



Community Care Practice Guide

Community Care provides child and family focused services and supports to families referred from the Department. These services and supports are geared to:

- ◆ Keeping the children in the family safe from abuse and neglect,
- ◆ Keeping the family intact,
- ◆ Preventing the need for further and future intervention by the Department (including removal of the child from the home), and
- ◆ Build ongoing linkages to community-based resources that improve the safety, health, stability, and well being of those served.

Eligibility Process

The Department of Human Services receives child abuse allegations and an assessment is initiated. **The 45-day timeframe for referring eligible cases to Community Care begins.**

The child protective worker (CPW) begins the process of assessing the case. **The 20-business-day timeframe for completion of assessment begins.**

During the course of an assessment, if the DHS worker determines that there is a need for safety plan services, the worker must obtain supervisory approval and prepare the documentation for referral (*Safety Plan*, form 470-3055, and *Referral Face Sheet*).

At the completion of the assessment make the appropriate referral to:

- ◆ DHS
 - FSRP Services; or
- ◆ Community Care
 - Answer the following three questions:

* If the case meets criteria for Community Care referral, conduct the Need Consideration		
Does the family need assistance to prevent future incidents of abuse?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	If you have answered yes to all, refer to Community Care.
Does the family need support beyond current formal or informal systems?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	If you have answered no to any, consider information and referral or information only and close case.
Is the parent willing to be referred to Community Care Services?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

NOTE: The **Need Consideration** should be used as a tool to guide the CPW in determining if a referral to Community Care is appropriate. Just because a family meets criteria for eligibility, it does not automatically mean that a referral should be made.

If **ALL three** boxes are checked yes, then a referral to Community Care can be made. The **Need Consideration** section of the *CPS Assessment Summary* does not print off as it is only a tool to guide you, so it is not included in the report provided to the family, et al.

The *Family Risk Assessment* must be completed as it determines the risk level and is provided as part of the referral documentation.

If the case does not meet criteria for a referral to DHS or Community Care you may provide Information and Information and Referral to close the case.

Cases NOT Eligible to Receive Community Care Services

The Department will **NOT** refer a family for Community Care:

- ◆ When a child has been adjudicated a Child in Need of Assistance **OR**
- ◆ If any child in the household has an open child welfare service case with the Department **OR**
- ◆ If the alleged abuse occurred in an out of home setting.

Referral Process/Release of Information

Community Care is a voluntary service. All families who agree to Community Care must sign a release of information. The release of information to be used for Community Care can be accessed in OUTLOOK under: Public Folders\All Public Folders\State Approved Forms\Service\Community Care. The form number is 470-4128, *Community Care Explanation and Referral*. A Spanish version of the information letter and release is also available.

A signed release of information must be received by DHS and placed in the case file before making a Community Care referral. Verbal agreements or faith that a client will return a signed release are not sufficient.

DHS cannot release child abuse information to a provider of care without proper authorization. In Community Care, Mid Iowa is the provider of care and the proper authorization is a signed release of information, form 470-4128. Information provided to Mid Iowa is not considered a "referral" unless **all** required information is provided within the 45-day timeframe. If not provided within the timeframe, the case will be deemed ineligible for Community Care.

NOTE: A signed copy of the release of information must be signed by the adult who wants to receive services and mailed with their copy of the final assessment.

If there are two households and both parents want to participate with Community Care, both parents must then sign a separate release of information. This still remains as one referral, but with two separate signed releases.

If there are multiple *CPS Assessment Summaries* completed simultaneously on one family who becomes eligible for Community Care, only ONE referral will be made for services.

Documentation in the *CPS Assessment Summary*

If the family is eligible and agrees to participate with Community Care, the CPW should document in their report that they discussed this option and that the family agreed to participate with services and signed the release of information. A copy of the signed release of information is maintained in the CPW case file and a copy is mailed along with the report. This information should be documented in the "Recommendation for Service" section of the *CPS Assessment Summary*.

System Entries – STAR

For those families that meet criteria for Community Care, a referral is made through **STAR** to generate the referral date and through **Case Flow** to send the referral. The process is as follows:

1. On **STAT2**, one of the three risk levels must be entered by selecting with an 'X.' This will correspond to the final risk level on the *Family Risk Assessment*.
2. You will then select the Service Eligibility Category based on the report finding, risk level, and age of the child victim. Service Eligibility has an **F2** lookup. **STAR** has built in edits that will assist in selecting the appropriate service category. If the family is eligible for Community Care, you will select option "**I**". Following the Service Eligibility Category there is an EXCEPTION REASON entry field. This **F2** lookup provides the user with exception reasons for not making a referral to the service category (options A – J). Some exception reasons may only be used if the child victim is the only child in the home.
3. If the Service Eligibility Category is Community Care, you must enter a 'Y' in the release obtained field unless there is an exception reason listed for not making a Community Care Referral.
4. The referral date cannot be entered until the report has been approved by a supervisor, thus completing the assessment. Once the report has been approved the assigned CPW will receive an alert to make the Community Care Referral. You as the user can fast path directly to **STAT2**.

