



□ Program Overview

The Emergency Screening Unit (ESU) provides 24 hour emergency psychiatric services and a variety of case management services for severely emotionally and behaviorally disturbed children and adolescents. Our multi-disciplinary treatment team consists of psychiatrists, licensed mental health clinicians, and psychiatric nurses.

We are located across from Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center in Chula Vista. We operate under the direction of the County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency and are a Certified Medi-Cal site and LPS facility.

□ Emergency Screening Services

The Emergency Screening Unit offers emergency diagnostic evaluation and treatment services to determine the appropriate level of mental health care

needed for the child or adolescent. Patients may be referred to other agencies or psychiatric hospitals for treatment or may continue to receive treatment at ESU. Emergency screening provides crisis-oriented treatment, including the prescribing and monitoring of psychotropic medications, referral for substance abuse treatment, and follow-up case management.

□ Crisis Stabilization

ESU is able to provide crisis stabilization for patients, either voluntary or involuntary, for up to 24 hours. This service allows for a period of observation/evaluation or de-escalation in lieu of a psychiatric hospitalization. Patients often return to their residence following stabilization or are referred to other appropriate levels of care.

□ Transitional Services

Transitional Services are offered through a County contract for children and adolescents that enter a psychiatric facility. A licensed mental health clinician coordinates services with the patient, the family and the hospital staff to ensure a comprehensive discharge plan from the hospital. The mental health clinician assists the family in obtaining follow-up services after the child/youth leaves the hospital.

□ Case Management Services

Case management is provided for children and adolescents seen at ESU and who are requiring additional mental health services upon being returned to their residence.

Consultation regarding admissions and less restrictive alternatives is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

□ State Hospital Diversion Services

Children and adolescents who may be in need of State hospital care are referred to the ESU for evaluation. Most youth can be stabilized and receive services in their own community with the assistance from intensive case management and wraparound. The level of care needed is determined by the ESU psychiatrist and the family and youth is referred to the appropriate service.

□ Financial Eligibility

ESU gives priority to patients who are unable to obtain help in the private sector because of financial constraints or special needs. A fee is charged for all services; however, no one is denied treatment because of their inability to pay. Patients with limited resources may be eligible for Medi-Cal or Short-Doyle funding. Charges for services are based on income, family size, and assets under the State's Uniform Method of Determining Ability to Pay (UMDAP) formula. An eligibility worker will assist in completing the necessary financial forms.



County of San Diego

*Children's
Mental Health
Services*

*Emergency
Screening Unit*



The Noblest Motive is the Public Good
