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*Department of Health Care Finance Informational Bulletin*

**DATE:** February 1, 2024  
**FROM:** Melisa Byrd, Senior Deputy Director/Medicaid Director  
**SUBJECT:** **Behavioral Health Integration Update: Authorizations and Standardized Tools**

The purpose of this bulletin is to provide notice of the selection of Standardized Tools in partnership with the Department of Behavioral Health for use by Providers and Managed Care Plans as directed below.

**Daily Living Assessment – 20 (DLA-20)**

The Daily Living Activities-20 (DLA-20) is an adult functional assessment tool that DBH plans to implement beginning on March 1, 2023. The DLA-20 is designed to assess what daily living areas are impacted by mental illness or disability. The assessment tool quickly identifies where interventions are needed, so clinicians can address those functional needs on individualized service plans. The DLA-20 is administered at periodic measuring points throughout an episode of care and those data points are used to determine the consumer's response to treatment and/or how to adjust treatment interventions.

Effective March 1, 2023, all DBH-certified MHRS and FSMHC Providers must use the DLA-20, specifically as part of a Diagnostic Assessment and for Specialty Service requests as follows:

- Assertive Community Treatment (ACT), Score of 4.0 and below
- Rehabilitative Services (Day Services), Score of 5.0 and below
- Residential Crisis Stabilization (Community Residential Facility), Score of 3.0 and below
- Intensive Day Treatment, Score of 3.0 and below
- Recovery Support/Community Support, Score of 6.0 and below
- Transitional Planning, Score of 4.0 and below
- Crisis Beds, Score of 4.0 and below
- Partial Hospitalization, Score of 4.0 and below

DLA-20 assessments are also required for these Providers:

1. At admission during the assessment process
2. Every ninety (90) days thereafter
3. When a change in Level of Care occurs
4. At discharge

**The Child & Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (CAFAS) and Pre-school & Early Childhood Functional Assessment Scale (PECFAS)**

The Child & Adolescent Functional Assessment Scale (“CAFAS”) and the Pre-school & Early Childhood Functional Assessment Scale (“PECFAS”) are rating scales that assess functional impairment attributed to behavioral, emotional, psychological, or substance use disorders in

youth ages 3-20. The CAFAS/PECFAS is used as a treatment planning and review tool for clinicians. CAFAS measures the functioning of youth ages 6-20.

Effective March 1, 2023, all DBH-certified Providers must use CAFAS/PECFAS as part of a Diagnostic Assessment, for Specialty Service requests, and as follows:

1. Within 30 days or by the 4th visit whichever comes first following intake.
2. Every ninety (90) days thereafter.
3. During significant events affecting the child/youth's functioning that would impact service intensity and necessitate a treatment plan update (hospitalization, etc.)
4. At discharge.

### **ASAM Co-triage and Continuum**

The American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) Framework is the nation's most widely used comprehensive set of standards for determining placement, continued stay, and transfer/discharge of patients with addiction and co-occurring conditions.

ASAM Co-triage is a computer-guided provisional referral tool designed to generate an initial level of care placement for individuals with substance use needs. The tool assists clinicians with identifying broad categories of treatment needs along the six ASAM criteria dimensions and is intended to direct patients to a level of care placement where they will then receive a comprehensive assessment. It should be noted that the Co-triage tool was designed for both non-medical and medical settings and can be delivered by providers who are non-specialists in the substance use space.

The ASAM Continuum is also a computer-guided, structured interview for assessing patients with addictive, substance-related, and co-occurring conditions, built from the ASAM criteria.

Effective October 1, 2023, all DBH-certified ASURs Providers must use the Co-triage and Continuum for screening, diagnostic assessment, and request for specialty services.

### **Global Appraisal of Individual Needs – Initial (GAIN-I)**

The GAIN-I is a comprehensive bio-psychosocial assessment designed to support clinical diagnosis, placement, treatment planning, performance monitoring, program planning and economic analysis. It is designed to be used primarily in clinical settings.

Effective October 1, 2023, all DBH-certified ASTEP (Adolescent Substance Use Treatment Expansion Program) and ASURS Providers must use GAIN-I for diagnostic assessment and requests for Specialty services for Youth.

### **Resources**

- All behavioral health integration bulletins can be found on the DHCF BH Integration landing page at [Behavioral Health Integration | dhcf \(dc.gov\)](https://www.dhcf.dc.gov/behavioral-health-integration).