



ISSUE DATE

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SUBJECT:

**Guidelines for Referrals and Coordination of Admission to South Mountain Restoration Center for Individuals Discharged from Correctional Facilities**

BY:

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**SCOPE:**

South Mountain Restoration Center  
Department of Corrections Facilities

**PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this bulletin is to provide uniform guidelines for accepting referrals and coordinating admissions to South Mountain Restoration Center (SMRC) from Department of Corrections (DOC) facilities. SMRC will revise its policies, procedures, and practices accordingly.

**BACKGROUND:**

Individuals residing in DOC facilities may be referred for admission to SMRC in anticipation of the conclusion of their sentence or as part of a parole home plan.

The Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) and the Bureau of Community and Hospital Operations (BCHO) support SMRC's mission of providing the highest quality of care and services to our residents in order to assist in achieving their full potential. In addition, OMHSAS and BCHO support the individual's right to self-directed care, independent choice in placement and being served in the least restrictive environment consistent with the safety and welfare of other individuals in residences, staff and the public.

**PROCEDURE:**

*SMRC Staff Responsibilities:*

SMRC staff will consider an individual who is currently being served by the Department of Corrections for direct admission according to the following:

1. All potential referrals from the DOC for admission to SMRC must be currently receiving the level of care for which they are being referred. Therefore, individuals being referred

**COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS BULLETIN SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO:**  
Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services, Bureau of Policy, Planning & Program Development, P.O. Box 2675, Harrisburg, PA 17105. General Office Number 717-772-7900.

to SMRC must be presently housed at SCI-Laurel Highlands or SCI-Muncy and receiving nursing home level of care.

2. Individuals must be screened by the local Area Agency on Aging OPTIONS Program Assessment and approved as Nursing Facility Clinically-Eligible for long term stay (greater than 180 days) prior to starting the referral process. This step will allow collaboration with any enhanced re-entry efforts currently underway.
3. Initial contact regarding all potential referrals from the DOC must be directed to the BCHO-DOC liaison. BCHO will make a preliminary determination whether the individual may be eligible for SMRC admission. If BCHO concludes that the referral is appropriate, permission will be granted for the DOC to contact SMRC to make the referral.
4. To be approved for admission, individuals referred must meet the following criteria:
  - a. The individual must be a legal resident of Pennsylvania.
  - b. The individual does not require an acute level of medical care.
  - c. Center staff and the facility are able to provide for the individual's needs.
  - d. The individual and their family/resident representative agree with admission to the Center; knowing it will be a long-term placement and having familiarity with the location of SMRC.
  - e. Other options for placement have been exhausted, including available less-restrictive environments and community nursing facilities. Referring facilities must document efforts to secure placement for the individual in his or her local area.
  - f. All admissions must be reviewed and approved by the SMRC Admission Committee. Some referrals may require additional review and approval by BCHO.
  - g. An individual may not be under court order or other legal requirements to remain a resident of SMRC.
5. Further assessment via an in-person visit or video conferencing may be requested if a clear determination cannot be made following the review of information.
6. If the individual is accepted to SMRC, the admission date will be determined by the home plan approval or maximum sentence date. The DOC is responsible to coordinate transportation to SMRC, sexual offender registration, and any other prerequisites for release.

*Emergency Referrals:*

An exception to the general policy that individuals will only be accepted from SCI-Laurel Highlands or SCI-Muncy may be granted in cases of an individual's sudden significant medical change (i.e. major stroke, major surgery etc.) or termination of a previously approved home

plan. In situations where these events occur within 3 months of the individual's maximum sentence date, other DOC facilities may initiate a referral as described above.