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## Memorandum

To: Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Teams

From: NYS Office of Mental Health, Bureau of Rehabilitation Services and Care Coordination

Date: 09/17/19

RE: ACT Collateral Contacts

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This memo is being distributed to notify all ACT teams of changes being made to the ACT Program Guidelines, effective 09/01/2019 to revise the definition of allowable collateral contacts, consistent with OMH regulations. As the ACT model continues to grow in New York State, we continue to learn about the successes and challenges teams encounter on the ground. With the implementation of Shelter ACT in New York City, these specialized teams have raised concerns around finding and engaging individuals who are homeless or transient. We believe that aligning the definition of collateral and permitting collateral contacts to include contacts with shelter staff in certain instances will help support billing the full rate for all ACT individuals, as intended.

Collateral contacts are an invaluable tool in the engagement and treatment of individuals with serious mental illness. Significant other means a relative, close friend, associate or individual otherwise concerned with the welfare of a person afflicted with mental illness when that individual is directly affected by the person's mental illness. Significant other may include, shelter staff who meet the regulatory definition of a collateral, including having the capability of affecting the client's condition. Such staff must be **identified in the client's treatment plan as having a role in treatment and/or are identified in the pre-admission notes as necessary for participation in the evaluation and assessment of the client.**

Note, the full rate for ACT billing may be claimed for clients who receive at least six (6) face-to-face contacts in a month, with up to three (3) of these face-to-face contacts being with a collateral. ACT services provided in contacts with collaterals must be for the benefit of the beneficiary for whom the contact is being made for billing purposes and ALL contacts must meet minimum length requirements. As per 14 CRR-NY 508.4(i), *contact* means a face-to-face interaction of at least 15 minutes duration where at least one ACT service is provided between an ACT team staff member and a client or collateral.

If you have any questions, please contact your field office liaison or [Stacey.hale@omh.ny.gov](mailto:Stacey.hale@omh.ny.gov) .