

**CARF Accreditation Report**  
**for**  
**Mental Health Association of**  
**Essex and Morris, Inc.**

**Three-Year Accreditation**



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## About CARF

CARF is an independent, nonprofit accreditor of health and human services, enhancing the lives of persons served worldwide.

The accreditation process applies CARF's internationally recognized standards during a site survey conducted by peer surveyors. Accreditation, however, is an ongoing process that distinguishes a provider's service delivery and signals to the public that the provider is committed to continuous performance improvement, responsive to feedback, and accountable to the community and its other stakeholders.

CARF accreditation promotes providers' demonstration of value and Quality Across the Lifespan® of millions of persons served through application of rigorous organizational and program standards organized around the ASPIRE to Excellence® continuous quality improvement framework. CARF accreditation has been the recognized benchmark of quality health and human services for more than 50 years.

For more information or to contact CARF, please visit [www.carf.org/contact-us](http://www.carf.org/contact-us).

## **Organization**

Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris, Inc.  
33 South Fullerton Avenue  
Montclair, NJ 07042

## **Organizational Leadership**

Robert N. Davison, MA, LPC, Chief Executive Officer

## **Survey Number**

162818

## **Survey Date(s)**

November 16, 2022–November 18, 2022

## **Surveyor(s)**

J. Penelope Kidder, MA, LPCC-S, Administrative  
Robert J. Wilson, MA, LPCS, MBA, Program  
Debra Shewey, Program

## **Program(s)/Service(s) Surveyed**

Case Management/Services Coordination: Integrated: SUD/Mental Health (Adults)  
Case Management/Services Coordination: Integrated: SUD/Mental Health (Criminal Justice)  
Case Management/Services Coordination: Mental Health (Adults)  
Community Integration: Psychosocial Rehabilitation (Adults)  
Health Home: Comprehensive Care (Adults)  
Outpatient Treatment: Mental Health (Adults)  
Outpatient Treatment: Mental Health (Children and Adolescents)  
Prevention: Mental Health (Adults)  
Supported Living: Mental Health (Adults)  
*Governance Standards Applied*

## **Previous Survey**

September 25, 2019–September 27, 2019  
Three-Year Accreditation

## **Accreditation Decision**

### **Three-Year Accreditation**

**Expiration: November 30, 2025**

# Executive Summary

This report contains the findings of CARF's site survey of Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris, Inc. conducted November 16, 2022–November 18, 2022. This report includes the following information:

- Documentation of the accreditation decision and the basis for the decision as determined by CARF's consideration of the survey findings.
- Identification of the specific program(s)/service(s) and location(s) to which this accreditation decision applies.
- Identification of the CARF surveyor(s) who conducted the survey and an overview of the CARF survey process and how conformance to the standards was determined.
- Feedback on the organization's strengths and recognition of any areas where the organization demonstrated exemplary conformance to the standards.
- Documentation of the specific sections of the CARF standards that were applied on the survey.
- Recommendations for improvement in any areas where the organization did not meet the minimum requirements to demonstrate full conformance to the standards.
- Any consultative suggestions documented by the surveyor(s) to help the organization improve its program(s)/service(s) and business operations.

## Accreditation Decision

On balance, Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris, Inc. demonstrated substantial conformance to the standards. Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris, Inc. (MHAEM) has successfully developed a variety of service models and continues to seek new opportunities and new ways of reaching the people in its communities who are in most need of support and services. The commitment to quality and to the transparency of all its operations is apparent. Personnel at all levels and the consumers of all programs can access quality improvement reports and are active in providing feedback to MHAEM. It is clear that MHAEM utilizes CARF standards in its daily operations and when planning for new programs. There are a few opportunities for improvement, which include implementing procedures for checking the Office of Inspector General (OIG) List of Excluded Individuals/Entities (LEIE), gathering and analyzing feedback from stakeholders for each program, including triggers on safety plans, and including doses on prescriber peer reviews. MHAEM was open to consultation and has already begun to make changes to procedures to address items identified in this report.

Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris, Inc. appears likely to maintain and/or improve its current method of operation and demonstrates a commitment to ongoing quality improvement. Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris, Inc. is required to submit a post-survey Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) to CARF that addresses all recommendations identified in this report.

**Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris, Inc. has earned a Three-Year Accreditation.** The leadership team and staff are complimented and congratulated for this achievement. In order to maintain this accreditation, throughout the term of accreditation, the organization is required to:

- Submit annual reporting documents and other required information to CARF, as detailed in the Accreditation Policies and Procedures section in the standards manual.
- Maintain ongoing conformance to CARF's standards, satisfy all accreditation conditions, and comply with all accreditation policies and procedures, as they are published and made effective by CARF.

# Survey Details

## Survey Participants

The survey of Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris, Inc. was conducted by the following CARF surveyor(s):

- J. Penelope Kidder, MA, LPCC-S, Administrative
- Robert J. Wilson, MA, LPCS, MBA, Program
- Debra Shewey, Program

CARF considers the involvement of persons served to be vital to the survey process. As part of the accreditation survey for all organizations, CARF surveyors interact with and conduct direct, confidential interviews with consenting current and former persons served in the program(s)/service(s) for which the organization is seeking accreditation. In addition, as applicable and available, interviews may be conducted with family members and/or representatives of the persons served such as guardians, advocates, or members of their support system.

Interviews are also conducted with individuals associated with the organization, as applicable, which may include:

- The organization's leadership, such as board members, executives, owners, and managers.
- Business unit resources, such as finance and human resources.
- Personnel who serve and directly interact with persons served in the program(s)/service(s) for which the organization is seeking accreditation.
- Other stakeholders, such as referral sources, payers, insurers, and fiscal intermediaries.
- Community constituents and governmental representatives.

