

## Utilization of Psychotropic Medication in Emergency Situations

Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families

Policy: 1000.0030

Effective Date: Sept. 29, 1986

In order to prevent unnecessary utilization of psychotropic medication in residential care programs, all dispensing of this medication in emergency situations shall be monitored, documented, and reviewed. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the youngster in placement.

The initiation of psychotropic medication for behavioral management purposes presents possible risks to the youngster. Psychotropic medication shall be considered only when there is a situation of harm to self or others and when all other attempts to intervene and stabilize the crisis situation have either been tried and failed or have been diagnostically eliminated.

Psychotropic medication shall not be initiated unless the patient has been examined by a psychiatrist/physician. However, if the youngster is already receiving psychotropic medication which is prescribed and periodically reviewed by a treating psychiatrist, successful altering of the dose can be managed by a qualified psychiatric nurse reporting to the psychiatrist. All other situations demand direct assessment by a psychiatrist/physician.

It is the position of the Department that each residential care program have written procedures governing the administration of psychotropic medication in emergency situations. The requirements listed below shall be incorporated into the program's written procedures.

Related Procedures...

Emergency Assessment

Utilization Review