



The SMI Determination Process

SMI – Definition

Serious Mental Illness (SMI) is a designation used in Arizona to identify adults who need additional support because mental illness severely impacts their ability to function.

SMI – Clinical Definition

You must have a qualifying diagnosis

- Psychotic Disorders, Bi-Polar Disorders, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorders, Major Depression or Mood Disorders, Anxiety Disorders, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Dissociative Disorder and Personality Disorders.

You must meet functional criteria

- Inability to live independently,
- A risk of serious harm to self or others,
- Dysfunction in role performance or
- Risk of deterioration.

Covered Services for those Determined SMI

- People with an SMI designation **may** have access to some mental health services (even if they do not have AHCCCS):
 - Case management,
 - Medication management,
 - Therapy
 - Crisis services and
 - Additional services based on need including: peer support, transportation, housing, etc.

***People with an SMI designation do not automatically qualify for all available services. Services are rendered based on individual need.**

CRN's Role

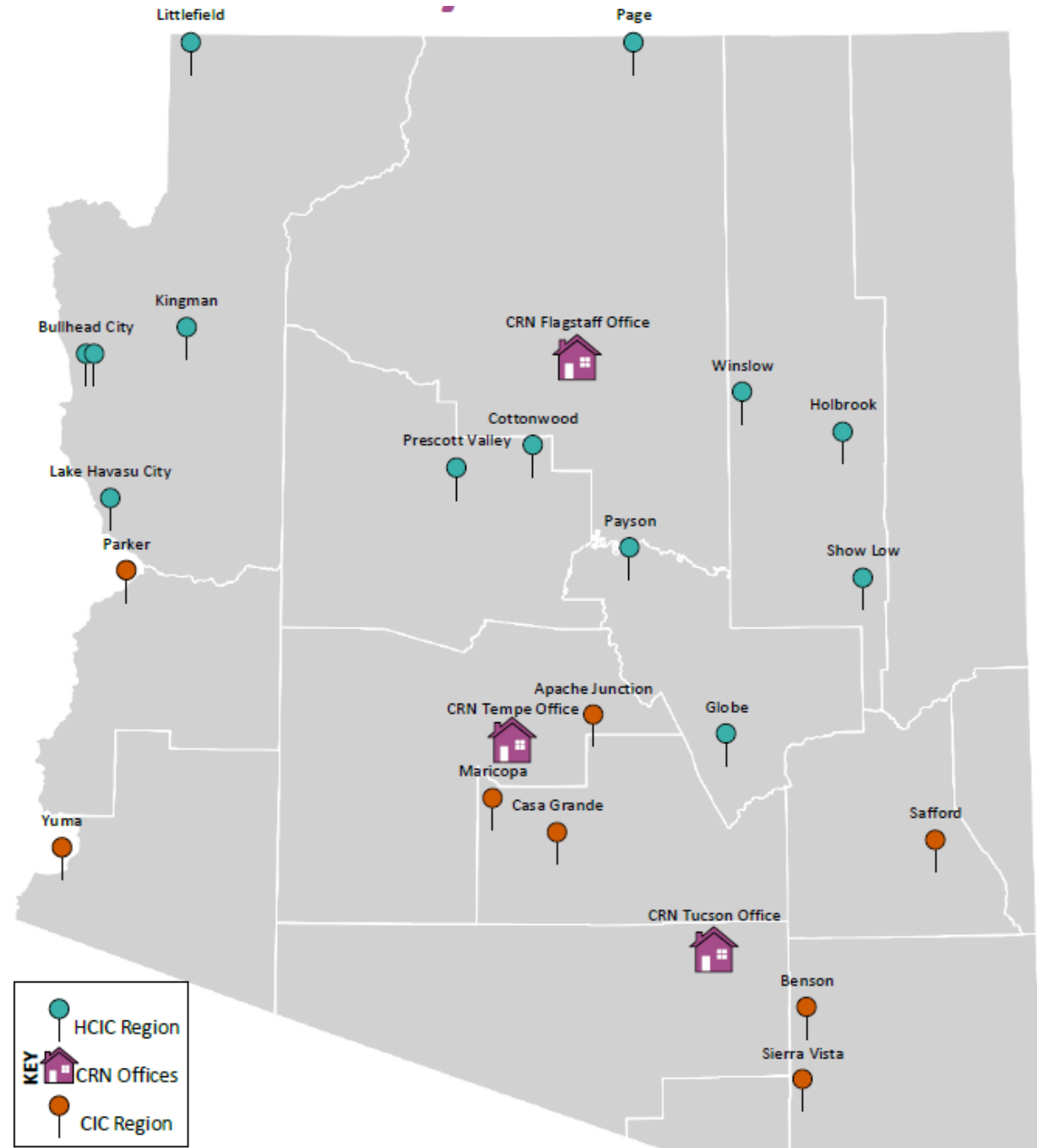
- On January 1, 2014, Crisis Response Network became the entity responsible for the Serious Mental Illness (SMI) determination process for Maricopa County
- Effective October 1, 2015, DBHS designated CRN responsible for all SMI determinations in Arizona

CRN's Role

- CRN is a neutral third party in the public behavioral health system.
- CRN does not provide any direct services.
- CRN has no incentive to determine an individual SMI or non-SMI.
- CRN maintains a member-focused mission.
- CRN applies the SMI criteria as mandated by AHCCCS.
 - Does the individual meet diagnostic criteria?
 - Does the individual meet functional criteria?
- Quality clinical management: Inter-rater reliability and clinical reviews

Community Access

- CRN has an office centrally located in Tempe with two satellite locations in Tucson and Flagstaff.
- 21 accessible community locations to cater to rural areas across Arizona.