## Survey Activities

Achieving CARF accreditation involves demonstrating conformance to the applicable CARF standards, evidenced through observable practices, verifiable results over time, and comprehensive supporting documentation. The survey of Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris, Inc. and its program(s)/service(s) consisted of the following activities:

- Confidential interviews and direct interactions, as outlined in the previous section.
- Direct observation of the organization's operations and service delivery practices.
- Observation of the organization's location(s) where services are delivered.
- Review of organizational documents, which may include policies; plans; written procedures; promotional materials; governing documents, such as articles of incorporation and bylaws; financial statements; and other documents necessary to determine conformance to standards.
- Review of documents related to program/service design, delivery, outcomes, and improvement, such as program descriptions, records of services provided, documentation of reviews of program resources and services conducted, and program evaluations.
- Review of records of current and former persons served.

## Program(s)/Service(s) Surveyed

The survey addressed by this report is specific to the following program(s)/service(s):

- Case Management/Services Coordination: Integrated: SUD/Mental Health (Adults)
- Case Management/Services Coordination: Integrated: SUD/Mental Health (Criminal Justice)
- Case Management/Services Coordination: Mental Health (Adults)
- Community Integration: Psychosocial Rehabilitation (Adults)
- Health Home: Comprehensive Care (Adults)
- Outpatient Treatment: Mental Health (Adults)
- Outpatient Treatment: Mental Health (Children and Adolescents)
- Prevention: Mental Health (Adults)
- Supported Living: Mental Health (Adults)
- *Governance Standards Applied*

A list of the organization's accredited program(s)/service(s) by location is included at the end of this report.

## Representations and Constraints

The accreditation decision and survey findings contained in this report are based on an on-balance consideration of the information obtained by the surveyor(s) during the site survey. Any information that was unavailable, not presented, or outside the scope of the survey was not considered and, had it been considered, may have affected the contents of this report. If at any time CARF subsequently learns or has reason to believe that the organization did not participate in the accreditation process in good faith or that any information presented was not accurate, truthful, or complete, CARF may modify the accreditation decision, up to and including revocation of accreditation.

## Survey Findings

This report provides a summary of the organization's strengths and identifies the sections of the CARF standards that were applied on the survey and the findings in each area. In conjunction with its evaluation of conformance to the specific program/service standards, CARF assessed conformance to its business practice standards, referred to as Section 1. ASPIRE to Excellence, which are designed to support the delivery of the program(s)/service(s) within a sound business operating framework to promote long-term success.

The specific standards applied from each section vary based on a variety of factors, including, but not limited to, the scope(s) of the program(s)/service(s), population(s) served, location(s), methods of service delivery, and survey type. Information about the specific standards applied on each survey is included in the standards manual and other instructions that may be provided by CARF.

## Areas of Strength

CARF found that Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris, Inc. demonstrated the following strengths:

- MHAEM has a seasoned leadership team, with many members having a lengthy tenure with the organization. The team brought MHAEM successfully through the many challenges of the pandemic, continuing to deliver services in creative ways.
- The CEO is very active within state and national organizations, which has led to name recognition for the organization and new opportunities for services.
- Members of the board of directors truly believe in the mission of MHAEM and actively support the mission in their communities. Even when required to leave the board due to term limitations, many of the members remain active supporters of the work of MHAEM until the opportunity to rejoin the board occurs.
- Community referral sources spoke highly of MHAEM, citing its responsiveness to requests as a strength. Quality of the care provided, regardless of the program, was mentioned by all, with one community stakeholder stating, “They are the leaders in this community and in the state.”
- MHAEM operates Homeward Bound, a case management service located at the Newark Liberty International Airport through a contract obtained from the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. A case manager is stationed at the airport 24/7 and makes rounds twice each day with Port Authority police to identify, engage, and provide assistance to persons who are homeless found at the airport. Engagement may include assisting a person to an emergency shelter, enrolling the person in housing programs operated by MHAEM, or purchasing airline tickets to assist stranded persons to return to their home in another state or country. Homeward Bound has been so successful that the contract has been extended, and MHAEM has been asked to present its approach to other airport administrators.
- MHAEM’s development department has been very successful in engaging its communities in fundraising and creating endowments. It has created public service announcements, commercials, and ads on the side of buses as a means to advertise the services provided by MHAEM. This was especially important during the pandemic, as the rise of mental health stress became more evident in the community.
- Consumers reported that they are genuinely cared for and valued by the staff members. The consumers spoke highly of the staff members and are grateful for the treatment they receive. They spoke of how respectful and available staff members are every day, stating, “My worker always answers her phone.” The consumers reported that the staff members are compassionate and caring.
- Case management services are recognized for the efforts to continue providing community-based, face-to-face contacts with consumers during the pandemic. Consumers reported that they were better able to “cope” during this difficult time with the assistance of the MHAEM team. MHAEM continued to provide services to its consumers throughout the pandemic. Vaccine clinics were provided to consumers, and PPE was delivered where needed. Personnel conducting home visits requested and received folding chairs so that they and the consumers could comfortably sit six feet apart, whether on porches or on lawns. MHAEM provided 100,000 meals to consumers and families between March 2020 and March 2021.
- Throughout the organization, the staff and leadership demonstrated creative approaches to a variety of challenging situations during the pandemic. MHAEM immediately applied for a grant that provided cell phones for the consumers and then developed a training program for staff and consumers so that all services could still continue through the pandemic. The organization has continued to provide needed services to the consumers using telehealth and hybrid programs in its services, including the high-risk programs, with great success. The consumers and parents commented on how helpful this is to assist in attending scheduled appointments.
- The offices are clean, are inviting, and provide excellent space and a great environment for consumer services once staff and consumers returned to activities in person.

