

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
Department of Health
Addiction Prevention and Recovery Administration



**Guidance Bulletin for
Substance Abuse Facilities and Programs Certified by
The Addiction Prevention and Recovery Administration**

**Bulletin
Number:**

2012-001

**Effective
Date:**

January 18, 2012

Subject:

Group Counseling, Nursing and Physician client ratio requirements

Purpose:

To reinforce the client to staff ratio requirements for group counseling sessions as set forth in the D.C Municipal Regulations for substance abuse treatment and recovery programs, as well as nurse and physician to client ratio requirements for medical detoxification facilities.

Statement:

Group addiction counseling is face-to-face therapeutic interaction between like minded individuals lead by an individual trained to provide addiction-focused therapies. It is an opportunity for the individuals to discuss their addiction and their lives. Group counseling is designed to decrease the isolation of addiction and build a support structure for the individuals involved.

To achieve the benefits associated with group counseling, the usual and customary size of a group counseling session shall not exceed fifteen (15) persons per group facilitator. *DCMR 29-2341.3*. A group of this size will better promote participation, disclosure and feedback among the participants. Substance abuse treatment facilities and programs shall maintain records, such as sign-in sheets, to demonstrate compliance with this requirement.

Medical detoxification is used to treat severe cases of withdrawal. Without the aid of medical monitoring these clients are less likely to complete detoxification on their own. This level of treatment requires 24-hour nursing care and physician supervision, evaluation, withdrawal management, and visitation when necessary.

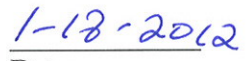
A substance abuse treatment facility or program offering medical detoxification shall provide on-site physician coverage twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. *DCMR 29-2364.4* Client to nurse ratios shall not exceed 12 to 1 during the day shift, 17 to 1 during the evening shift and 25 to 1 during the night shift. *DCMR 29-2364.6* All staffing at the facility must be appropriate in number to ensure the safety of the clients and staff.

This Guidance Bulletin will remain in effect until it is revised or superseded by a subsequent APRA Guidance Bulletin.

Approved by:
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Signature



Date