

# Mental Health Approved Home Operator Manual

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*Saskatchewan!* The logo for Saskatchewan, featuring the word "Saskatchewan!" in a green, sans-serif font. To the right of the text is a stylized graphic consisting of three overlapping, curved shapes in shades of yellow and green, resembling a sun or a leaf.

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## **1. Purpose of the Mental Health Approved Home Program Operator Manual**

This manual is not intended to replace The Mental Health Services Act, The Mental Health Services Regulations, or legal advice. This manual is intended to be supplementary to the Act and regulations. Mental health approved home operators and persons responsible for administering the portions of the legislation pertaining to mental health approved homes are responsible for being familiar with The Mental Health Services Act, The Mental Health Services Regulations and this manual.

## 2. Responsibilities of the Provincial Health Authority for Mental Health Approved Home Forms, Policies and Procedures

### Forms

The Saskatchewan Health Authority (SHA) shall develop and maintain standardized forms for the following purposes:

1. Assessment of suitability to become a mental health approved home operator covering:
  - application for licensing as a mental health approved home;
  - authorization to receive confidential information on potential operators;
  - initial inspection;
  - mental health approved home operator's orientation;
  - Reference Check as part of assessment of suitability to become a Mental Health Approved Home Operator
  - confidentiality agreement
  
2. Maintenance of licensure and resident placement covering:
  - outcome of mental health approved home visit report
  - trustee accounting report
  - resident medical summary
  - operator service agreement for a resident
  - renewal of mental health approved home licence application
  - mental health approved home program operator's review
  - mental health approved home program letter of transmittal and DLSA assessment
  - mental health approved home program resident review
  - complaint investigation
  
3. Licence cancellation
  - cancellation form

Until such time as new forms, approved by the Regional Director(s) of Mental Health Services, designated by Saskatchewan Health Authority Head of Mental Health Services, are developed and the SHA provides notice of the same to the Ministry of Health, the forms contained in the appendices of the October 2015 Mental Health Approved Home Operator's Manual shall remain in use.

## **Policies and Procedures**

The SHA shall develop and maintain policies and procedures for:

- submission/reporting of general concerns
- use of legal/illegal substances in an approved home
  - by a resident
  - by a mental health approved home operator
  - by a family member/off duty operator
- reports of abuse of a resident
- investigation of concerns and/or reports of abuse including documentation and confidentiality
- application and licencing including:
  - offer of other services to persons other than residents
  - updating / reporting changes
  - supports for operators
  - education and training
  - basic rights of the Mental Health Approved Home Operator
- increasing and decreasing licenced spaces
- licence renewals
- rights and privileges of residents
- placement of clients
- approved home enhancements / layered needs
- resident discharge from home
- conflict of interest
- medications
- amendment, cancellation or suspension of licence

Until such time as new policies and procedures, approved by the Regional Director(s) of Mental Health Services, are developed and the SHA provides notice of the same to the Ministry of Health, the policies and procedures contained in the appendices of the October 2015 Mental Health Approved Home Operator's Manual shall remain in use.

## 3. Introduction

### What is a Mental Health Approved Home?

A Mental Health Approved Home is a primary residence that is issued a license under The Mental Health Services Act. The Mental Health Approved Home must operate according to the requirements in The Mental Health Services Act and Regulations and the Mental Health Approved Home Program Operator Manual. Approved Homes provide residential services to persons with mental health issues. Each approved home has a condition on their licence that requires them to operate in accordance with the most recent edition of the Mental Health Approved Homes Program Operator Manual.

### Goal of the Mental Health Approved Home Program

The goal of the Mental Health Approved Home Program is to provide a safe living experience supportive of a person's recovery. These family living experiences may be for short to long-term periods with the common aim being to support and promote successful community integration. The operators and the home must facilitate this goal through providing a positive, nurturing atmosphere where residents feel:

- safe from physical and psychological harm;
- accepted by others;
- free to express oneself; and,
- understood.

Note: When the term "Approved Home" or "Home" is used in this document, it means a mental health approved home.

Becoming an approved home operator is the beginning of an intense learning experience. Much of this learning will be on the job training. Prior to licensing, operators will receive an orientation and are required to take courses in Standard First Aid, Food Safety, and CPR and generally become familiar mental health issues. Ongoing training will also be available. Operators are expected to participate in at least one full day of training on an annual basis. Most operators who are seriously interested in people and in helping others will be successful in providing a family like living environment and experience for their residents.