- MHAEM demonstrates strong evidence of respect for the consumers, staff, and management. This is evident in the casual interactions seen between consumers and staff and reports from staff in regard to ongoing positive interactions with management. Staff presents as very excited about growth and changes.
- There are many examples of MHAEM providing items for consumers, such as coats, scarves, gloves, and socks for the winter; air conditioners and fans for the summer; meals and food for the holidays; and essential funding that provides support to better the lives of the consumers.
- MHAEM demonstrates commitment to its culture of caring for the consumers. Annual events hosted by the organization include the annual boat trip (that the consumers love) in which they get to eat and enjoy the sights and the Thanksgiving dinner where the staff members cook turkeys with their own recipes and then serve the meals for the consumers. MHAEM helps families in need to provide Christmas gifts for their children. There is a Christmas luncheon in which the different MHAEM departments perform the Twelve Days of Christmas for the consumers, and the consumers are part of a talent show that is enjoyed by everyone.
- The clinical staff members are committed, compassionate, and caring. The clinical staff members feel supported in their positions and in their strengths and expertise. It is obvious that MHAEM supports the staff members in their careers and personal growth. Staff members reported that it is a great organization to work for. It encourages staff growth and appreciates staff members and what they do. This is evidenced by the quarterly staff meetings that always provide fun things to do and a variety of interesting eating opportunities (e.g., food trucks or catering). This is the same for the staff appreciation breakfast that everyone enjoys. MHAEM also promotes education opportunities and assists with the cost.
- The program personnel are complimented for their documentation in the medical record regarding person-centered consumer strengths, needs, abilities, and preferences. It is evident that the consumer has significant input into the development of the written assessment.
- The criminal justice case management program is recognized for its positive involvement with the judicial system and law enforcement and the development of Crisis Intervention Teams. Its co-responder team model is considered to be one of the best in the state, and MHAEM has been asked to develop those services in neighboring communities as a result.
- MHAEM offers a continuum of case management services based on intensity of need and diagnosis. This system provides support from hospital discharge through long-term housing support and prevents individuals from falling through the cracks.
- MHAEM's quality assurance department displays a grid of program outcomes, along with a QR code to access the organization's management report, in the waiting area of each location.
- Consumers spoke very highly of the MHAEM staff. Consumers commented that staff "provides lots of support" and that "I am more mature as a result of their help." Consumers also said, "They are very hands on," and "They make things happen."

## Opportunities for Quality Improvement

The CARF survey process identifies opportunities for continuous improvement, a core concept of "aspiring to excellence." This section of the report lists the sections of the CARF standards that were applied on the survey, including a description of the business practice area and/or the specific program(s)/service(s) surveyed and a summary of the key areas addressed in that section of the standards.

In this section of the report, a recommendation identifies any standard for which CARF determined that the organization did not meet the minimum requirements to demonstrate full conformance. All recommendations must be addressed in a QIP submitted to CARF.



In addition, consultation may be provided for areas of or specific standards where the surveyor(s) documented suggestions that the organization may consider to improve its business or service delivery practices. Note that consultation may be offered for areas of specific standards that do not have any recommendations. Such consultation does not indicate nonconformance to the standards; it is intended to offer ideas that the organization might find helpful in its ongoing quality improvement efforts. The organization is not required to address consultation.

When CARF surveyors visit an organization, their role is that of independent peer reviewers, and their goal is not only to gather and assess information to determine conformance to the standards, but also to engage in relevant and meaningful consultative dialogue. Not all consultation or suggestions discussed during the survey are noted in this report. The organization is encouraged to review any notes made during the survey and consider the consultation or suggestions that were discussed.

During the process of preparing for a CARF accreditation survey, an organization may conduct a detailed self-assessment and engage in deliberations and discussions within the organization as well as with external stakeholders as it considers ways to implement and use the standards to guide its quality improvement efforts. The organization is encouraged to review these discussions and deliberations as it considers ways to implement innovative changes and further advance its business and service delivery practices.

## **Section 1. ASPIRE to Excellence®**

### **1.A. Leadership**

#### **Description**

CARF-accredited organizations identify leadership that embraces the values of accountability and responsibility to the individual organization's stated mission. The leadership demonstrates corporate social responsibility.

#### **Key Areas Addressed**

- Leadership structure and responsibilities
- Person-centered philosophy
- Organizational guidance
- Leadership accessibility
- Cultural competency and diversity
- Corporate responsibility
- Organizational fundraising, if applicable

#### **Recommendations**

##### **1.A.7.b.**

MHAEM should demonstrate corporate compliance through implementation of written procedures that address exclusion of individuals and entities from federally funded healthcare programs. During the survey, MHAEM did an OIG check of all personnel of the organization.

### **1.B. Governance (Optional)**

#### **Description**

The governing board should provide effective and ethical governance leadership on behalf of its owners'/stakeholders' interest to ensure that the organization focuses on its purpose and outcomes for persons served, resulting in the organization's long-term success and stability. The board is responsible for ensuring that the organization is managed effectively, efficiently, and ethically by the organization's executive leadership through

defined governance accountability mechanisms. These mechanisms include, but are not limited to, an adopted governance framework defined by written governance policies and demonstrated practices; active and timely review of organizational performance and that of the executive leadership; and the demarcation of duties between the board and executive leadership to ensure that organizational strategies, plans, decisions, and actions are delegated to the resource that would best advance the interests and performance of the organization over the long term and manage the organization's inherent risks. The board has additional responsibilities under the domain of public trust, and as such, it understands its corporate responsibility to the organization's employees, providers, suppliers, and the communities it serves.

### **Key Areas Addressed**

- Ethical, active, and accountable governance
- Board selection, orientation, development, leadership, structure, and performance
- Linkage between governance and executive leadership
- Board meetings and committee work
- Executive leadership development, evaluation, and compensation

### **Recommendations**

There are no recommendations in this area.

## **1.C. Strategic Planning**

### **Description**

CARF-accredited organizations establish a foundation for success through strategic planning focused on taking advantage of strengths and opportunities and addressing weaknesses and threats.

