

## About PACS

The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) provides integrated public health and human services that help address the needs of Montgomery County Maryland's most vulnerable children, adults and seniors.

Planning, Accountability and Customer Service (PACS), located within the Office of the Director, supports the Department's mission by providing performance measurement, data collection and management, evaluation and analytics, and policy analysis that ensures high quality, equitable service delivery to promote and ensure residents' health and safety and build individual and family strength and self-sufficiency outcomes.

**PACS accomplishes its primary area of work through:**

- ▶ Developing and refining meaningful program metrics that demonstrate client outcomes
- ▶ Deployment of targeted Quality Service Reviews and Community Reviews
- ▶ Supporting service integration through the Intensive Teaming Meeting process
- ▶ Capacity building on appropriate performance metrics for service areas, programs, and complex social service systems
- ▶ Leveraging advanced integrated technology, data systems, and innovative analytical tools
- ▶ Developing effective partnerships with other government agencies, community partners, universities and research centers



## Community Review

## Menu of Services



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Montgomery County, Maryland  
Department of Health and Human Services  
Planning, Accountability and Customer Service

# Community Reviews

The Community Review is a process of structured program self-assessment and subsequent independent review performed by knowledgeable panel of trained community volunteers. The review informs DHHS on how well aligned a program's service delivery is with the Department's missions and objectives.

The review is not a performance or financial audit, nor is it a program evaluation or in depth Quality Service Review (QSR). Instead, it provides a perspective of service delivery from the community or client's perspective.

## Who are Community Reviewers?

Reviewers are knowledgeable of the health and human service field and reflective of the diversity of Montgomery County. Review opportunities are open to residents who volunteer for service. The team comprises three to four reviewers supported by the PACS coordinator throughout the entire process.

Reviewers are not employees but people from the community who receive specialized orientation and training to prepare for the review.

## How does it work?

The process begins with a program self-assessment by staff using the Community Review Assessment Tool (CRAT). The program manager and staff collaboratively examine standards in six sections and provide supporting evidence area as to whether the program aligns with the standard or strategy.

Reviewers examine the self-assessment tool and other program-related documents, interviewing staff and customers and observing program service delivery on the ground. Working with program staff, reviewers identify strengths and best practices which could be transferable to other programs. Recommendations for improvements where they might be needed are also documented.

Findings are summarized in a report that is presented by reviewers to the Department's Director, senior management and program staff. A plan of action and timeline are developed for findings or recommendations, as appropriate.

## What is Reviewed?

The CRAT is a structured multi-section review instrument with a rating scale and criteria used to facilitate the process. The programs are evaluated based on their alignment with the mission and guiding principles of DHHS: effective and equitable service delivery; accountability; capable and engaged workforce; service delivery transformation and collaborative partnerships.

Programs are also reviewed how successfully they meet objectives in line with goals in the Department's Strategic Plan Roadmap, such as equitable service delivery.

## What is the value?

Community Reviews serve as a quality review process that helps staff to assess services and with community input, to ensure service delivery is effective and equitable. The review gives community members the opportunity to learn about the array of programs offered in Montgomery County.

The reviews also serve to identify programs that may need a more formal evaluation or a Quality Service Review (QSR).

PACS monitors progress of the recommendations and reports results to the DHHS Director and the Senior Leadership Team, at regular intervals.

## Community Review Quick Facts

- ▶ 136 Community Reviews completed since 1999
- ▶ An average of 20 recommendations are reported per review
- ▶ 69% of recommendations implemented at least in part within 18 months (FY15-FY16)
- ▶ More than 50 volunteer reviewers have participated to date