If the referral date is not entered within 36 calendar days from the date of intake a second alert will be issued to the CPW and an alert will also be issued to the supervisor that a Community Care referral needs to be made. If the referral is not made within 45 calendar days from the date of intake, no referral can be made.

5. The RELEASE OBTAINED, REFERRAL DATE, and EXCEPTION REASON entry fields remain open for entry after supervisory approval. If the release is obtained and referral can be received by Mid Iowa within 45 days of from the date of intake, the exception reason may be deleted and a "Y" entered in the release obtained field.

The referral date in **STAR** is the date that you are actually in the system on **STAT2**; you cannot pre or post date the referral date.

NOTE: If any demographics change during the course of the assessment from what was initially reported to intake, the CPW needs to make sure that those changes are entered into **STAR**. All current and valid demographic information, specifically address and phone numbers, should be entered into the system.

NOTE: When there are multiple *Child Protective Assessment Summaries* completed on a family, only one referral is made. EXAMPLE: A CPW has three open assessments on a family who is eligible for Community Care. The CPW will select ONE report (Incident #) that will be the primary report to be included in the referral. The other two reports will be reflected on the **STAT2** screen in **STAR** with Exception Reason (F) – Family does not need additional supports) and on the Incident Summary line type in “Community Care referred under another Incident Number.”

System Entries – Case Flow

When you have entered the referral date on **STAT2**, you should:

1. Go immediately into Case Flow.
2. Type in the incident number and then to the far right of Case Flow is the section titled "Send Community Care Referral."
3. Click on the Assess Summary & Fam Risk and then hit Go. This will pull up your completed report.
4. At the top right, there is a button that says *Email Referral to Community Care*. Click on this and the referral is sent. **If there is no referral date listed on STAT2 you will not be able to e-mail your referral and an error message will appear stating there is no referral date in STAR.**

NOTE: The referral date on **STAT2** and the date that you send the referral to Community Care through Case Flow **MUST** be the same date. This prevents conflicting referral dates and triggers the timeline for Community Care to make contact with the family within 14 calendar days.

Once a Community Care referral is made, the CPW's involvement ends for purposes of case oversight. The release of information is for the purpose of data sharing only. DHS will provide the current *CPS Assessment Summary*, including the risk and safety assessment, and the Community Care contractor will provide DHS with information on whether services were accepted, general categories of services provided, and when and why services ended. If the Community Care contractor needs additional information in order to make contact with the family or regarding any of the referral information, the Community Care contractor may contact you and you can provide this information. Contact may be made if another assessment is received during the course of the Community Care service provision.

Out-of-Home Setting

If the alleged abuse occurred in an out-of-home setting, the family is NOT eligible for Community Care.

Court Involvement and Community Care

If CPW determines that juvenile court intervention is necessary, a referral to court for a CINA petition must be made. If a CINA petition or assessment is initiated, a referral to Community Care is not appropriate. If CPW anticipates court intervention in the near future, the case is not appropriate for Community Care.

Addendums

Iowa Code 232.71B, subsection 11, states “An addendum to a *Child Protective Assessment Services Summary* is required when additional information becomes available regarding the allegation or finding.”

How Does an Addendum Affect Eligibility for Community Care?

Chapter 17-B(4), Topic 19, states “If an addendum is completed due to new or additional information within six months of the intake date, a Community Care referral can be made **if**:

- ◆ The addendum information changes the risk level and service eligibility of the original report, and
- ◆ The family was not eligible for Community Care following the original report.

New Allegations/New Assessment Initiated on a Family Receiving Community Care

If a family is currently receiving Community Care and a new child abuse referral is assigned and the outcome determines the family is Community Care eligible, on **STAT2** use Exception Reason (F) – Family does not need additional supports) and on the Incident Summary line type in “Community Care currently involved.”

If the outcome of the current (new) assessment identifies DHS eligibility, the CPW must contact the Community Care provider and notify them of the case eligibility so that Community Care services can be terminated and the agency can assist with the transition of the case. The CPW should e-mail Mid Iowa by contacting Julie Gunn at julie.gunn@mifc.com stating that the family will now be served by DHS.