### **Key Areas Addressed**

- Environmental considerations
- Strategic plan development, implementation, and periodic review

### **Recommendations**

There are no recommendations in this area.

## **1.D. Input from Persons Served and Other Stakeholders**

### **Description**

CARF-accredited organizations continually focus on the expectations of the persons served and other stakeholders. The standards in this subsection direct the organization's focus to soliciting, collecting, analyzing, and using input from all stakeholders to create services that meet or exceed the expectations of the persons served, the community, and other stakeholders.

### **Key Areas Addressed**

- Collection of input from persons served, personnel, and other stakeholders
- Integration of input into business practices and planning

### **Recommendations**

There are no recommendations in this area.

## 1.E. Legal Requirements

### Description

CARF-accredited organizations comply with all legal and regulatory requirements.

### Key Areas Addressed

- Compliance with obligations
- Response to legal action
- Confidentiality and security of records

### Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

## 1.F. Financial Planning and Management

### Description

CARF-accredited organizations strive to be financially responsible and solvent, conducting fiscal management in a manner that supports their mission, values, and performance objectives. Fiscal practices adhere to established accounting principles and business practices. Fiscal management covers daily operational cost management and incorporates plans for long-term solvency.

### Key Areas Addressed

- Budgets
- Review of financial results and relevant factors
- Fiscal policies and procedures
- Reviews of bills for services and fee structures, if applicable
- Review/audit of financial statements
- Safeguarding funds of persons served, if applicable

### Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

## 1.G. Risk Management

### Description

CARF-accredited organizations engage in a coordinated set of activities designed to control threats to their people, property, income, goodwill, and ability to accomplish goals.

### Key Areas Addressed

- Risk management plan implementation and periodic review
- Adequate insurance coverage
- Media relations and social media procedures
- Reviews of contract services

### Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

## Consultation

- It is suggested that MHAEM create a way to show its analysis of loss exposures that have been identified in its risk management plan that correspond to its plans to implement and monitor actions to address those risks.

## 1.H. Health and Safety

### Description

CARF-accredited organizations maintain healthy, safe, and clean environments that support quality services and minimize risk of harm to persons served, personnel, and other stakeholders.

### Key Areas Addressed

- Healthy and safe environment
- Competency-based training on health and safety procedures and practices
- Emergency and evacuation procedures
- Access to first aid and emergency information
- Critical incidents
- Infections and communicable diseases
- Health and safety inspections

### Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

## Consultation

- It is suggested that MHAEM include cleaning supplies and other hazardous materials that may be in its facilities in the written procedures that currently only address biohazardous wastes.

## 1.I. Workforce Development and Management

### Description

CARF-accredited organizations demonstrate that they value their human resources and focus on aligning and linking human resources processes, procedures, and initiatives with the strategic objectives of the organization. Organizational effectiveness depends on the organization's ability to develop and manage the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behavioral expectations of its workforce. The organization describes its workforce, which is often composed of a diverse blend of human resources. Effective workforce development and management promote engagement and organizational sustainability and foster an environment that promotes the provision of services that center on enhancing the lives of persons served.

### Key Areas Addressed

- Composition of workforce
- Ongoing workforce planning
- Verification of backgrounds/credentials/fitness for duty
- Workforce engagement and development
- Performance appraisals
- Succession planning

### Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

## Consultation

- It is suggested that MHAEM develop a succession plan for senior leadership positions in a more formal manner than the current informal plan and the understanding of who can temporarily fill a vacant position.

## 1.J. Technology

### Description

Guided by leadership and a shared vision, CARF-accredited organizations are committed to exploring and, within their resources, acquiring and implementing technology systems and solutions that will support and enhance:

- Business processes and practices.
- Privacy and security of protected information.
- Service delivery.
- Performance management and improvement.
- Satisfaction of persons served, personnel, and other stakeholders.

### Key Areas Addressed

- Ongoing assessment of technology and data use, including input from stakeholders
- Technology and system plan implementation and periodic review
- Technology policies and procedures

### Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

## 1.K. Rights of Persons Served

### Description

CARF-accredited organizations protect and promote the rights of all persons served. This commitment guides the delivery of services and ongoing interactions with the persons served.

### Key Areas Addressed

- Policies that promote rights of persons served
- Communication of rights to persons served
- Formal complaints by persons served

### Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

### Consultation

- Complaints and grievances are individually analyzed. Because there have been so few, no trends have been identified. It is suggested that a reporting line identifying trend analysis, or the lack of a sufficient number to create a trend, be added to the annual performance analysis document.

## 1.L. Accessibility

### Description

CARF-accredited organizations promote accessibility and the removal of barriers for the persons served and other stakeholders.

## **Key Areas Addressed**

- Assessment of accessibility needs and identification of barriers
- Accessibility plan implementation and periodic review
- Requests for reasonable accommodations

## **Recommendations**

There are no recommendations in this area.

# **1.M. Performance Measurement and Management**

## **Description**

CARF-accredited organizations demonstrate a culture of accountability by developing and implementing performance measurement and management plans that produce information an organization can act on to improve results for the persons served, other stakeholders, and the organization itself.

The foundation for successful performance measurement and management includes:

- Leadership accountability and support.
- Mission-driven measurement.
- A focus on results achieved for the persons served.
- Meaningful engagement of stakeholders.
- An understanding of extenuating and influencing factors that may impact performance.
- A workforce that is knowledgeable about and engaged in performance measurement and management.
- An investment in resources to implement performance measurement and management.
- Measurement and management of business functions to sustain and enhance the organization.

