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Compeer Referral Procedures and Responsibilities for Mental Health Professionals

REFERRAL GUIDELINES:

Clients must be referred by a qualified mental health professional who is engaged in an ongoing clinical relationship with the client. A mental health professional must be trained or licensed in social work, psychology, case management or be a medical doctor. The mental health professional must know the client, see him/her for treatment on a regular basis, and be willing to be consulted for intervention and consultation as situations or crisis occurs.

Clients must have a primary diagnosis of mental illness and have been under your care for a minimum of six months. The clients must be in a stage of their recovery ready for a referral to the Compeer program. Appropriate clients are:

- Able to benefit from the kind of social interaction a volunteer friend provides
- Willing and desiring to be matched with a volunteer friend
- Willing to participate in a volunteer program
- Dependable in keeping appointments and returning phone calls
- Residing at a permanent address, not currently homeless, at risk of becoming homeless, in prison or hospitalized
- Have a rudimentary insight into their illness and are aware of the importance of maintaining a professional therapeutic alliance with the referring mental health professional throughout the duration of the Compeer match.

• Note: Referrals of clients with any history of criminal activity (felony), physically or sexually aggressive behavior, fire starting, and/or a diagnosis of narcissistic or anti-social personality disorder and/or dementia should first be discussed with a Compeer staff member to determine appropriateness.

REFERRAL PROCEDURES:

1. Discuss the Compeer program with your client and have the release form signed.
2. Complete both sides of the referral form and return it with the release to Compeer.
3. All pertinent psychiatric and medical information should be disclosed. Record symptomatic behaviors and diagnosis.
4. List all hobbies and special interests. A client's chance of being matched is enhanced by positively reflecting the referred individual's personality and interests. All requested information is important to facilitate a complementary match with a volunteer.
5. Additional comments, concerns, and information are welcome and helpful

MATCHING PROCEDURES:

1. Volunteer is interviewed, screened, and trained by Compeer staff.
2. Compeer Volunteer Coordinator chooses a potential friend from a list of profiles selected based on age, smoking preference, geographic location, mutual interests and hobbies, level of client functioning as well as skill level and experience of the volunteer.
3. Volunteer Coordinator calls the referring mental health professional for the purpose of gaining additional information about a potential friend.
4. A match meeting is arranged in a public place with the client, volunteer, Compeer Coordinator, and the mental health professional (if they wish to be present for the initial meeting) and the friendship begins.
5. The mental health professional, Compeer Coordinator, and volunteer will maintain a mutually supportive relationship throughout the friendship. Compeer staff will contact the mental health professional to report serious concerns or problems that cannot be resolved. The mental health professional will be the point of contact with Compeer staff should a crisis occur.
6. The mental health professional is asked to monitor the Compeer relationship and report any concerns to the Compeer office.
 - a. Concerns about inappropriate behavior or activities should be reported immediately to the Compeer office.
 - b. If your client leaves the treatment against medical advice, please notify the Compeer office immediately.
 - c. Any pertinent information such as change in the referred individual's status, change in address, change in case manager, etc. should be reported to the Compeer officer as soon as possible.
 - d. Special Note: Please notify the Compeer office as soon as possible if your client is hospitalized, so that the volunteer may call, send a card, or visit his/her friend at the appropriate time.