

County of Financial Responsibility (COFR) Dispute Resolution Committee - Case 2005-5

Committee:	Pam Pekelder	Ottawa Community Mental Health
	Doug Ward	Community Mental Health for Central Michigan
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The Committee met on November 17, 2005 concerning a dispute between two CMHSPs. CMHSP representatives from the two agencies participated (one by phone) to explain the case and the rationale for each CMHSP's position.

Issue: An individual was served by the CMHSP in County A in July, 2004 as a resident. In October, 2004, she tried to purchase a handgun in another county, apparently in an attempt to commit suicide, but was refused. After stopping at a private clinic in County B, she was picked up by police who called the County B CMHSP. The on-call worker contacted the County A CMHSP. There is a difference of opinion over whether the person at County A authorized pre-admission screening (for which authorization is not required) or in-patient hospitalization. The person was admitted that night to a regional hospital.

County A CMHSP says that it is not the COFR because it never authorized the admission, only a screening. Secondly, the person should be considered a resident of County B because she was homeless when she was treated and then stayed in County B after her release from the hospital. Also, the intake forms at the hospital showed a County B address for the individual.

County B CMHSP says that County A is the COFR because the individual last lived independently in County A and was "passing through" County B when she was seen and hospitalized. Her intake documents indicated that she had no intent to stay in County B. It was determined during the hearing that the County B address referenced on her hospitalization intake form was actually the address of the County B CMHSP.

Resolution: The difference of opinion on authorization for the admission is not relevant. County B did what was expected under the agreement: they provided timely service without being delayed by concerns over finances. Authorization is not a determining factor for COFR.

The COFR is the county where the individual last lived independently. To be living independently, the agreement says that "The location in which the person is residing is not transient." There was no evidence that this person was anything but transient in County B. The last place where the person lived independently was County A and County A is the COFR.