## **Key Areas Addressed**

- Leadership accountability for performance measurement and management
- Identification of gaps and opportunities related to performance measurement and management
- Input from stakeholders
- Performance measurement and management plan
- Identification of objectives and performance indicators for service delivery
- Identification of objectives and performance indicators for priority business functions
- Personnel training on performance measurement and management

## **Recommendations**

### **1.M.6.a.**

#### **1.M.6.b.(1)**

#### **1.M.6.b.(2)**

#### **1.M.6.b.(3)**

#### **1.M.6.b.(4)**

#### **1.M.6.b.(5)**

MHAEM collects feedback from a variety of stakeholders with specific questions as to the program they are rating; however, it reports this data for the organization as a whole. To measure experience of services and other feedback from other stakeholders, each program/service seeking accreditation should document an objective(s) and a performance indicator(s), including to whom the indicator(s) will be applied, the person(s)/position(s) responsible for collecting the data, the source(s) from which data will be collected, identification of relevant timeframes for collection of data, and a performance target that is based on the organization's performance history or established by the organization or a stakeholder or is based on an industry benchmark.

## 1.N. Performance Improvement

### Description

CARF-accredited organizations demonstrate a culture of performance improvement through their commitment to proactive and ongoing review, analysis, reflection on their results in both service delivery and business functions, and transparency. The results of performance analysis are used to identify and implement data-driven actions to improve the quality of programs and services and to inform decision making. Performance information that is accurate and understandable to the target audience is shared with persons served, personnel, and other stakeholders in accordance with their interests and needs.

### Key Areas Addressed

- Analysis of service delivery performance
- Analysis of business function performance
- Identification of areas needing performance improvement
- Implementation of action plans
- Use of performance information to improve program/service quality and make decisions
- Communication of performance information

### Recommendations

#### 1.N.1.c.(3)

The analysis of service delivery performance should address, for each program/service seeking accreditation, the experience of services and other feedback from other stakeholders.

## Section 2. General Program Standards

### Description

For an organization to achieve quality services, the persons served are active participants in the planning, prioritization, implementation, and ongoing evaluation of the services offered. A commitment to quality and the involvement of the persons served span the entire time that the persons served are involved with the organization. The service planning process is individualized, establishing goals and objectives that incorporate the unique strengths, needs, abilities, and preferences of the persons served. The persons served have the opportunity to transition easily through a system of care.

## 2.A. Program/Service Structure

### Description

A fundamental responsibility of the organization is to provide a comprehensive program structure. The staffing is designed to maximize opportunities for the persons served to obtain and participate in the services provided.

### Key Areas Addressed

- Written program plan
- Crisis intervention provided
- Medical consultation
- Services relevant to diversity
- Assistance with advocacy and support groups
- Team composition/duties

- Relevant education
- Clinical supervision
- Family participation encouraged

### **Recommendations**

There are no recommendations in this area.

## **2.B. Screening and Access to Services**

### **Description**

The process of screening and assessment is designed to determine a person’s eligibility for services and the organization’s ability to provide those services. A person-centered assessment process helps to maximize opportunities for the persons served to gain access to the organization’s programs and services. Each person served is actively involved in, and has a significant role in, the assessment process. Assessments are conducted in a manner that identifies the historical and current information of the person served as well as the person’s strengths, needs, abilities, and preferences. Assessment data may be gathered through various means, including face-to-face contact, telehealth, or written material, and from various sources, including the person served, family or significant others, or from external resources.

### **Key Areas Addressed**

- Screening process described in policies and procedures
- Ineligibility for services
- Admission criteria
- Orientation information provided regarding rights, grievances, services, fees, etc.
- Waiting list
- Primary and ongoing assessments
- Reassessments

### **Recommendations**

**2.B.13.j.**

**2.B.13.m.(14)**

**2.B.13.n.(1)(b)**

MHAEM’s assessment process should consistently gather and record information about the person’s use of complementary health approaches, social determinants of health, and history of trauma that is witnessed.

## **2.C. Person-Centered Plan**

### **Description**

Each person served is actively involved in and has a significant role in the person-centered planning process and determining the direction of the plan. The person-centered plan contains goals and objectives that incorporate the unique strengths, needs, abilities, and preferences of the person served, as well as identified challenges and potential solutions. The planning process is person-directed and person-centered. The person-centered plan may also be referred to as an individual service plan, treatment plan, or plan of care. In a family-centered program, the plan may be for the family and identified as a family-centered plan.



## **Key Areas Addressed**

- Person-centered planning process
- Co-occurring disabilities/disorders
- Person-centered goals and objectives
- Designated person coordinates services

## **Recommendations**

### **2.C.4.d.(1)**

When an assessment identifies a potential risk for suicide, violence, or other risky behaviors, it is recommended that the completed safety plan include triggers.

## **2.D. Transition/Discharge**

### **Description**

Transition, continuing care, or discharge planning assists the persons served to move from one level of care to another within the organization or to obtain services that are needed but are not available within the organization. The transition process is planned with the active participation of each person served. Transition may include planned discharge, placement on inactive status, movement to a different level of service or intensity of contact, or a re-entry program in a criminal justice system.

The transition plan is a document developed with and for the person served and other interested participants to guide the person served in activities following transition/discharge to support the gains made during program participation. It is prepared with the active participation of the person served when transitioning to another level of care, after-care program, or community-based services. The transition plan is meant to be a plan that the person served uses to identify the support that is needed to prevent a recurrence of symptoms or reduction in functioning. It is expected that the person served receives a copy of the transition plan.

A discharge summary is a clinical document written by the program personnel who are involved in the services provided to the person served and is completed when the person leaves the organization (planned or unplanned). It is a document that is intended for the record of the person served and released, with appropriate authorization, to describe the course of services that the organization provided and the response by the person served.

Just as the assessment is critical to the success of treatment, the transition services are critical for the support of the individual's ongoing recovery or well-being. The organization proactively attempts to connect the persons served with the receiving service provider and contact the persons served after formal transition or discharge to gather needed information related to their post-discharge status. Discharge information is reviewed to determine the effectiveness of its services and whether additional services were needed.

Transition planning may be included as part of the person-centered plan. The transition plan and/or discharge summary may be a combined document or part of the plan for the person served as long as it is clear whether the information relates to transition or pre-discharge planning or identifies the person's discharge or departure from the program.

