

Subject: Screening, Assessment and Diagnosis

Requirements

Bulletin Number: DY-1/Clinical-24-10	CCBHC Implementation Bulletin	Effective Date: November 1, 2024
Bulletin Status: Revised	Subject: Screening, Assessment & Diagnosis	Number of Pages: 4

1. **Programs Affected:** All CCBHC Demonstration participants.
2. **Background and Purpose:** Community Mental Health Clinics (CMHCs) designated by the Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH) as Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs) are responsible for providing screening, assessment, and diagnosis, including risk assessment for behavioral health conditions in accordance with SAMHSA CCBHC Certification Criteria, either directly or via a Designated Collaborating Organization (DCO) partnership.¹ **This implementation bulletin provides guidance to CCBHCs on Screening, Assessment and Diagnosis.**
3. **SAMHSA CCBHC Criteria Authority**
The SAMHSA CCBHC Criteria gives the following direction regarding screening:
 - 3.1 In the event specialized services outside the expertise of the CCBHC are required for purposes of screening, assessment, or diagnosis (e.g., neuropsychological testing or developmental testing and assessment), the CCBHC refers the person to an appropriate provider.
 - 3.2 Screening, assessment, and diagnosis are conducted in a time frame responsive to the needs and preferences of the person receiving services and are of sufficient scope to assess the need for all services required to be provided by the CCBHC.
 - 3.3 The CCBHC will use standardized and validated and developmentally appropriate screening and assessment tools appropriate for the person and where warranted, brief motivational interviewing techniques to facilitate engagement.
 - 3.4 The CCBHC will use culturally and linguistically appropriate screening tools and approaches that accommodate all literacy levels and disabilities (e.g., Hearing disability, cognitive limitations), when appropriate.
 - 3.5 The screening should identify unsafe substance use including problematic alcohol or other substance use, the CCBHC conducts a brief intervention and the person receiving services is provided a full assessment and treatment, if appropriate within the level of care of the CCBHC or referred to a more appropriate level of care. If the screening identified more immediate threats the safety of the person receiving services, the CCBHC will take appropriate action as described in CCBHC Criteria 2.b.1.
4. **Alabama CCHBC Screening Tools- Required Quality Measures**
 - 4.1 Alabama CCBHCs will be required to complete both Behavioral Health and Primary Care Screenings for all persons served by the CCBHC
 - 4.2 The list of required screening tools can be found:

¹ <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/ccbhc-criteria-2023.pdf>

- DY-1/Clinical-24-16 (Screening, Assessment and Diagnosis)
- DY-1/Clinical-24-11 (Primary Care Screening and Monitoring)

5. Scope of Screening, Assessment and Diagnosis

Per the SAMHSA CCBHC Criteria:

- 5.1 All people receiving CCBHC services receive both an initial and a comprehensive evaluation.
- 5.2 The initial evaluation (including information gathered as part of the preliminary triage and risk assessment, with information releases obtained as needed), includes at a minimum:
 - Preliminary diagnoses
 - The source of referral
 - The reason for seeking care, as stated by the person receiving services or other individuals who are significantly involved
 - Identification of the immediate clinical care needs related to the diagnosis for mental and substance use disorders of the person receiving services
 - A list of all current prescriptions and over-the-counter medications, herbal remedies, and dietary supplements and the indication for any medications
 - A summary of previous mental health and substance use disorder treatments with a focus on which treatments helped and were not helpful
 - The use of any alcohol and/or other drugs the person receiving services may be taking and indication for any current medications
 - An assessment of whether the person receiving services is a risk to self or to others, including suicide risk factors
 - An assessment of whether the person receiving services has other concerns for their safety, such as intimate partner violence
 - Assessment of need for medical care (with referral and follow-up as required)
 - A determination of whether the person presently is, or ever has been, a member of the U.S. Armed Services
 - For children and youth, whether they have system involvement (such as child welfare and juvenile justice)
- 5.3 Subject to more stringent state, federal, or applicable accreditation standards, all new people receiving services will receive a comprehensive evaluation to be completed within 60 calendar days of the first request for services. If the state has established independent screening and assessment processes for certain child and youth populations or other populations, the CCBHC should establish partnerships to incorporate findings and avoid duplication of effort. This requirement does not preclude the initiation or completion of the comprehensive evaluation, or the provision of treatment during the 60-day period.
- 5.4 The comprehensive evaluation should gather the amount of information that is commensurate with the complexity of their specific needs and prioritize preferences of people receiving services with respect to the depth of evaluation and their treatment goals.
- 5.5 The comprehensive evaluation should include:

