

Assertive Community Treatment (ACT)

Target Population

Individuals served by ACT are adults with serious and persistent mental illness, with severe functional impairments, who have not engaged in or responded well to traditional outpatient mental health care and psychiatric rehabilitation services. Persons served by ACT often have co-existing problems such as homelessness, substance use, or involvement with the judicial system.

Treatment Setting

ACT is a community-based service. ACT teams function in the community and provide services wherever is most appropriate for the participant.

Length/Frequency of Treatment

ACT services are available 24 hours per day, 365 days per year. ACT services are intended to be long-term due to the severe impairments often associated with serious and persistent mental illness.

Referral Process

ACT is a pre-authorized service that requires approval by Community Behavioral Health.

The DBHIDS Targeted Case Management identifies individuals who may be appropriate referrals for ACT.

Website:

<http://www.actassociation.org/>

Overview

Assertive Community Treatment is a team treatment approach designed to provide comprehensive, community-based psychiatric treatment, rehabilitation, and support to **adults** with serious and persistent mental illness such as schizophrenia. ACT teams provide initial and ongoing assessments; case management; psychiatric services; employment and housing assistance; family support and education; substance abuse services; and other services and supports critical to an individual's ability to live successfully in the community.

Core Components

- Each ACT team is made up of a multidisciplinary team (psychiatrist, nurses, social workers, rehabilitation, etc.) and the team provides most services with minimal referrals to other mental health programs or providers.
- ACT staff help participants become less socially isolated and more integrated into the community by encouraging participation in community activities and membership in organizations of their choice.
- The team encourages all participants to engage in community employment and provides vocational rehabilitation services directly.
- Staff work with participants and their family members to become collaborative partners in the treatment process.
- Participants are taught about mental illness and the skills needed to better manage their illnesses and their lives.
- The ACT team provides health education, access, and coordination of health care service.

ACT in the DBHIDS network

In 2008, DBHIDS partnered with Community Treatment Teams to begin the first Assertive Community Treatment team in Philadelphia. Since then, ACT in Philadelphia has grown to include additional ACT teams at CTT and at Horizon House. These teams receive consultation, training support and monitoring from external ACT experts.