## **Key Areas Addressed**

- Referral or transition to other services
- Active participation of persons served
- Transition planning at earliest point

- Unplanned discharge referrals
- Plan addresses strengths, needs, abilities, preferences
- Follow-up for persons discharged for aggressiveness

## Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

## 2.E. Medication Use

### Description

Medication use is the practice of controlling, administering, and/or prescribing medications to persons served in response to specific symptoms, behaviors, or conditions for which the use of medications is indicated and deemed efficacious. The use of medication is one component of treatment directed toward maximizing the functioning of the persons served while reducing their specific symptoms. Prior to the use of medications other therapeutic interventions should be considered, except in circumstances that call for a more urgent intervention.

Medication use includes all prescribed medications, whether or not the program is involved in prescribing, and may include over-the-counter or alternative medications. Alternative medications can include herbal or mineral supplements, vitamins, homeopathic remedies, hormone therapy, or culturally specific treatments.

Medication control is identified as the process of physically controlling, storing, transporting, and disposing of medications, including those self-administered by the person served.

Medication administration is the preparing and giving of prescription and nonprescription medications by authorized and trained personnel to the person served. Self-administration is the application of a medication (whether by oral ingestion, injection, inhalation, or other means) by the person served to the individual's own body. This may include the program storing the medication for the person served, personnel handing the bottle or prepackaged medication dose to the person served, instructing or verbally prompting the person served to take the medication, coaching the person served through the steps to ensure proper adherence, and/or closely observing the person served self-administering the medication.

Prescribing is the result of an evaluation that determines if there is a need for medication and what medication is to be used in the treatment of the person served. Prior to providing a prescription for medication, the prescriber obtains the informed consent of the individual authorized to consent to treatment and, if applicable, the assent of the person served. Prescription orders may be verbal or written and detail what medication should be given to whom, in what formulation and dose, by what route, when, how frequently, and for what length of time.

### Key Areas Addressed

- Scope of medication services provided by the program(s) seeking accreditation
- Education and training provided to direct service personnel at orientation and at least annually
- Education and training provided to persons served, family members, and others identified by the persons served, in accordance with identified needs
- Written procedures that address medication control, administration, and/or prescribing, as applicable to the program
- Use of treatment guidelines and protocols to promote prescribing consistent with standards of care, if applicable to the program
- Peer review of prescribing practices, if applicable to the program

## **Recommendations**

### **2.E.8.a.(4)(c)**

MHAEM provides prescribing of medications. It is recommended that the documented peer review assess the appropriateness of each medication, as determined by dosage.

## **2.G. Records of the Persons Served**

### **Description**

A complete and accurate record is developed to ensure that all appropriate individuals have access to relevant clinical and other information regarding each person served.

### **Key Areas Addressed**

- Confidentiality
- Timeframes for entries to records
- Individual record requirements
- Duplicate records

### **Recommendations**

There are no recommendations in this area.

## **2.H. Quality Records Management**

### **Description**

The organization implements systems and procedures that provide for the ongoing monitoring of the quality, appropriateness, and utilization of the services provided. This is largely accomplished through a systematic review of the records of the persons served. The review assists the organization in improving the quality of services provided to each person served.

### **Key Areas Addressed**

- Quarterly professional review
- Review current and closed records
- Items addressed in quarterly review
- Use of information to improve quality of services

### **Recommendations**

There are no recommendations in this area.

### **Consultation**

- It is suggested that MHAEM add model fidelity to its review form.

## 2.I. Service Delivery Using Information and Communication Technologies

### Description

Depending on the type of program, a variety of terminology may be used to describe the use of information and communication technologies to deliver services; e.g., telepractice, telehealth, telemental health, telerehabilitation, telespeech, etc. Based on the individual plan for the person served, the use of information and communication technologies allows providers to see, hear, and/or interact with persons served, family/support system members, and other providers in remote settings.

The provision of services via information and communication technologies may:

- Include services such as assessment, individual planning, monitoring, prevention, intervention, follow-up, supervision, education, consultation, and counseling.
- Involve a variety of professionals such as case managers/service coordinators, social workers, psychologists, speech-language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, physicians, nurses, rehabilitation engineers, assistive technologists, and teachers.
- Encompass settings such as:
  - Hospitals, clinics, professional offices, and other organization-based settings.
  - Schools, work sites, libraries, community centers, and other community settings.
  - Congregate living, individual homes, and other residential settings.

The use of technology for strictly informational purposes, such as having a website that provides information about the programs and services available, is not considered providing services via the use of information and communication technologies.

### Key Areas Addressed

- Written procedures for the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in service delivery
- Personnel training on how to deliver services via ICT and the equipment used
- Instruction and training for persons served, family/support system members, and others.
- Provision of information related to ICT
- Maintenance of ICT equipment
- Emergency procedures that address unique aspects of service delivery via ICT

### Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

## Section 3. Core Treatment Program Standards

### Description

The standards in this section address the unique characteristics of each type of core program area. Behavioral health programs are organized and designed to provide services for persons who have or who are at risk of having psychiatric disorders, harmful involvement with alcohol or other drugs, or other addictions or who have other behavioral health needs. Through a team approach, and with the active and ongoing participation of the persons served, the overall goal of each program is to improve the quality of life and the functional abilities of the persons served. Each program selected for accreditation demonstrates cultural competency and relevance. Family members and significant others are involved in the programs of the persons served as appropriate and to the extent possible.

## 3.B. Case Management/Services Coordination (CM)

### Description

Case management/services coordination programs provide goal-oriented and individualized supports focusing on improved self-sufficiency for the persons served through assessment, planning, linkage, advocacy, coordination, and monitoring activities. Successful service coordination results in community opportunities and increased independence for the persons served. Programs may provide occasional supportive counseling and crisis intervention services, when allowed by regulatory or funding authorities.

