

Rural East Texas Health Network Letter of Agreement

The Rural East Texas Health Network (RETHN) seeks collaboration among local service entities to implement a standard protocol for emergency behavior health crisis situations.

By signing this agreement we are publicly endorsing the need for a standard approach to behavioral health crisis. We agree to work collaboratively with the service entities involved in the process by adopting, practicing and promoting the use of the Emergency Behavioral Health Protocol. In addition, we agree to begin with the protocol to resolve any disagreements, questions, or uncertainties in a behavioral health crisis situation.

(Your signature)

(Print your name)

(Print name of Agency)

(Date)

Mail to:

Anne Bondesen
Rural East Texas Health Network
Program Director
#57 Waterford
Nacogdoches, Texas 75965
(936) 465-0357
anneb@burke-center.org

Emergency Behavioral Protocol Guide

Steps For Law Enforcement (city/county):

1. Assess and stabilize situation/patient
 2. Determine if Magistrate's Order for Emergency Apprehension and Detention or EPOW is needed
 3. Transfer to hospital or Burke Center (during day M-F)
 4. Upon Arrival at hospital/Burke Center:
Officer should remain at hospital/Burke Center until completion of the preliminary examination(s):
 - a. Medical triage - head-to-toe check
 - b. Drug/alcohol screen
 - c. Mental status exam
- Then officer and hospital/Burke Center should:
- a. Re-evaluate security/safety needs
 - b. Negotiate security/safety resources
 - i.) Is patient passive?
 - ii) Is security officer available?
 - iii) Is there an available exam room which can be easily monitored?
 - iv.) Is patient hostile?
 - v.) Is patient expressing determination to leave facility
 - vi.) Is patient under the influence of drugs or alcohol?
5. Officer transports to behavioral facility.

For non-resident - If episode occurs in a county other than that of the patient's residence, the county of residence reimburses costs to the county which transports.

6. If medical facility determines patient does not have any medical or behavioral health needs, presenting officer or family will transport patient back to point of origin.

For Hospital:

1. Family brings to the Emergency room or Law Enforcement brings to ER
2. Medicare, Medicaid and private insurance **will not** reimburse ambulance providers to transport a psychiatric patient under **any** circumstances.
3. If the patient is transported by private car to the hospital ER or Burke Center, once there, the patient is free to leave if an EPOW or warrant is **not** obtained.
4. Patient is placed in consultation room that can be

easily monitored.

5. Evaluation of resources for security/safety needs is implemented (see i-v above; potential rating scale of 1-5, with one being the least and five being strong)
6. Preliminary screening exam is done by physician:
 - a. Determine need for intervention and transfer to psychiatric facility
 - b. Determine necessity for Burke Center assessment/authorization for State resources (refer to identified hospital's exclusion criteria)
 - c. Determine need for legal warrants
 - d. Determine need for drug & alcohol assessment
7. During the day, contact Burke Center Centralized Intake Department for mental health worker assessment (866-242-4556), and Burke Center Crisis Line after 5:00 pm and on weekends (1-800-392-8343); ADAC (1-800 445-8562)
8. Emergency Services Assessment form is discussed with Burke Center Emergency Services for evaluation of case and/or request assistance in placement:
 - a. Burke Center staff requested to do assessment
 - b. Burke Center notifies of state-funded hospital bed slot capacity
 - c. Determination of doctor-to-doctor transfer opportunity.
 - d. Determine available resources within community outpatient services dependent on preliminary safety and security assessment

Facility beginning commitment should assume responsibility for completion of commitment.

