

TO: Rotary Youth Exchange Committee

DATE: May 1, 2019

FROM: District 5100 Youth Exchange Committee

RE: Potential Mental Health Issues for Candidates

We are committed to doing everything in our power to ensure the students involved in Rotary Youth Exchange have a wonderful experience in our program. District 5100 Youth Exchange Committee members work diligently with each student to find the best possible placement.

An increasing number of overseas Rotary Districts are reluctant to accept exchange students with a history of mental health issues and have declined to accept students for an exchange. Unfortunately, we often have had to deal with placement challenges late in our process which is stressful for the student.

In the past, mental health issues were disclosed when the completed application was submitted. We are now hoping to identify issues as early as possible and seek additional information to help find the best placement for the student.

New recommended questions for the initial club interviews have been developed for your use. Your club may have questions you would prefer to use. If you choose to use different questions, we ask that you add the question we have developed that seeks information about current or recent mental health issues and treatment.

That question is:

Are you now, or in the last six months, have you been under the care of a doctor, nurse, counselor or other health care professional? What health issues are being addressed? How long has the treatment been in place? Are you taking any medications?

(If the answer is yes to the above, the interviewer should also ask how the medical issue affects daily life and school attendance.)

There are two letters that have been developed. The first is a release of information that needs to be signed by the student and parent that the family will submit to their health care provider. The second letter is for the club to give to the family explaining that additional information is needed.

The letters have been created to allow the release of information from the health care provider under the confidentiality rules for HIPPA. The report is sent to the family which allows them to decide if they wish to release the information to District 5100 Youth Exchange Committee.

If the student and parents choose not to release the information, it may not be possible to place the student. The district committee will work with the club on any issues or problems that arise related to the medical request.