Case management/services coordination may be provided by an organization as part of its person-centered planning and delivery, by a department or division within the organization that works with individuals who are internal and/or external to the organization, or by an organization with the sole purpose of providing case management/services coordination. Such programs are typically provided by qualified case managers/coordinators or by case management teams.

Organizations performing case management/services coordination as a routine function of other services or programs are not required to apply these standards unless they are specifically seeking accreditation for this program.

### Key Areas Addressed

- Personnel who are knowledgeable about appropriate services and relevant support systems
- Optimization of resources and opportunities for persons served
- Provision of or linkage to skill development services related to performing ADL

### Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

## 3.C. Community Integration (COI)

### Description

Community integration is designed to help persons to optimize their personal, social, and vocational competency in order to live successfully in the community. Activities are determined by the needs of the persons served. The persons served are active partners in all aspects of these programs. Therefore, the settings can be informal in order to reduce barriers between staff members and program participants. In addition to services provided in the home or community, this program may include a psychosocial clubhouse, a drop-in center, an activity center, or a day program.

Community integration provides opportunities for the community participation of the persons served. The organization defines the scope of these services based on the identified needs and desires of the persons served. A person may participate in a variety of community life experiences that may include, but are not limited to:

- Leisure or recreational activities.
- Communication activities.
- Spiritual activities.
- Cultural activities.
- Vocational pursuits.
- Development of work attitudes.
- Employment activities.
- Volunteerism.

- Educational and training activities.
- Development of living skills.
- Health and wellness promotion.
- Orientation, mobility, and destination training.
- Access and utilization of public transportation.

### **Key Areas Addressed**

- Opportunities for community participation
- Based on identified preferences of participants
- Times and locations meet the needs of participants

### **Recommendations**

There are no recommendations in this area.

## **3.I. Health Home (HH)**

### **Description**

A health home is a healthcare delivery approach that focuses on the whole person and integrates and coordinates primary care, behavioral health, other healthcare, and community and social support services. A health home allows for individual choice and is capable of assessing the various physical and behavioral health needs of persons served. The program demonstrates the capacity to address, either directly or through linkage with or referral to external resources, behavioral health conditions, such as mental illness and substance use disorders, and physical health conditions. Programs may also serve persons who have intellectual or other developmental disabilities and physical health needs or those who are at risk for or exhibiting behavioral disorders. Care is coordinated over time across providers, functions, activities, and sites to maximize the value and effectiveness of services delivered to persons served.

A health home provides comprehensive care management, care coordination, health promotion, comprehensive transitional care, individual and family/support services, and linkage and referral to community and social support services. Services are designed to support overall health and wellness and:

- Embody a recovery-focused model of care that respects and promotes independence and responsibility.
- Promote healthy lifestyles and provide prevention and education services that focus on wellness and self-care.
- Ensure access to and coordination of care across prevention, primary care (including ensuring that persons served have a primary care physician), and specialty healthcare services.
- Monitor critical health indicators.
- Support individuals in the self-management of chronic health conditions.
- Coordinate/monitor emergency room visits and hospitalizations, including participation in transition/discharge planning and follow-up.

A health home collects, aggregates, and analyzes individual healthcare data across the population of persons served by the program and uses that data and analysis to manage and improve outcomes for the persons served. If the health home is not the actual provider of a particular healthcare service, it remains responsible for supporting and facilitating improved outcomes by providing disease management supports and care coordination with other providers.

### **Key Areas Addressed**

- Comprehensive care management
- Health assessment
- Cross-training of personnel
- Utilization of health records/patient registries

### **Recommendations**

There are no recommendations in this area.

## **3.O. Outpatient Treatment (OT)**

### **Description**

Outpatient treatment programs provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services that include, but are not limited to, individual, group, and family counseling and education on wellness, recovery, and resiliency. These programs offer comprehensive, coordinated, and defined services that may vary in level of intensity. Outpatient programs may address a variety of needs, including, but not limited to, situational stressors, family relations, interpersonal relationships, mental health issues, life span issues, psychiatric illnesses, and substance use disorders and other addictive behaviors.

### **Key Areas Addressed**

- Therapy services
- Education on wellness, recovery, and resiliency
- Accessible services
- Creation of natural supports

### **Recommendations**

There are no recommendations in this area.

# **Section 4. Core Support Program Standards**

### **Description**

The standards in this section address the unique characteristics of each type of core program area. Behavioral health programs are organized and designed to provide services for persons who have or who are at risk of having psychiatric disorders, harmful involvement with alcohol or other drugs, or other addictions or who have other behavioral health needs. Through a team approach, and with the active and ongoing participation of the persons served, the overall goal of each program is to improve the quality of life and the functional abilities of the persons served. Each program selected for accreditation demonstrates cultural competency and relevance. Family members and significant others are involved in the programs of the persons served as appropriate and to the extent possible.

## **4.G. Prevention (P)**

### **Description**

Prevention programs are proactive and evidence-based/evidence-informed, striving to reduce individual, family, and environmental risk factors, increase resiliency, enhance protective factors, and achieve individual and comprehensive community wellness through a team or collaborative approach. Prevention programs utilize strategies designed to keep individuals, families, groups, and communities healthy and free from the problems

related to alcohol or other drug use, mental health disorders, physical illness, parent/child conflict, abuse or neglect, exposure to or experience of violence in the home and community; to inform the general public of problems associated with those issues, thereby raising awareness; or to intervene with at-risk individuals to reduce or eliminate identified concerns. Programs may be provided in the community, school, home, workplace, or other settings.

