North Central Health Care
Ambulatory Detoxification Program Fact Sheet

North Central Health Care is pleased to announce the planned implementation of a new and innovative program called the NCHC Ambulatory Detoxification Program. This service will go a long way in helping residents of the community to solve problems with substance abuse as it provides:

• An outpatient model for individuals requiring detoxification from drugs or alcohol,
• Many of the benefits of inpatient detoxification but in a less-restrictive, cost-effective environment, and
• The first step in a continuum of substance-abuse treatment that ultimately leads to recovery.

This fact sheet addresses common questions about the new program.

1. What is the NCHC Ambulatory Detoxification Program?

Our new ambulatory detoxification service is an outpatient model for individuals requiring detoxification from drugs and alcohol. The program is unique in that it provides many of the benefits of inpatient detoxification but in a setting that is more cost effective and less restrictive.

North Central Health Care is in the process of launching the new program that will be available 24 hours a day, seven days per week, where patients will be under the care of an interdisciplinary team that includes Physicians, Registered Nurses, Nurse Practitioners, Behavioral Health Technicians, in addition to a Substance Abuse Counselor, Medical Director, Nursing Director, and the Behavioral Health Services Director.

Services will include assessment and patient observation, medical history, monitoring of vital signs, treatment of withdrawal symptoms, Substance Abuse Counselor consultation, and referrals for ongoing addiction and substance abuse treatment.

Toni Simonson, Senior Executive, Human Services, of NCHC explains, “Ambulatory detoxification services fit our mission and vision of providing person-centered, outcome-based care in the least restrictive environment.”
2. Why is North Central Health Care implementing an Ambulatory Detoxification Program?
In the past many detoxification patients were served on an inpatient basis since other outpatient options were not available. Using the State of Wisconsin Uniform Placement Criteria (WI-UPC), an analysis of the population identified that the majority would be better served on an outpatient basis.

We are designing our new Ambulatory Detoxification Program to meet several goals:

• Provide detoxification services at optimal levels and in an environment appropriate for this category of patient
• Deliver services in a fiscally responsible manner
• Meet federal and state requirements
• Provide a continuum of substance-abuse treatments that ultimately leads to a full recovery

3. Is additional licensing or certification required in order for NCHC to provide its new program?
Yes. We applied to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services for certification (DHS Chapter 75.08) to offer an ambulatory detoxification program so that patients will be able to receive these services in a medically managed manner. We have developed a full complement of policies and procedures, as well as remodeled our facility and allocated staff resources for the new program.

4. When will NCHC begin offering the new outpatient detoxification services?
We anticipate the new program to be operational and to begin accepting patients by mid- to late-September.

5. Where will the NCHC Ambulatory Detoxification Program be located, and what is its capacity?
NCHC’s Ambulatory Detoxification Program will be located at

North Central Health Care
Ambulatory Detoxification Service
1100 Lake View Drive
Wausau, WI 54403

Admission assessment is conducted at the NCHC Crisis Center, and the telephone number is 715-845-4326. The service will provide patient care 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and initially will have the capacity to care for up to five individuals.
6. How will NCHC’s Ambulatory Detoxification Program services be administered? 
NCHC’s new ambulatory detoxification services will consist of a medically managed, monitored and structured detoxification service provided on an outpatient, voluntary basis and delivered by a physician or other service personnel acting under the supervision of a physician.

- Ambulatory detoxification patients will be assessed for psychological and social signs and symptoms of substance abuse and dependence, along with mental health disorders, trauma and suicide risk, using Wisconsin Uniform Placement Criteria (WI-UPC) and Clinical Institute Assessment of Alcohol Scale Revised (CIWA-Ar)

- Management and monitoring of intoxication withdrawal will be performed by nursing staff, including assessment and dispensing of medications to assist with withdrawal

- The service will generally be limited to 48 hours or less but may extend in duration for specific cases

- Referral for ongoing treatment will be provided upon discharge

7. Which types of patients will be cared for under NCHC’s Ambulatory Detoxification Program? 
NCHC’s new program will provide care for patients age 18 and older in need of detoxification for alcohol and opiate withdrawal in an ambulatory outpatient setting who do not require general hospital services for alcohol poisoning.

- Each patient will be evaluated on an individual basis

- To meet admission criteria for the ambulatory detoxification services, patients must require detoxification from alcohol or opiates, including but not limited to acute intoxication or withdrawal

- Clients will be generally cooperative and voluntary
8. **Will other options outside of the ambulatory detoxification services be offered to patients that meet specific criteria?**
   
   Yes. A number of options may apply:
   
   - Minors will be referred to a general hospital or sent home with parents, if available and appropriate
   - Patients who are medically compromised will be referred to a general hospital
   - Those who can be cared for by family or friends—and who pose no danger to themselves or others—will be sent home
   - The Behavioral Health Inpatient program will continue to provide detoxification services to psychiatric patients whose primary diagnosis is psychiatric, but with co-occurring detoxification issues

9. **Are there any limitations to the ambulatory detoxification services NCHC will be offering?**
   
   Yes. In certain cases restrictions will apply:
   
   - As mentioned above, NCHC will not provide ambulatory detoxification services to minors or those who are medically compromised
   - Ambulatory Detoxification is a voluntary service that cannot hold individuals against their will; accordingly, this program is not designed to accommodate involuntary commitments
   - County of residence restrictions apply

10. **How is a referral made to Ambulatory Detoxification?**
    
    A number of options are available:
    
    - No appointment is necessary. Self-referrals are welcome
    - Call or walk in to the North Central Health Care Crisis Center in Wausau
    - Contact Numbers: 715-845-4326 or 800-799-0122

11. **Whom can I contact if I have additional questions?**
    
    Please contact:
    
    - The North Central Health Care Crisis Center: 715-845-4326 or 800-799-0122
    - Yvonne Monien, Director of Nursing: 715-848-4583, ymonien@norcen.org
    - Jeff Boodle, Director of Emergency and Behavioral Health Services: 715-848-4590, jboodle@norcen.org