



COUNTY OF YOLO
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SECTION 5, CHAPTER 7, POLICY 011

ADULT AND YOUTH SCREENING TOOLS

POLICY NUMBER:	5-7-011
SYSTEM OF CARE:	MENTAL HEALTH
FINALIZED DATE:	01.05.2023
EFFECTIVE:	01.01.2023
SUPERSEDES # :	N/A

A. PURPOSE: To establish guidelines for utilizing the Adult and Youth Screening Tools for Medi-Cal Mental Health Services for Outpatient Specialty Mental Health services (SMHS), consistent with the California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) initiative, to ensure Yolo County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) Behavioral Health (BH) and Network Providers are following state requirements.

B. FORMS REQUIRED/ATTACHMENTS:

1. Adult Screening Tool
2. Youth Screening Tool

C. DEFINITIONS:

1. **Beneficiary:** SMHS; A Medi-Cal recipient who is currently receiving services from the Mental Health Plan (MHP)
 - a. **Youth:** beneficiaries under age 21
 - b. **Adults:** over the age of 21
2. **Clinical experiences:** information about whether the beneficiary is currently receiving treatment, if they have sought treatment in the past, and their current or past use of prescription mental health medications.
3. **Gap in connection to Primary Care:** A youth who is age three (3) or younger and has not seen a pediatrician in the last 6 months, or a youth age four (4) or older that has not seen a pediatrician in the last year.

4. **Life circumstances:**
 - a. Adults: information about challenges the beneficiary may be experiencing related to school, work, relationships, housing, or other circumstances.
 - b. Youth: information about challenges a beneficiary may be experiencing related to family support, school, work, relationships, housing, or other life circumstances.
5. **Medi-Cal Managed Care Health Plan (MCP):** Publicly or commercially run entities that administer the Non-Specialty Mental Health Services (NSMHS) benefit of Medi-Cal.
6. **Mental Health Plan (MHP):** Yolo County Health and Human Services (HHS) Behavioral Health (BH), which administers the Medi-Cal SMHS benefit.
7. **Network Providers:** Any provider, group of providers, or entity that has a network provider agreement with the MHP and receives Medicaid funding directly or indirectly to order, refer or render covered services as a result of the contract with the MHP (42 C.F.R. § 438.2).
8. **Risk:** information about suicidality, self-harm, emergency treatment, and hospitalizations.
9. **Safety:** information about whether the beneficiary needs immediate attention and the reason(s) a beneficiary is seeking services.
10. **Specialty Mental Health Services (SMHS):** Defined by Title 9 C.C.R. 1810.247
11. **System Involvement:** information about whether the beneficiary is currently receiving treatment and if they have been involved in foster care, child welfare services, or the juvenile justice system.
12. **Timely Clinical Assessment:** Mental Health Plans must provide Medi-Cal beneficiaries a non-urgent non-psychiatry mental health appointment within ten (10) business days of the beneficiary's request. A non-urgent psychiatry appointment within fifteen (15) business days of the beneficiary's request. Pursuant to California Code of Regulations (CCR) Section 1300.67.2.2 of Title 28.

D. POLICY:

Adult and Youth Screening Tools for Medi-Cal Mental Health Services shall be utilized by an MHP or Network Provider when a beneficiary, or a person on behalf of a beneficiary under age 21, who is not currently receiving mental health services, contacts the MHP seeking mental health services. The tools are to be utilized to guide a referral by the MHP to the appropriate Medi-Cal mental health

delivery system (i.e., MCP or MHP).

1. The Adult Screening Tool shall be utilized for adult beneficiaries and the Youth Screening tool for youth beneficiaries or a person calling on their behalf.
2. The Adult and Youth Screening Tools identify initial indicators of beneficiary needs in order to make a determination for referral to either the beneficiary's MCP for a clinical assessment and medically necessary NSMHS or MHP for a clinical assessment and medically necessary SMHS.
 - a. The completion of the Adult or Youth Screening Tool is not considered an assessment. Once a beneficiary is referred to the MCP or MHP, they shall receive an assessment from a provider in that system to determine medically necessary mental health services.
3. The Adult and Youth Screening Tools are not required to be utilized when beneficiaries contact mental health providers directly to seek mental health services. The MHP shall allow contracted mental health providers who are contacted directly by beneficiaries seeking mental health services to begin the assessment process and provide services during the assessment period without using the Screening Tools, consistent with the No Wrong Door for Mental Health Services Policy described in Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) Behavioral Health Information Notice (BHIN) 22-011.
4. The Adult and Youth Screening Tools do not replace:
 - a. MHP policies and procedures (P&P) that address urgent or emergency care needs, including protocols for emergencies or urgent and emergent crisis referrals.
 - b. MHP protocols that address clinically appropriate, timely, and equitable access to care.
 - c. MHP clinical assessments, level of care determinations, and service recommendations.
 - d. MHP requirements to provide EPSDT services.
 - e. Both the Adult and Youth Screening Tools have similar and diverse sets of questions intended to elicit information regarding various domains including: clinical experiences, life circumstances, risk, safety, system involvement, life circumstances and risk.