Organizations may provide one or more of the following types of prevention programs, categorized according to the population for which they are designed:

- Universal programs target the general population and seek to increase overall well-being and reduce the overall prevalence of problem behaviors, and include comprehensive, well-coordinated components for individuals, families, schools, communities, and organizations. Universal prevention programs promote positive behavior and include social marketing and other public information efforts.
- Selected programs target groups that are exposed to factors that place them at a greater than average risk for the problem. These programs are tailored to reduce identified risk factors and strengthen protective factors. Examples of prevention programs include pregnancy prevention, drop-out prevention, Strengthening Families, substance abuse prevention, violence prevention, HIV prevention, tobacco use prevention, child abuse prevention, and suicide prevention.
- Training programs provide curriculum-based instruction to active or future personnel in human service programs. Examples of training programs include caseworker training, child welfare supervisory training, foster parent training, leadership training, guardian/guardian ad-litem training, and childcare assistant training.

### **Key Areas Addressed**

- Personnel qualifications
- Appropriate program activities
- Public awareness
- Program strategies

### **Recommendations**

There are no recommendations in this area.

## **4.H. Supported Living (SL)**

### **Description**

Supported living addresses the desires, goals, strengths, abilities, needs, health, safety, and life span issues of persons living in their own homes (apartments, townhouses, or other residential settings). Supported living services are generally long term in nature, but may change in scope, duration, intensity, or location as the needs and preferences of individuals change over time.

Supported living refers to the support services provided to the person served, not the residence in which these services are provided. A sample of these sites will be visited as part of the interview process of the person served. Although the residence will generally be owned, rented, or leased by the person who lives there, the organization may occasionally rent or lease an apartment when the person served is unable to do so. Typically, in this situation the organization would co-sign or in other ways guarantee the lease or rental agreement; however, the person served would be identified as the tenant. The home or individual apartment of the person served, even when the organization holds the lease or rental agreement on behalf of the person served, is not included in the survey application or identified as a site on the accreditation outcome.



### **Key Areas Addressed**

- Person-centered
- Education and wellness, recovery, and resiliency
- Independence and self-determination
- Education on health and safety

### **Recommendations**

There are no recommendations in this area.

## **Section 5. Specific Population Designation Standards**

### **5.C. Children and Adolescents (CA)**

#### **Description**

Programs for children and adolescents consist of an array of behavioral health services designed specifically to address the treatment needs of children and adolescents. Such programs tailor their services to the particular needs and preferences of children and adolescents and are provided in a setting that is both relevant to and comfortable for this population.

#### **Key Areas Addressed**

- Comprehensive assessments
- Services based on needs of child
- Criminal background checks for staff providing direct services

#### **Recommendations**

There are no recommendations in this area.

### **5.E. Criminal Justice (CJ)**

#### **Description**

Criminal justice programs serve special populations comprised of accused or adjudicated individuals referred from within the criminal justice system who are experiencing behavioral health needs, including alcohol or other drug abuse or addiction, or psychiatric disabilities or disorders. Services can be provided through courts, through probation and parole agencies, in community-based or institutional settings, or in sex offender programs. Institutional settings may include jails, prisons, and detention centers. The services are designed to maximize the person's ability to function effectively in the community. The criminal justice mandates include community safety needs in all judicial decisions and require that behavioral health programs are aware of the safety requirements of not only the individual, program staff members, and peers, but also the community at large.

Criminal justice educational programs may include either community-based or institution-based educational and training services. Such programs may include personal and interpersonal skills training, conflict resolution, anger management, DUI/DWI education, mental health education, education about alcohol and other drugs, information on criminal thinking patterns, or traditional academic education.

**Key Areas Addressed**

- May be community based or within correctional facility
- Team has specialized criminal justice knowledge

**Recommendations**

There are no recommendations in this area.

# Program(s)/Service(s) by Location

## **Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris, Inc.**

33 South Fullerton Avenue  
Montclair, NJ 07042

Health Home: Comprehensive Care (Adults)  
Outpatient Treatment: Mental Health (Adults)  
Outpatient Treatment: Mental Health (Children and Adolescents)  
Prevention: Mental Health (Adults)  
*Governance Standards Applied*

## **Collaborative Justice Services**

60 Washington Street, Suite 301  
Morristown, NJ 07071

Case Management/Services Coordination: Integrated: SUD/Mental Health (Criminal Justice)

## **Essex County Correctional Facility**

254 Doremus Avenue  
Newark, NJ 07104

Case Management/Services Coordination: Integrated: SUD/Mental Health (Criminal Justice)  
Health Home: Comprehensive Care (Adults)

## **Integrated Case Management Services**

1373 Broad Street, Suite 312  
Clifton, NJ 07512

Case Management/Services Coordination: Integrated: SUD/Mental Health (Adults)  
Health Home: Comprehensive Care (Adults)

## **Integrated Case Management Services/Supported Employment/Assisted OT Services/Supported Living/PATH**

80 Main Street, Suite 150, 370, 500  
West Orange, NJ 07052

Case Management/Services Coordination: Integrated: SUD/Mental Health (Adults)  
Case Management/Services Coordination: Mental Health (Adults)  
Health Home: Comprehensive Care (Adults)  
Supported Living: Mental Health (Adults)

## **Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris**

300 Littleton Avenue, Suite 300  
Parsippany, NJ 07054

Case Management/Services Coordination: Integrated: SUD/Mental Health (Adults)  
Case Management/Services Coordination: Mental Health (Adults)  
Health Home: Comprehensive Care (Adults)  
Prevention: Mental Health (Adults)  
Supported Living: Mental Health (Adults)

**Mental Health Association of Essex and Morris**

83 Spring Street, Suite 302B  
Newton, NJ 07860

Case Management/Services Coordination: Integrated: SUD/Mental Health (Adults)  
Health Home: Comprehensive Care (Adults)  
Prevention: Mental Health (Adults)

**Prospect House Partial Care/Prospect Primary Healthcare**

424 Main Street  
East Orange, NJ 07018

Community Integration: Psychosocial Rehabilitation (Adults)  
Health Home: Comprehensive Care (Adults)