

Pennsylvania's Telephonic Psychiatric Consultation Service Program for CHIP Members

Updated November 2024

The Telephonic Psychiatric Consultation Service (TiPS) is a Pennsylvania program designed to increase the availability of child psychiatry consultation teams regionally and telephonically to primary care providers (PCPs) and other prescribers of psychotropic medications. TiPS for children insured by Pennsylvania's Medical Assistance (Medicaid) was expanded in 2022 to include the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

TiPS provides one team per each HealthChoices/CHIP zone (shown in the "TiPS Team Service Area" section below) and ensures access to quality services in the appropriate setting based on need. Modeled after the Massachusetts Medical School program, TiPS teams (child psychiatrists, licensed therapists, care coordinators, and administrative support), pediatricians, and family physicians can effectively meet the needs of youth with common mental health conditions such as attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD) and mild depression.

TiPS also provides real time peer-to-peer resources to PCPs who desire immediate consultative advice for children up to age 21 with behavioral health concerns. If the child needs specialty psychiatric care or has medication needs that are not appropriately managed in the primary care setting, TiPS teams can help connect them to appropriate care.

TiPS care coordinators identify and maintain up-to-date behavioral health resources in the community. They work with families to identify appropriate options, provide information on the expected wait times, and follow-up to ensure connections are made. They also keep providers informed of the referrals and the outcome of the follow-up efforts so you can ensure your patients are receiving the care they need.

IMPORTANT: TiPS psychiatrists do not prescribe medications.

Consultation

When you see a member who could benefit from TiPS, you can call TiPS for a peer-to-peer consultation. Phone inquiries are usually member-specific but can be about any general question related to child psychiatry, behavioral health, or community resources.

TiPS team members will respond to your request for consultation within 30 minutes. The consultation usually results in one of the following outcomes, depending on the needs of the child and family:

- An answer to your question
- Referral to the team care coordinator to assist the family in accessing local behavioral health services such as therapy, specialty psychiatry, or neuro-psychological assessment
- Referral to the team therapist to provide transitional, face-to-face care to the child and family until the family can access local behavioral health resources
- Referral to the team or local child psychiatrist for a face-to-face acute psychopharmacological or diagnostic consultation

IMPORTANT: Referred providers must be enrolled in the Department of Human Services' (DHS) PROMISe ID program to provide services to enrollees.

Training and Education

TiPS teams for each zone are available for training and education based on your needs and desires. These can be brief "brown bag" lunches on specific topics, round table seminars with multiple practices, grand rounds, or case consultations.

Common topics include:

- Education on a particular class or type of psychotropic medication; black box warnings; new prescribing guidelines
- Implementation and use of screening or assessment tools
- Specific diagnostic or symptom education (i.e., self-injury, bingeing, substance use, etc.)
- Developing a referral network of community resources

How to Enroll in TiPS

You can enroll for free by contacting your regional TiPS team at the number listed in the TiPS Team Service Area section below. TiPS is funded by the DHS through the Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) and is free for all prescribers of psychotropic medications to use. Supervision of the program is provided by the MCOs, who are contracted with the DHS for the HealthChoices or CHIP programs.

Once your practice enrolls in TiPS, your regional team will come to your office or provide education over the phone for you and your staff. They will explain the program, how to access services, answer questions, and discuss expectations.

TiPS Team Service Areas

Regional TiPS Team	Region(s)	Phone
Children's Community Pediatrics (CCP)	Northwest, Southwest	844-972-8477
Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP)	Southeast	267-426-1776
Penn State Children's Hospital	Lehigh/Capital, Northeast	800-233-4082 (Press 3)

Additional Resources

For more information, please review the following:

- [Telephonic Psychiatric Consultation Service Program \(TiPS\) | pa.gov](https://www.pa.gov/health/telephonic-psychiatric-consultation-service-program-tiips)
- [Telephonic Psychiatric Services | Penn State Health](https://www.pennstatehealth.com/telephonic-psychiatric-services)

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