Contact your local mental health clinic to obtain information about mental health and mental illness. The Schizophrenia Society of Saskatchewan and the Canadian Mental Health Association are also good resources.

Life experiences can be an asset. A person who has lived in a family with a person who has a disability has likely gained great insight that can be useful in operating an approved home. Many residents have faced problems in their own life and may have been rejected and/or misunderstood because of them. An approved home operator needs a sense of humour, must be understanding, patient, quick thinking and respectful.

## **Who are the Residents?**

The residents of the Mental Health Approved Home Program are adult persons who face serious challenges as a result of mental illnesses such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, depression and other psychiatric disorders. They may also have cognitive issues, an addiction or a legal problem. These challenges may make independent living difficult for a time.

Medications (injections and/or pills) are often helpful in managing the symptoms of these illnesses. For these medications to work best, good nutrition and regular meals are necessary. Approved Homes provide an effective stage between hospital care and supported independent living or a self-reliant life.

The Approved Home must provide a low stress living environment with daily monitoring of mental health issues.

The largest group of persons in Approved Homes have severe mental illness or a disorder that has remained active for at least one year and often several years. The illness or disorder can cause moderate to severe functional disabilities such as:

- low stress tolerance;
- lack of concentration;
- confusion;
- overwhelming emotions;
- poor judgement; and
- learning problems.

Persons with a mental disorder or illness frequently have difficulty in finding and maintaining their own accommodations during and following periods of severe symptoms. Many require shelter and support because of difficulties including:

- managing money;
- inexperience in independent living situations;
- organizational skills;
- self-care capacities; and
- arranging and maintaining support from other persons.

The Mental Health Approved Home Operator has the opportunity to partner with residents to:

- be part of a “circle of support” of the person’s choosing to facilitate recovery
- help inform a resident’s recovery plans and improve the planning, organization and delivery of mental health services and supports.

Saskatchewan Health Authority staff can provide additional information regarding Mental Health Approved Homes at the following locations and contact numbers:

North Battleford - Approved Home Coordinator- (306) 446- 6500

Prince Albert – (306) 765-6055

Swift Current – (306) 778 5280

Weyburn – Approved Home Coordinator - (306) 842-8665

Saskatoon - (306)-655-4590

Regina – (306) 766-7800

Moose Jaw – (306) 691 6464

Yorkton – Approved Home Coordinator - (306) 786-0558



## **4. The Mental Health Services Act and Regulations**

It is important to understand that the manual provides assistance with The Mental Health Services Act and Regulations and it is not a replacement.

Mental Health Approved Home Operators and persons responsible for administration of the particular portions of the legislation that pertain to mental health approved homes should be familiar with The Mental Health Services Act and Regulations. It is advisable that the documents be reviewed yearly upon licence review or as part of education supplied by the Saskatchewan Health Authority.

The Mental Health Services Act and Regulations can be found at:

<https://pubsaskdev.blob.core.windows.net/pubsask-prod/892/M13-1.pdf>

<https://pubsaskdev.blob.core.windows.net/pubsask-prod/2151/M13-1R1.pdf>

## **5. Ministry of Social Services funding for residents on a temporary absence or discharge**

Please see the Ministry of Social Services, Saskatchewan Assistance Program, Policy Manual for information on payment for temporary absences of residents, required notice periods, etc.

## 6. Request for Review by the Ministry of Health

- A person who is the subject of a decision or action made with respect to the issuing, refusal to issue, renewal, amendment, suspension or cancellation of a license for mental health approved home by the PHA, after exhausting appeal to the Regional Director may request a Ministry of Health review of the decision.

The request for a review of the decision should be made to the Director of Mental Health Services, Ministry of Health.

- The request for the review must be in writing and be within 30 calendar days of the Regional Director's decision.
- A request for review to the Ministry does not stay the effect of the decision or action in relation to which the review is requested.
- On receiving the request the Ministry shall:
  - review the information provided regarding the decision;
  - allow the person requesting the review the opportunity to make representation in person or in written form; and
  - request further information if necessary.
- On completing the review, the Director shall:
  - confirm, reverse or vary the decision or action in relation to which the review was requested; and
  - provide written reasons for the decision to the person who requested the review.