E. PROCEDURE:

1. **Administering the Adult and Youth Screening Tools**
 - a. Adults shall be screened utilizing the Adult Screening Tool

- b. There are two versions of the Youth Screening Tool:
 - i. *'Youth Respondent'* shall be utilized when a youth is contacting the MHP
 - ii. *'Respondent on Behalf of Youth'* shall be utilized when a person is contacting the MHP on behalf of a youth.
- c. Both Screening Tools can be administered by clinicians or non- clinicians in alignment with the MHP protocols and may be administered in a variety of ways, including in person, by telephone, or by video conference.
- d. The Screening Tool questions shall be asked in full using the specific wording provided in the tools and in the specific order the questions appear in the tools, to the extent that the beneficiary is able to respond. Additional questions shall not be added to the tools.
- e. The Adult and Youth Screening Tools are provided as portable document formats (PDF's); however, MHP's are not required to use the PDF format to administer the tool. The tool may be built into their electronic health record (EHR).
 - i. If built into an EHR, the contents of the Screening Tools, including the specific wording, the order of the questions, and the scoring methodology shall remain intact.
 - ii. Providers documenting in the Yolo County's EHR shall utilize the electronic version once available.
- f. The scoring methodologies outlined in the instructions of the Screening Tools shall be utilized to determine an overall score for each screened beneficiary.
- g. The Screening Tools do not replace the MHP protocols for emergencies or urgent and emergent crisis referrals; If the beneficiary is in crisis or experiencing a psychiatric emergency, emergency and crisis protocols shall be followed.
- h. Both Screening Tools also include questions related to substance use disorder (SUD). If an adult, youth or a person on behalf of a youth responds affirmatively to these SUD questions, they shall be offered a referral to the MHP a SUD assessment. The beneficiary may decline the referral without impact to their mental health delivery system referral.

- i. If a Youth, or a person on their behalf, indicates that there is a gap in connection to primary care, they shall be offered linkage to their MCP for a primary care visit.
- j. If a youth, or a person on their behalf, responds affirmatively to questions related to SMHS access criteria including those related to involvement in foster care or child welfare services, involvement in the juvenile justice system, and experience with homelessness, they shall be referred to the MHP for an assessment and medically necessary services. Please refer to the MHP's medical necessity policy and DHCS BHIN 21-073 for more information.

2. Post Administration of the Screening Tool

- a. After administration of the Adult or Youth Screening tool, a beneficiary's score will be generated. Based on the screening score, as outlined in the instructions of the Adult or Youth Screening Tool, the beneficiary shall be referred to either the MHP or a MCP for a clinical assessment.
- b. If a beneficiary is referred to the MHP based on the score generated by MCP administration of the Adult or Youth Screening Tool, the MHP shall offer and provide a timely clinical assessment to the beneficiary without requiring an additional screening and in alignment with existing standards as well as medically necessary mental health services.
- c. If a beneficiary is being referred by the MHP to an MCP based on the score generated on the Adult or Youth Screening Tool, the MHP and network providers shall:
 - i. Engage beneficiaries in the process and appropriate consents obtained in accordance with accepted standards of clinical practice.
 - ii. Coordinate beneficiary referrals with MCPs or directly to MCP providers delivering NSMHS where appropriate processes have been established in coordination with the MCP.
 - iii. Share the completed Adult or Youth Screening Tool
 - iv. Follow up to ensure the beneficiary has been connected with a provider and a timely clinical assessment has been made available to the beneficiary.

F. REFERENCES:

- 1. DHCS Information Notice (BHIN) # 22-065: Screening and Transition of Care Tools for Medi-Cal Mental Health Services

2. DHCS Information Notice (BHIN) # 22-011: No Wrong Door for Mental Health Services Policy
3. All Plan Letter (APL) 22-005: No Wrong Door for Mental Health Services Policy
4. Welfare and Institutions Code (W&I) section 14184.402: California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal Act
5. DHCS Information Notice (BHIN) # 21-073: Criteria for beneficiary access to Specialty Mental Health Services (SMHS), medical necessity and other coverage requirements

Approved by:



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01/05/2023

Date