

Case 2: Entitlements and Benefits

Educational objectives:

- Define what an entitlement is and give four examples
- Describe the relationship between Federal Poverty Level (FPL) and entitlements
- Reflect on your role as a provider as it relates to helping patients access their entitlements

Case 2 Description

Barbara is a 19 year old woman who survives child abuse and foster care and is now living in a shelter for homeless teens. She becomes pregnant and finds independent housing prior to the birth of her son, Tayshawn, knowing otherwise he will be taken away by Children's Services. At age 18 months, he is diagnosed with asthma and speech delay. She wants to know what she and he are entitled to.

Reflections

What are key factors to know in order to answer this question?

- a. What state does she want to live in?
- b. Federal Poverty Level: What is it? How is it determined?
- c. What is Barbara's health status?
- d. What are Barbara's current sources of income?

Case 2 continues:

Barbara tells you that she will be living in New Jersey and wants to apply for section 8 housing. She wants you to write a letter that documents her need. What is your reaction?

Case 2 Continues:

Barbara comes back a few months later. She had worked with the social work agency that you had referred her to and wants to let you know that her current entitlement portfolio and budget is as follows:

- Welfare - TANF/MCD/Food Stamps
- SSI - \$700, TANF \$162
- TANF - \$322 (for all if don't have other income)
- Food stamps - \$147 in Newark, then moved to Perth Amboy \$222
- TOTAL = \$1009
- Rent alone = \$800 (leaving \$209 to cover other expenses)

Reflections

- What is meant by "Welfare"?
- What are some of the programs that comprise "Welfare"?

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Case continues

Barbara suffers from morbid obesity and obstructive sleep apnea. She develops a stroke and her son is placed in the care of Barbara's sister who now is eligible to receive any benefits for which he is eligible.

Once she recovers, Barbara and her son move to Pennsylvania because Section 8 housing is not readily available in NJ (8 yr. waiting list) and she can't afford rent without that assistance.

After establishing her home, her son joins her.

- *Rent = \$426 (30 % total income), when son was not with her rent was \$215*
- *Food= \$250 - \$350*
- *Utilities (gas/ electric) = \$80*
- *Phone/ TV =\$170*
- *Other expenses (clothes, toiletries) = \$200*
- *SSI Barbara = \$716*
- *SSI for her son = (\$705)*
- *Food Stamps = \$250 (based on income)*
- *TOTAL = \$1671*
- *Currently- doing OK- can cover expenses and have \$445 left. However, her son's SSI is tenuous as he is currently healthy and likely will not qualify when he needs recertification.*

Barbara dies one year later from sepsis of a leg wound. Tayshawn goes back to live with his aunt in New Jersey.

Reflections

- *Can families survive on TANF and SNAP alone?*
- *How do families survive?*
- *What can we, as providers, do?*