



*State of New Jersey*  
*Department of Human Services*  
*Children's System of Care Initiative*

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**March 2001**

**To:** Hospitals, Physicians, Certified Nurse Practitioners, Federally Qualified Health Centers, Mental Health Clinics, Residential Treatment Centers, Psychologists, Partial Hospitalization/Partial Care Providers and Health Maintenance Organizations

**Subject:** The Children's System of Care Initiative

**Effective:** January 1, 2001

**What is the Children's System of Care Initiative?**

The Children's System of Care Initiative (CSOCI) was developed by the Department of Human Services, and represents the collaborative efforts of the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS), the Division of Mental Health Services (DMHS) and the Division of Medical Assistance and Health Services (DMAHS). The purpose of the Initiative is to redirect and refocus services offered under the current mental health system and develop a complement of support services to meet the unique needs of emotionally and behaviorally disturbed children and their families/caregivers.

Services offered through CSOCI will be available to children and adolescents identified by a variety of avenues as needing mental health services, and will also be available to young adults up to the age of 21 who are transitioning from the child-serving agencies to adult-serving agencies.

There are three significant components of the CSOCI which are being developed to strengthen the Initiative. These components are the Contracted Systems Administrator (CSA), the Care Management Organization (CMO) and the Family Support Organization (FSO). The delivery of services, depending upon the level of care needed by the child, will be managed through these entities at the community level.

1. The Contracted Systems Administrator (CSA) will provide technical and administrative support in the areas of utilization, information, communication, provider networks, and quality management.
2. The Care Management Organization (CMO) is a community based organization whose function is to coordinate and refocus available mental health and support services at the local level, as well as help to identify, develop and provide additional services that are identified as necessary for the individuals receiving CMO services. The CMOs will focus on a subset of the CSOCI general population, those children with serious emotional or behavioral disturbances and multiple system involvement, including children living with relatives or other caregivers.
3. The Family Support Organization (FSO) is a family-run organization that provides direct parent-to-parent support to family members of children with emotional and behavioral disturbances. These organizations will link the families of the children receiving CSOCI services with parent representatives who will provide support and assistance to them as part of the Individual Service Plan (ISP).

The development of these new provider entities, along with the addition of a number of new support and therapeutic services being introduced through the CSOCI, will improve the delivery and quality of the mental health services available to eligible children and their families and caregivers by providing the following:

- Common screening and assessment tools for accessing the services offered through CSOCI without regard to the port of entry into the child-serving systems of the state, including, but not limited to, DYFS, DMHS, the justice system, or referral by the Department of Human Services (DHS) or an authorized contracted agent of the Department;
- A single comprehensive system of flexible, accessible community-based resources and clinical services for all children with emotional and behavioral disturbances and their families/caregivers;
- A coordinated system of care that supports the development of a comprehensive individualized service plan (ISP) reaching across the various child-serving systems, matching available services with individual child and family/caregiver needs;
- Child-centered and strength-based ISPs that address all life domains of the child and build on existing child and family strengths.
- Community-based, family-focused, family-friendly, and culturally responsive services which are designed to engage the child, adolescent or young adult receiving the services and their families/caregivers and directly involve them with service planning and delivery, assuring that their needs and goals drive the ISP development and implementation processes.

### **Who is eligible for CSOCI services?**

The CSOCI addresses the needs of all children with emotional and behavioral disturbances and their families served by the DHS and other child-serving systems. This includes children eligible for child welfare, mental health and/or Medicaid/NJ FamilyCare services up to age 18 and young adults up to age 21 who are transitioning from the child-serving system to the adult system. Also eligible to receive services under the CSOCI are those children who may be involved with the Juvenile Justice Commission, the courts, probation, or those receiving substance abuse services in addition to their involvement with a NJ DHS agency or contract provider.

Upon full implementation, children, adolescents and young adults who are enrolled in the CSOCI will be issued an identification card from DMAHS with a separate and unique CSOCI eligibility number. ***This identification card indicates eligibility for CSOCI-approved services only and does not indicate that they are eligible to receive other Medicaid/NJ FamilyCare services.***

### **What services will be offered as part of the CSOCI?**

The CSOCI will introduce new services to augment the array of direct services available to children in need of mental health services. These new services will include, but not limited to:

- Multi-System Assessments;
- Behavioral Assistance services;
- Crisis Management services;
- Family Support services;
- Intensive In-Home Services; and
- CMO services, for children needing the most intensive care coordination.

### **CSOCI Newsletters**

This is the first in a continuing series of CSOCI Newsletters that will provide information to the providers as system reforms related to the Initiative are implemented. The color letterhead with the CSOCI letterhead easily identifies these Newsletters.

Since CSOCI providers are required to enroll as Medicaid providers, they may also receive Medicaid Newsletters from DMAHS with Medicaid-related information. The letterhead for those Newsletters is black and white and clearly indicates that the Newsletters are Medicaid Newsletters.

Providers should retain all CSOCI or Medicaid Newsletters until they are instructed to replace or destroy them.

### **Questions?**

If you have questions regarding the CSOCI, please contact Constance Thomas at (609) 588-2629 or visit our website: <http://www.njkidsoc.org>.

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