

SOUTHERN HIGHLANDS COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER
POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL

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Policy 252 - Procedure to Observe Consumer Sessions

I. POLICY

In addition to obtaining consent for treatment, it is the policy of Southern Highlands Community Mental Health Center that consent be obtained for the observation of clinical sessions.

II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to give guidance to staff for observing clinical sessions. Clinical sessions may include psychiatric evaluations, pharmacological appointments, individual and group counseling sessions, clinical evaluations, and service planning, etc. Sessions may be in an outpatient, residential, or other secure Agency setting. Observations may take place when it is necessary for a staff member or student to be trained on a service or when a supervisor is needing to evaluate the performance of a staff member or provide further training.

III. SCOPE

This procedure applies to clinical sessions that are being observed for clinical supervision and/or training purposes. Sessions may be observed by new staff that are in training, students that are completing internships/practicums, and supervisors.

IV. PROCEDURES

Staff must inform consumers when there is going to be an observation of a clinical session, what the purpose of the observation will be, and who will be observing. Consumer(s) must agree/give consent before an observation may take place. Staff must also ensure that the consent form to observe the session is completed. It will be contained in the consumer's medical record.

Observations of sessions may be done face for face or via telehealth technology. Southern Highlands will use the Zoom, video conferencing platform, for observing clinical sessions via telehealth. This will also be indicated on the consent form. Zoom is a secure feature that is HIPAA compliant.

Consumers will be informed that any staff observing a session, (including new staff in training, students, supervisors, etc.) will be under the Agency's HIPAA/Confidentiality guidelines.

For telehealth, when feasible, the camera will be directed at the staff person conducting the session. However, consumers may be in view, especially if the clinical session is in a group format. The observing staff person will be able to hear all audio communication. Clinical sessions will not be recorded at any time!