RAMSEY COUNTY
Workforce Solutions

DWP/MFIP-ES POLICY
(WS2012-09)

DATE ISSUED: December 6, 2012

FROM: Kate Probert Fagundes
DWP/MFIP Employment Services Division Manager

TO: Ramsey County DWP/MFIP-ES Staff

SUBJECT: Request for Medical Opinion Form

BACKGROUND:
Request for Medical Opinion Forms are used to gather professional medically-informed views about a participant's or his/her dependents' health condition and resulting eligibility to engage in work activities. Information shared on the medical opinion form is then used to assist employment service (ES) providers and participants in developing employment plans and determining the most appropriate and effective employment readiness activities. Refer to the Department of Human Services (DHS) [i] MFIP ES manual sections 11- *Family Stabilization Services (FSS)* and 13- *Extensions* for more details.

PURPOSE:
A MFIP or DWP participant needing to qualify for FSS or Extension services due to their own physical or mental health condition, or that is needed in the home to care for a dependent family member who has a certified physical or mental health issue, must provide DHS approved verification by qualified medical professionals. If the participant is unable to provide his/her own documentation, then employment services providers must use one of the listed Medical Opinion Forms. All forms should first be reviewed by the participant and must include the participant's signature authorizing the ES agency to release their personal information.

Signature for release of information is valid for one year. ES providers wishing to request *new* or updated diagnostic information when the original signature date is over one year old must first obtain a new participant signature for release of information. ES providers must keep track of the "date of appointment for re-evaluation of the condition" listed on each of the Medical Opinion Forms and should follow up with the participants and their medical providers after the listed diagnosis renewal date in order to maintain status updates and renew Employment Plans (EP). Additionally, EPs should generally be updated on a quarterly basis. EPs should include activities that reflect the maximum possible number of employment or employment-readiness hours the health professional indicated as within the participant's capacity, based on their current diagnosis and condition.

The following forms have been updated and should replace *all* previous versions (including ES agencies' own internal versions). Please note that they each must be completed by a [ii]"qualified professional."

- **Medical Opinion Form: MFIP or DWP Participant-** Documents a participant's physical and/or mental health condition(s) and limitations and abilities in regard to employment.

- **Medical Opinion Form: Family Member Needed in the Home-** Verifies that a MFIP or DWP participant's dependent family member has a qualifying physical and/or mental health condition which necessitates the MFIP or DWP participant's assistance, therefore limiting his/her capacity in regard to employment.
- **Medical Opinion Form: Severe Emotional Disturbance (SED)-** Documents the criteria for SED as related to the MFIP or DWP participant's child. Verification of the SED caregiver's ability to obtain employment is not required.
- **Medical Opinion Form: Serious and Persistent Mental Illness-** Documents the criteria for Severe and Persistent Mental Illness (SPMI) as related to the MFIP or DWP participant or an adult dependent. Verification of the SPMI caregiver's ability to obtain employment is not required.

REQUIRED ACTION: Review policy with all applicable staff and follow all outlined expectations.

EFFECTIVE DATE: December 12, 2012

CONTACT PERSON: Agency Lead Planner

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[i] MFIP ES manual available at the DHS website
http://www.dhs.state.mn.us/main/groups/agencywide/documents/pub/dhs16_170940.pdf

[ii] For a list of qualified medical professionals, see the "Qualified Professionals Definition
http://www.co.ramsey.mn.us/workforce/provider_policies.htm