

3-11-24 Weekly Clinical Update

The Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health in Nursing Facilities published their February 2024 Newsletter and one of the articles in the newsletter discussed the value of a Behavioral Health Needs Assessment that could be an adjunct to each facility's Facility Assessment.

From the article, "The COE-NF's new Behavioral Health Needs Assessment can complement the required annual facility-wide assessment. The assessment was designed to bridge any behavioral health gaps not addressed or identified in the required annual facility-wide assessment.

Current guidance from the CMS State Operations Manual Appendix PP ([Ftags 740-745](#)) references assessment of residents' behavioral health needs and staff training and skills within the required annual facility-wide assessment.

Some examples:

- Pg. 498: "SUD and SMI care needs should be part of the facility assessment. The facility should determine if they have capacity, services, and staff skills to meet the requirements of F741."
- Pg. 508: Regarding sufficient staff to provide BH services: "The facility must address in its facility assessment under §483.70(e) (F838) the behavioral health needs that can be met and the numbers and types of staff needed to meet these needs."

Benefits

Why use the behavioral health needs assessment? It provides:

- A systematic way of identifying the current behavioral health and service needs of residents with behavioral health conditions.
- Actionable data for planning, staffing, training, and engaging with external resources/partnerships.
- Assistance with meeting the requirement for the behavioral health component of the facility-wide assessment that must be completed at least annually.
- A pathway for creating an environment that prioritizes and recognizes that behavioral health is essential to physical health and functional outcomes.
- Key information to help elevate the facilities' behavioral health care, treatment and services provided to residents.

In addition, the assessment can also be used for Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement (QAPI) purposes to identify specific areas within the nursing facility that require improvement in behavioral health services.

We encourage nursing facilities to use the assessment as they examine their own needs in the context of mental health and substance use services. Contact the COE-NF for training on how to complete the form. This Behavioral Health Needs Assessment is not a requirement.

The actual assessment can be accessed at https://nursinghomebehavioralhealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Behavioral-Health-Needs-Assessment-Fillable-With-Examples_508.pdf

This is an excellent tool that includes facility-specific assessment of:

- Mental Health Diagnosis Sources
- Percentage of Residents with Mental Health Diagnosis
- Medication Sources
- % of resident on medication to treat a mental health condition
- Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Sources
- % of residents on medication to treat SUD
- Trauma History Sources
- PASARR Level 2 Sources
- Mental Health/Substance Use Related Incidents
- Staff Training Topics
- Mental Health Specific Training
- Substance Use/Co-Occurring Disorders-Specific Training
- Trainings with certifications offered by COE-NF
- Psychiatry & Medication Management support & training
- Treatment Locator
- Psychotherapy & Substance Use Treatment
- Other Behavioral Health Support
- Specialized Care
- Community Partners
- Recovery Support Groups

The tool also offers a Gap Analysis and a PDSA Plan

With so many facilities with current and future residents with serious mental illness, this tool will be invaluable to your Facility Assessment AND more importantly, the appropriate care of your residents with mental illness.