identifiers that will meet Medi-Cal requirements, will meet DMH requirements for cost-effectiveness outcome analyses, and will facilitate sharing of data for research; and confidentiality and security of data.

When the EDCS Work Group was formed last fall, it was expected that this system would replace CDS, Institutions for Mental Disease (IMD) reporting, and all Medi-Cal claiming systems since Medi-Cal funding would be moving to capitation or block grants. Since that time, it has become apparent that Medi-Cal funding will continue through a claiming system for longer than was expected. Thus, the efficiencies of the CSI System will not be fully realized immediately. However, the CSI System will replace CDS and IMD reporting, and provide substantial efficiencies over the CDS System. The improvements include changing from episode-based reporting to client and service reporting, thereby reducing errors by up to 50 percent. The CSI System design will also include electronic file transmission and on-line error correction.

A Client Record will be required at first contact with each county and then Service Records will be submitted as services occur. Also, Periodic Records, which contain data elements that change such as living arrangement, will be submitted at admission, annually and at discharge. After the initial collection at admission, it is expected that the periodic data would be collected concurrently with outcome measures.

There has been some discussion on adding several data elements to the CSI and using it for claiming Short-Doyle/Medi-Cal. While that may be possible, substantial changes to programs and county procedures would be necessary. Therefore, the consensus of state and county staff who have explored this possibility is to wait until CSI is implemented and counties have implemented Phase II consolidation of services and claiming. At that time, combining the systems will be reconsidered.

A technical work group of county and state staff has met several times and will continue to work on the details of the system. Counties will be informed of changes and the technical details as they are finalized. In order to facilitate this communication, further information will be sent in CSI letters. The CDS mailing list will be used to send the first CSI letter, and updates to that list will be requested for future CSI letters. The mailing list includes the director, data contact, data processing contact, and other designated individuals. Several types of materials will be sent within the next few weeks, including the technical specifications, and a form to update the CSI mailing list.

If you have any questions about the technical aspects of the system, please contact Mike Anderson in Information Technology at (916) 654-6181. If you have general questions about the data elements, please contact Sara Gilb in Statistics and Data Analysis at (916) 327-9318.

Sincerely,

LINDA A. POWELL
Deputy Director
Administrative Services

cc: California Mental Health Planning Council
Chief, Technical Assistance and Training