

## Guidance for Informed Consent for Children and Youth in CCYA Related to Psychotropic Medication Treatment

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**Purpose:** This document identifies the key elements of a comprehensive informed consent process for children and youth in the custody of a County Children and Youth Agency (CCYA) and starting a new psychotropic medication. Informed consent is a process between the health provider and the child and his/her parent/guardian. The informed consent process ensures the medical consenter has the complete information (risks, benefits, side effects, etc.) on the proposed course of treatment and on treatment options before making a decision on treatment. The medical consenter is the child's parent/guardian, or in accordance with the Minors' Consent Act can be the youth if older than 14 years of age. In conjunction with the informed consent conversation, a written form is required documenting informed consent. A separate informed consent process is required for each new psychotropic medication prescribed.

It is recommended that a medical provider's consent conversation and forms incorporate the components outlined below.

The informed consent process for psychotropic medication treatment should ensure that the parent/guardian or older youth understand:

- The specific condition, disorder, targeted symptoms
- The beneficial effects on the condition from the medication
- The risks and consequences of the medication, including side effects
- How the medication could be safely tapered or stopped
- The expectations for medication monitoring (how often and what is being measured)
- Black box warnings if applicable
- If medication is off-label and what that means
- If medication is relatively new and there is relatively little clinical experience
- The medication alternatives to the proposed medication and their risks and consequences
- The non pharmacologic (non- medication) alternatives for treatment (therapies)
- The prognosis with and without the proposed medication

The informed consent process should ensure that a parent/guardian or older youth have:

- Been given the opportunity to ask questions
- Been given written information about the medication
- Consented freely and been free to choose among the treatment alternatives without undue influence
- Been given notice of the right to choose not to consent to the initiation of this medication.
- Been given notice of the right to withdraw consent for this medication at any time and been told about the consequences of medication withdrawal and how to contact the prescriber for help with withdrawal