What does Crisis Response Network (CRN) do?

- CRN reviews evaluations and makes SMI determinations. CRN completes all SMI determinations in Arizona.
 - Note: Mental health providers complete the evaluation and submit it to CRN. CRN does not complete the evaluation.
- Individuals can request an SMI evaluation by asking their current Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) provider, their Tribal or Regional Behavioral Health Authority (T/RBHA) or AHCCCS directly.

The Determination Process

Anyone living in Arizona can be assessed to see if they qualify for SMI eligibility.

To request an evaluation, contact your general mental health provider or your AHCCCS Health Plan for a referral

Once a member requests to be assessed for SMI services, the provider agency has **seven (7)** days to complete this evaluation and submit it to CRN.

After the evaluation has been completed, the assessor submits the SMI packet to CRN via web portal within one business day.

CRN has either three, 20, or 90 days to make the determination (if given the consent to pend).

Packet Submissions: What is a Complete Packet?

Required Forms:

- Consent for Assessment
- Seriously Mentally Ill (SMI) Determination Form
- Core Assessment

Additional Documents:

- Waiver of Three Day Determination Form
- Release of Information (ROI)
- Data Disposition Sheet

Common Errors which Delay Processing

If any of these errors occur, CRN cannot process the determination:

- An incomplete or missing written consent for assessment
- The 320-P SMI Determination Form does not include a BHP signature
- The comprehensive evaluation is out-of-date (more than 6 months old)
- Each month, a packet submission quality report is sent to each health plan
- This report provides error rates by provider in order to identify trends

CRN Psychologists' Role

- Review SMI evaluations and records
- Communicate with providers and evaluators to gather more information with the goal of coming to a clinical agreement
- Determine an applicant's eligibility for SMI and document the rationale in our EHR
- Apply objective criteria and integrate various sources of information in order to come to a final determination
- Maintain fidelity of the state's SMI criteria and timelines
- Participate in the appeals process

Clinical Determination Process

- Use objective SMI criteria, as well as clinical expertise and judgment
- Paying extra attention to:
 - Reason for referral (self-referred, referred by psychiatrist, lawyer, probation, etc)
 - Reconciliation of symptoms/problem description in eval, MSE/presentation, and info in other records (are there major inconsistencies or consistencies?)

Clinical Determination Process

- Treatment history (IP, OP) and medications
- Substance use history (including sx and fx in periods of sobriety, UDS results)
- Family history of mental illness and suicide
- Hx of suicide attempts (and circumstances surrounding this)
- Situational Stressors (possibly impacting their sxs and fx)

Clinical Determination Process

- Physical health conditions that may be associated with psychiatric symptoms
- Are the proposed diagnoses consistent with the information provided? Why or why not?

Clinical Determination Process – Functional

When reviewing for functional impairment:

- There must be at least one area of functional impairment that is due to the qualifying diagnosis, for the duration specified
- Evaluation/records should demonstrate how the diagnosis is directly linked to the impairment **and** how the duration criterion is met

The Extended Evaluation Program

A 90 day period free from substances may be requested if:

- A current substance use/concern is present
- The clinical documentation lacks evidence supporting the functional impairment is linked to the qualifying diagnosis vs. the substance use diagnosis
- For diagnostic clarification to determine if symptoms are related to a substance use diagnosis or a qualifying diagnosis
- The Extended Evaluation Program (EEP) consists of on-going substance use treatment which is shared with CRN over the 90 day period

The Appeal Process

- Every individual has the right to appeal their SMI decision
- When appealing an SMI determination, the applicant has the right to an informal conference within 7 days of appeal:
 - Face-to-Face
 - Video Conferencing
 - Teleconference
- If the applicant wishes to appeal this decision, they have the right to request an administrative hearing

SMI Appeal Decisions at the Informal Conference

- 68% Extended for CRN to obtain more records
- 25% Education provided by CRN staff and appeal is withdrawn
- 7% SMI determination is overturned
- 42% of applicants are determined SMI after the appeal process is completed

How long will an SMI determination last?

- Generally, this designation lasts indefinitely unless the individual request to have it removed.
- **Decertification:** This is the term used to for the decision that a person is no longer designated SMI.
 - Clinical Decertification: A person can ask to be assessed for whether they *still* meet SMI criteria.
 - Administrative Decertification: If a person has not used their SMI services in over two years, they may request to be automatically decertified by AHCCCS.

Questions/Comments?

CRN Eligibility and Care Services

1-855-832-2866

Website

<http://www.crisisnetwork.org/smi/provider/#smi-assessment>

Includes Tips, Application, Required Forms,
Submission Instructions, FAQ's, etc.