



Memorandum

TO: All HIV/STD Prevention Contractors

FROM: HIV/STD Comprehensive Services Branch

DATE: January 5, 2006

SUBJECT: Activities with Clients of Low-to-No Current Risk in Comprehensive Risk Counseling and Services (CRCS, *formerly Prevention Case Management*)

The purpose of this technical assistance bulletin is to provide guidance to agencies implementing CRCS.

The Program Operating Procedures and Standards, Chapter 21, describe CRCS: “its goal is to promote the adoption and maintenance of HIV risk reduction behaviors for those clients with multiple, complex problems and risk reduction needs. CRCS is intended for clients who have difficulty initiating or sustaining practices that reduce or prevent HIV/STD acquisition, transmission, or re-infection”.

CRCS is clearly intended for clients currently engaged in high-risk behavior, yet several agencies have expressed the need to allow room for some lower-risk clients within their caseloads.

Situation One: *Relapse Prevention*

A client referred to CRCS has not engaged in high-risk behavior for the past year. The current psychosocial and/or physical situation places the client in danger of relapse.

Situation Two: *Discharge Upon Goal Attainment*

After a 6-month enrollment in CRCS, a client achieves all risk reduction goals and is no longer engaged in the risk behavior.

Response:

At the present time, neither client described above is engaged in the risk behavior and might therefore be categorized as low-risk. Behavior change takes time and effort. With the goal of CRCS focusing not only on the adoption of risk reduction behaviors, but also the **maintenance** of said behaviors, the above clients are appropriate candidates for CRCS within the following parameters:

1. (*Situation One*) The length of stay for low-to-no risk clients entering CRCS is limited to the time necessary to develop and implement a relapse prevention plan. This time is not to exceed a total of 3 months.
2. (*Situation Two*) Upon attainment of risk reduction goals, an agency may choose to successfully discharge the client. The agency may also continue working with the client for a period not to exceed 6 months, even with the client now reporting very low, or no risk behavior. Work during this extended period must center on maintenance of the risk reduction behavior and crafting a relapse prevention plan. (Note: Generally, a client should not remain in CRCS for a period exceeding one year from date of enrollment).
3. (Overall) Persons currently in low-to-no risk categories must remain only a small percentage of the total CRCS caseload. While it is okay to work with persons in this category from time-to-time, **programs should focus efforts to individuals currently engaged in high-risk behaviors.**

Any questions or concerns, please contact your field operations consultant or regional staff person.