MONTANA STATE HOSPITAL
POLICY AND PROCEDURE

TRANSITIONAL FUNDS - REQUESTS AND APPROVAL

Effective Date: May 3, 2011 **Policy #:** BS - 11

I. PURPOSE: To provide procedures for requesting and authorizing funds for the purpose of assisting people in transitioning from Hospital care to community placements.

II. POLICY:

A. The Montana State Hospital Administrator (or designee) may authorize the expenditure of funds to assist people in transitioning from Hospital services to community placements.

B. Funds may be used to pay for treatment services not covered by private funds, insurances, or public programs. Funds may also be used to cover expenses related to establishing residence in a community, medication or transportation.

C. As a general rule, funding will be limited to a maximum of $1,500 per individual. A larger amount may be authorized when warranted under unusual circumstances.

D. These funds are not an entitlement. There is no obligation on the part of the hospital to provide any funds to any individual. Decisions will be made based upon the treatment and financial needs of the individual. These funds are also dependent on the availability of money in the Hospital budget.

E. The Hospital may request reimbursement of expenditures when appropriate, such as when an entitlement payment is received or other payment sources become available.

F. Payment will ordinarily be made directly to the service provider such as a landlord, utility company, mental health center or other healthcare provider, or pharmacy.

G. Funds may not be used for purchase of tobacco products, alcohol, or pet maintenance items.

H. Funds provided are intended for the sole purpose of support of the individual, and may not be authorized for use by other family members or friends.

III. DEFINITIONS:

Transitional Funds – Funds within the State Hospital Budget used for the purpose of assisting an individual transition from the Hospital to a community placement. Funds may be used to cover expenses associated with treatment, housing, living expenses, medication, or transportation.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES:

Social Workers – to develop discharge plans in collaboration with the patient, family members, community mental health providers, and other individuals and organizations with responsibility for helping an individual transition from the Hospital to a community placement. The request for funds in accordance with the policy and procedure is a discharge planning process.

Hospital Administrator (or designee) – to approve the expenditure of funds requested under this policy.

Director of Business and Support Services – to track and report information about the utilization of transition funds.

V. PROCEDURE:

A. Social Workers will develop discharge plans in collaboration with the patient, aftercare providers, and other appropriate persons.

B. When discharge planning, every effort will be made to identify sources of funding for services and living expenses. This includes programs that pay for services like Medicare, Medicaid, Mental Health Services Program, etc. This also includes other options like supported housing vouchers, food banks, etc. Patients are also expected to utilize their personal funds or request assistance from family members to the greatest extent possible.

C. When the lack of funds for a treatment or a living expense is identified as a barrier to discharge, the social worker will initiate a request for transitional funds.

D. The request for funds should be put in the form of a letter or memo to the Hospital Administrator that identifies the Patient, the discharge plan, options for funding that have been explored, the needs identified, and the amount of the request. The request will be co-signed by the Social Services Discipline Chief. A “store order” should accompany the letter or memo.

E. The Hospital Administrator (or designee) will review the plan and make a decision to approve the request in full or in part, or deny the request. This action will be indicated by written notation on the letter or memo.

F. The Administrator will inform the social worker of the decision. When approval of the request is granted in full or in part, the Administrator will also notify the Business Office. The Social Worker will work with the Business Office to determine the most appropriate payment process, e.g., issuance of a check; reimbursement upon presentation of receipt; transfer of funds.

G. The Business Office will provide a report on the use of these funds to the Hospital Administrator, the Addictive and Mental Disorders Division, or other persons upon request.

H. Community mental health providers may request transitional funds under this policy by making the request through a Hospital Social Worker.

I. When the patient is likely to receive money in the future, such as a social security payment, issuance of these funds may be considered a loan. In this case, a short, simple contract developed to encourage repayment and responsibility on the part of the person benefiting from this funding. Community aftercare providers will be informed of any loan arrangement and will be requested to assist the patient with loan repayment processes.

J. Requests for funding of transportation needed for discharge is covered under a separate policy "BS – 04 - Patient Travel."

VI. REFERENCES: From the Montana Code Annotated: **53-21-185. Care and treatment following release.** The department and its agents have an affirmative duty to provide adequate transitional treatment and care for all patients released after a period of involuntary confinement. Transitional care and treatment possibilities include but are not limited to psychiatric day care, treatment in the home by a visiting therapist, nursing home or extended care, a halfway house, outpatient treatment, and treatment in the psychiatric ward of a general hospital.

VII. COLLABORATED WITH: Addictive and Mental Disorders Division, Social Work Discipline Chief

VIII. RESCISSIONS: #BS-11; *Transitional Funds – Requests and Approval* dated May3, 2007

IX. DISTRIBUTION: All hospital policy manuals

X. REVIEW AND REISSUE DATE: May 2014

XI. FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITY: Social Work Discipline Chief

XII. ATTACHMENTS: None

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John W. Glueckert	Date	Tracey Thun	Date
Hospital Administrator		Chief Financial Officer	