Private Providers/No Payer Source:

1. Utilize Burke Center if there is **not** a payer source for hospitalization.
 - a. Determine if Law-Enforcement is required to assist
 - b. Determine if local Emergency Room is required

For Burke Center:

1. Individual, family or community makes contact.
2. Telephone contacts via Emergency Services **1-800-392-8343** are assessed for imminent harm to self or others and determination for a warrant is made:
 - a.) If family or individual is in the community they are referred to local Judge's office to obtain warrant.
 - b.) If imminent risk is apparent, the Burke Center staff will request Law Enforcement to assess situation for possible EPOW.
 - c.) If Law Enforcement EPOW is utilized.
3. Walk in at clinic-assessment is made face-to-face for imminent harm to self or others and determination for hospitalization is made:
 - a.) If hospitalization is determined, a warrant is required; family is referred to local Judge's office to obtain warrant. Judge will contact Law Enforcement to pick up paper work to carry out warrant.
 - b.) If hospitalization is determined and no individual is available, a warrant or EPOW, dependent on situation, will be obtained by Burke Center.
 - c.) Persons exiting Burke Center for hospitalization may require medical clearance dependent on admitting hospital.
 - d.) Burke Center communicates to law enforcement and ER the plan of action to meet person in crisis needs
 - e.) If medical clearance is required, Burke Center will inform ER of where doctor-to-doctor transfer will be, and have available fax numbers for transfer.
4. If an individual is located in a hospital emergency room and Emergency Services is contacted,

a face-to-face assessment may be determined as necessary before State funded beds are accessed.

- a.) ER contacts Crisis /Intake at 1-866-242-4556 to request assistance on indigent.
- b.) Emergency Services dispatches Mental Health Clinician for face-to-face assessment if required.

For Judges:

If someone is seeking mental health care, and they are not in crisis, they can contact Burke Center between 8:00 am to 5:00 p.m., Monday thru Friday: (936) 634-5010 or toll-free: (866) 242-4556 (24 hours)

If someone is seeking care, and alcohol/drug abuse is involved, and they are not in crisis, they can contact ADAC between 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday-Friday; (936) 634-5753 or toll free 1-800-445-8562

If someone is experiencing a mental health crisis, i.e.: there is indication or report that an individual is or appears to be a danger to themselves or others due to a mental illness: Burke Center's Mental Health Emergency Services can be contacted 24/7 at: 1-800-392-8343

If there truly is a mental health crisis, the Burke Center will ask that a responsible adult, who may be present, transport the individual to the nearest hospital ER for further evaluation.

If no responsible adult is available to transport the individual, or if the situation is too high risk, the Burke Center will contact law enforcement to pick-up the individual (via Emergency Peace Officer's Warrant) and transport them to the nearest hospital ER.

At the ER, further evaluation takes place to determine if the individual requires in-patient psychiatric care or not. At this time, it is also determined as to whether or not there may be some other health care condition that may be causing or contributing to the emergency symptoms.

Furthermore, if inpatient psychiatric referral is indicated,

the prospective patient must be determined to be "medically stable" before a State Hospital or even a private psychiatric facility will accept them. This must be a communication between the referring and accepting hospitals.

If during normal working hours, a family member or friend calls seeking mental health care help for someone who is not willing to voluntarily get help on their own, such individuals will be directed to their local court of jurisdiction to complete an application for involuntary detainment by a law enforcement officer (a mental health warrant for emergency detention).

The Department of State Health Services (DSHS) requires Burke Center to pre-approve all State hospital admissions. If a person is taken to a State hospital without advanced approval, there is a high probability that they will be turned away

Persons requiring State hospital admission: Adults are usually admitted to Rusk State Hospital, children and adolescents are usually admitted to Austin State Hospital. When these hospitals are "at capacity" patients are diverted to other State Hospitals (Burke Center usually knows when this situation exists).

Austin State Hospital requires that all children or adolescents arrive under a court commitment (requires a warrant from the court of jurisdiction). However, there are a few exceptions.

Neither Burke Center or the Courts need to be involved with hospitalizations to a private psychiatric hospital if the patient or family has the means (insurance, cash) and the patient is willing to be admitted.

However, there are some private psychiatric hospitals that will accept people against their will (court committed) and there are some that won't. Burke Center Emergency Services Hotline can assist with this information when the need arises.

EMERGENCY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PROTOCOL POCKET GUIDE

**Burke Center Mental Health
24-Hour Emergency Services:
1-800-392-8343
Alcohol/Drug Abuse Council
1-800-445-8562**

