

A Serious Mental Illness (SMI) is a chronic and long term mental health condition which impacts a person's ability to perform day-to-day activities or interactions. When an individual meets criteria for an SMI, it is called an SMI designation. An SMI designation will remain in place unless an individual requests to have it removed. The individual requesting removal could be the person with an SMI designation, his or her legal guardian, or a member of the individual's clinical team. If an individual does not agree with an SMI designation, he or she can ask for an assessment to see whether they still meet criteria for an SMI designation. This process is called "decertification."

## What is decertification?

Decertification is a process for when an individual no longer meets the criteria for an SMI designation. This will result in a change to the individual's medical record by changing the behavioral health category designation from Serious Mental Illness to general mental health. Decertification may also impact the member's eligibility category for services.

## What is the process?

There are two processes available to remove an SMI designation. One process is clinical and the other is administrative.

### SMI Clinical Decertification

An SMI clinical decertification is a determination that an individual no longer meets SMI eligibility criteria. The process includes:

- An individual who has an SMI designation or someone from the individual's clinical team may request an SMI clinical decertification,
- Clinical documentation that is collected from the individual's medical record and submitted to Solari, the agency selected by AHCCCS to make SMI eligibility determinations,
- The AHCCCS designee, Solari, reviews the clinical documentation to determine if the individual meets the SMI criteria,
- A written notice of the determination, along with the right to appeal the decision, is sent to the individual from Solari, and
- If it is determined the individual no longer meets criteria for an SMI designation, the individual's behavioral health category will be updated, they will be assigned to their preferred health plan, and they will receive medically necessary services under their new health plan.

### SMI Administrative Decertification

If an individual who has an SMI designation has not received behavioral health services for two or more years, they may request an SMI administrative decertification. The process includes:

- An individual who has an SMI designation would need to contact the AHCCCS Clinical Resolution Unit (CRU) at 602-364-4558, or 1-800-867-5308,.
- CRU will evaluate the individual's request and review data sources to determine the last date the individual received a behavioral health service,
- AHCCCS will inform the individual of changes that may occur as a result of the removal of the individual's SMI designation. These changes may include specific case management services, SMI housing resources, and copayment structure,
- In the event the CRU review finds that the individual has received behavioral health services within the prior two year period, the individual will be notified that they may seek decertification of their SMI status through the clinical decertification process, and
- If you do not qualify for the SMI Administrative Decertification, you may be eligible for the SMI Clinical Decertification as described above.

The Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) is committed to ensuring the availability of timely, quality health care. If you know of an AHCCCS member who is unable to access health services, or if you have a concern about the quality of care, please call your AHCCCS health care plan's Member Services number. If your concern is not resolved, please call AHCCCS Clinical Resolution Unit at 602-364-4558, or 1-800-867-5308.