



TO: Nursing Facility Administrators, Admissions, and Social Services  
 FROM: Bonlitha Windham, Bureau Director, Mental Health Programs  
 RE: Service Reassessment Project/Ascend Management Innovations

The Mississippi Division of Medicaid (DOM) is conducting a one-time project beginning September 3, 2013 to assess the services recommended to residents with mental health diagnoses evaluated through the PASRR process.

Services are recommended by Ascend, the independent PASRR Level II evaluation vendor, through the Level II evaluations. The Mississippi Department of Mental Health (DMH) finalizes those recommendations and either adds, subtracts, or keeps the recommendations as listed by Ascend. This project seeks to evaluate the current benefit of services recommended.

### **Simple Review Process**

Ascend has structured this statewide review to group residents by facility. Ascend will set a phone appointment to pre-screen the residents to determine if they will receive a brief assessment, which is document-based, or an extended assessment, which requires a local licensed clinician to conduct a face-to-face interview. After the initial scheduling phone call, Ascend will fax a list of the residents to be reviewed and instruct the nursing facility to download from [www.pasrr.com](http://www.pasrr.com) a copy of a screening form. This form should be completed for each resident on the list and then faxed to Ascend. The form asks specific questions about the individual's:

- current location and potential plans to discharge or transfer,
- behavioral health stability, and
- current behavioral health services.

During the scheduled screening call, Ascend will discuss the results of the screening forms with the facility, explaining who qualified for the brief or extended assessments. If the screening forms are completed and returned in advance of the call, then the calls should be brief (10–15 minutes max). If the forms are not completed ahead of the scheduled screening call, the calls could take up to 10–15 minutes **per resident** discussed.

### **Review Results**

Based on the results of the brief and extended assessments performed, Ascend may find new recommendations for services are needed to ensure the individual is getting the most benefit from service recommendations. All findings will be sent to DOM to allow DOM to make informed policy decisions. Nursing facilities not compliant in sending medical records or completing the Document-Based Review form will be reported to DOM.

The project will roll out starting September 3, 2013 and is expected to conclude December 31, 2013.

Should you have any problems or questions about this process, do not hesitate to contact Ascend toll free by phone at 877-431-1388 and ask to speak to a Mississippi team member.