

3.2 Terminology Used in this Chapter

“Area authority” is the area mental health, developmental disabilities, and substance abuse authority. N.C. GEN. STAT. § 122C-3(1) (hereinafter G.S.). The area authority is a statutory creation that is the “locus of coordination among public services for clients of its catchment area.” G.S. 122C-101. The catchment area may be a single county, which is referred to as a “county program,” or a combination of two or more counties. *See* G.S. 122C-3(5), (10a). The term “local management entity” or LME is also used to describe an area authority or county program. LME is a collective term that refers to functional responsibilities rather than governance structure. G.S. 122C-3(20b). The area authority or LME is charged with implementing and monitoring community-based mental health and substance abuse services as well as coordinating the care of individual clients to ensure care is appropriate. *See* G.S. 122C-115.4, 122C-117.

“Dangerous to self” and “dangerous to others.” *See supra* § 2.2.

“Eligible psychologist” is a licensed psychologist with at least two years’ clinical experience who “holds permanent licensure and certification as a health services provider psychologist issued by the North Carolina Psychology Board.” G.S. 122C-3(13d).

“Qualified professional” is “any individual with appropriate training or experience as specified by the General Statutes or by rule of the Commission [for Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Abuse Services] in the fields of mental health or developmental disabilities or substance abuse treatment or habilitation, including physicians, psychologists, psychological associates, educators, social workers, registered nurses, certified fee-based practicing pastoral counselors, and certified counselors.” G.S. 122C-3(31).

“Responsible professional” is “an individual within a facility who is designated by the facility director to be responsible for the care, treatment, habilitation, or rehabilitation of a specific client and who is eligible to provide care, treatment, habilitation, or rehabilitation relative to the client’s disability.” G.S. 122C-3(32).

“Substance abuse” is “the pathological use or abuse of alcohol or other drugs in a way or to a degree that produces an impairment in personal, social, or occupational functioning. ‘Substance abuse’ may include a pattern of tolerance and withdrawal.” G.S. 122C-3(36).

“Substance abuser” is “an individual who engages in substance abuse.” G.S. 122C-3(37).

“24-hour facility” is a “facility that provides a structured living environment and services for a period of 24 consecutive hours or more.” G.S. 122C-3(14)g.