

Customer Service

San Diego County Behavioral Health Services (SDCBHS) recognizes that its greatest strength lies in the talent of its providers and expects them to always treat clients, families and other consumers with respect, dignity and courtesy. They should be treated *without* regard to race, religion, creed, color, gender, economic status, sexual orientation, age, source of payment or any other non-treatment or non-service related characteristic.

Clients and families expect high-quality customer service and they deserve it. They want fast, efficient service and caring, professional treatment. Exceptional customer service includes:

- Treating customers with courtesy, respect, professionalism and a positive attitude
- Responding to customers in a timely manner whether in person, by phone, in writing or via e-mail
- Being aware of cultural diversity and focusing on understanding customer differences
- Providing complete, accurate and reliable information and feedback

County and contracted organizational providers are expected to ensure that they have a customer-first attitude which is instilled throughout their operations. Systems should be in place so that customers are able to voice their problems or complaints anonymously. Input should be listened to and acted upon. Programs can then use the input to look at systems and improve them. The methods your program or legal entity uses may be through informal conversations or more formal methods such as individual interviews, focus groups, surveys, and suggestion/comment cards or forms.

The recommended way to get ongoing feedback from customers is to have suggestion or comment cards available to them on site. The advantage of using brief surveys and comment cards is that they are more user friendly and convenient. That way you can receive timely input on many aspects of your services that can be reviewed and acted upon quickly. A critical element of using suggestion or comment cards is to ensure that individual's identities are held confidential so that they will feel safe to comment or respond to surveys candidly without fear of any recrimination or retaliation.

The following are the basic expectation that SDCBHS has for all County and Contracted programs:

1. Establish Customer Service Standards which may include elements such as:
 - Answering phones and email in a friendly and timely manner
 - Informing clients when appointments will be cancelled

- Having a positive attitude to clients and families.
 - Going the extra mile for clients, such as fitting in one more client when you are about to close, taking more time to explain a bill to a confused client, initiating a friendly conversation, dealing with questions instead of deflecting them to others.
 - Having a clean, neat, organized and cheerful workplace can never be undervalued. A welcoming waiting room invites visitors to feel at home and creates an expectation that services will be equally caring and accepting.
2. Ensure that all staff members are aware of the standards and are clear that adhering to Customer Service Standards is an expectation of your organization and your facility.
 3. Encourage your customers to give you input that will allow you to make changes to improve the service that you are delivering.
 4. Ensure clients and families that if they give input to you or your program about improvements that are needed that they will not face any kind of retaliation.
 5. Enhance your program based on the input you receive from customers to demonstrate that you are listening.
 6. Make Customer Service training available to all staff.
 7. Recognize great customer service