- Reasons for seeking services at the CCBHC, including information regarding onset of symptoms, severity of symptoms, and circumstances leading to the presentation to the CCBHC of the person receiving services.
- An overview of relevant social supports; social determinants of health and health-related social needs such as housing, vocational, and educational status; family/caregiver and social support; legal issues; and insurance status
- A description of cultural and environmental factors that may affect the treatment plan of the person receiving services, including the need for linguistic services or supports for people with LEP
- Pregnancy and/or parenting status
- Behavioral health history, including trauma history and previous therapeutic interventions and hospitalizations with a focus on what was helpful and what was not helpful in past treatments
- Relevant medical history and major health conditions that impact current psychological status
- A medication list including prescriptions, over-the counter medications, herbal remedies, dietary supplements, and other treatments or medications of the person receiving services. Include those identified in a Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) that could affect their clinical presentation and/or pharmacotherapy, as well as information on allergies including medication allergies
- An exam that includes current mental status, mental health (including depression screening, and other tools that may be used in ongoing measurement-based care) and substance use disorders (including tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs)
- Basic cognitive screening for cognitive impairment
- Assessment of imminent risk, including suicide risk, withdrawal and overdose risk, danger to self or others, urgent or critical medical conditions, and other immediate risks including threats from another person
- The strengths, goals, preferences, and other factors to be considered in treatment and recovery planning of the person receiving services
- Assessment of the need for other services required by the statute (i.e., peer and family/caregiver support services, targeted case management, psychiatric rehabilitation services)
- Assessment of any relevant social service needs of the person receiving services, with necessary referrals made to social services. For children and youth receiving services, assessment of systems involvement such as child welfare and juvenile justice and referral to child welfare agencies as appropriate
- An assessment of need for a physical exam or further evaluation by appropriate health care professionals, including the primary care provider (with appropriate referral and follow-up) of the person receiving services
- The preferences of the person receiving services regarding the use technologies such as telehealth/telemedicine, video conferencing, digital therapeutics, remote patient monitoring, and asynchronous interventions

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5.6 Screening, assessment and diagnosis shall be comprehensive of both mental health and substance use needs

Per Alabama Administrative Code Rule 580-2-20-.09

5.7 Screening- The provider shall have and implement written policies and procedures for a screening process to briefly screen individuals prior to initiation of a behavioral health assessment or diagnostic interview examination. At a minimum, this process shall:

(a) Describe the screening process.

(b) Specify the instrument(s) or process utilized to conduct the screening process. Substance Use Disorder providers shall use the ADMH approved screening instrument(s). Mental Health providers shall use an ADMH approved screening instrument(s) when applicable.

(c) Describe the procedures followed when the screening process:

1. Identifies risk factors for mental health, substance use or co-occurring disorder(s).

2. Does not identify risk factors for a mental health, substance use or co-occurring disorder(s).

3. Identifies the need for crisis intervention.

4. Identifies special supports for recipients who have mobility challenges, hearing or vision loss, and/or Limited English proficiency.

(d) Specify the procedures for documenting the screening process and that the results of the screening was explained to the recipient and recipient's lawful representative as appropriate.

5.8 Intake/Assessment- All providers seeking to have a recipient admitted to an ADMH certified level of care/service shall have and implement written policies and procedures to:

(a) Intake/assessment shall be a clinical interview with recipient, and may include family members, lawful representative, significant other, as appropriate.

Disclaimer: The information contained in this implementation bulletin is for general information purposes only. For more details on the specific subject area covered in this bulletin, please refer to the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) Certification Updated March 2023.

¹ <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/ccbhc-criteria-2023.pdf>