

ATLANTA EMA QUALITY MANAGEMENT STANDARDS AND MEASURES MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING AND TREATMENT SERVICES

Purpose

The purpose of the Ryan White Part A quality management standards and measures is to ensure that a uniformity of service exists in the Atlanta Eligible Metropolitan Area (EMA) such that the consumers of a service receive the same quality of service regardless of where the service is rendered. If an agency is unable to meet a particular standard, the agency must document why the standard was unable to be met and explain the steps it is taking to meet that standard.

Definition

Mental health services are provision of outpatient psychological and psychiatric screening, assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and counseling services offered to clients living with HIV with a diagnosed mental illness. Services are based on a treatment plan, conducted in an outpatient group or individual session, and provided by a mental health professional licensed or authorized within the state to render such services, typically including psychiatrists, psychologists, and licensed clinical social workers. Please refer to section II.B for the qualifications of program staff providing mental health services.

Standards Development Process

The standards were developed through extensive background research on quality management standards, a review of existing standards from other Ryan White Part A EMAs, meetings of the quality management committee of the Atlanta HIV Health Services Planning Council, and meetings with the Ryan White Part A Recipient.

Application of Standards

These standards apply to any agency receiving Part A funds to provide Mental Health Services. If an agency is unable to meet a particular standard, the agency must document why the standard was unable to be met and explain in quarterly reports the steps it is taking to meet that standard.

Mental Health, Substance Abuse, Case Management, and Legal Standardized Screening Questions

The screening process includes utilization of the Atlanta EMA Screening Tool, standardized Case Management, Mental Health, Substance Abuse, and Legal questions, which all agencies must use if receiving Part A funds to provide Outpatient Ambulatory Health Services, Substance Abuse, Mental Health, Case Management (medical or non-medical) or Referral for Health Care and Support services. The purpose of the tool is to provide a uniform way to identify persons living with HIV (PLWH) who need an assessment conducted. Given this standardized approach, clients will receive the same follow-up for assessment, treatment and/or referrals based on their responses, regardless of the agency. Please note that agencies may decide to add more questions to their screening tool; however, the questions listed in these standards must be asked first before an agency's additional questions.

Acknowledgements

Fulton County would like to thank all of the EMAs that shared their standards and those who gave generously of their time to provide valuable input to the development of these quality management standards and measures.

ATLANTA EMA QUALITY MANAGEMENT STANDARDS AND MEASURES
MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING AND TREATMENT SERVICES

I. Policies and Procedures	
Standard	Measure
A. Agency must have policies and procedures in place that address confidentiality (HIPAA), grievance procedures and supervision requirements per federal and state law and local regulations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and procedure manual • Grievance procedure posted in visible location
B. Agency has eligibility requirements for services in written form. This is inclusive of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Clients rights and responsibilities ✓ Release of information/confidentiality ✓ Eligibility for services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on file
C. Agency is licensed and/or accredited by the appropriate city/county/state/federal agency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current licensure on file from appropriate city/county/state/federal agency
D. Agency has written policies and procedures in place that protect the physical safety and well-being of staff and clients. This is inclusive of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Physical agency safety management and public health emergencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meets fire safety requirements • Complies with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) • Is clean, comfortable and free from hazards • Complies with Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) infection control practices • Follows recommendations of Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines during pandemics and outbreaks • Maintains and updates an emergency preparedness plan ✓ Crisis management and psychiatric emergencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to assess emergent/urgent vs. routine need • Verbal intervention • Non-violent physical intervention • Emergency medical contact information • Incident reporting • Voluntary and involuntary inpatient admission ✓ Refusal and/or termination of services ✓ Personnel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles and responsibilities of staff, including supervision responsibilities and caseload or staff/client ratio ✓ Client/Parent/Guardian Rights and Responsibilities (see Section VII) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on file • Program Review/Site Visit

ATLANTA EMA QUALITY MANAGEMENT STANDARDS AND MEASURES
MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING AND TREATMENT SERVICES

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Health Record Storage and Maintenance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complies with DHHS, Office of Civil Rights HIPAA requirements ✓ Business Association Agreements on file 	
<p>E. Agency has private, confidential office space for seeing clients with mental health treatment needs (e.g. no half-walls or cubicles, all rooms must have doors).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Review/Site Visit
<p>F. Agency will have all inactivated client records in a confidential locked location for a period as stipulated by law.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site Visit/Program Monitoring
<p>G. Agency is required to maintain documentation of the following which shall be made available to the Recipient and HRSA upon request and during Ryan White Part A site visits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Documentation of appropriate and valid licensure and certification of mental health professionals as required by the State ✓ A detailed treatment plan for each eligible client that includes required components and signature ✓ Documentation of services provided, dates, and consistency with Ryan White requirements and with individual client treatment plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel files • Client records • Site Visit/Program Monitoring

II. Program Staff

Standard	Measure
<p>A. Staff is trained and knowledgeable about HIV/AIDS and available resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training records
<p>B. Staff has appropriate skills, relevant experience and licensure to care for PLWH with mental health issues. Mental health services provided with HRSA funding are subject to Georgia Code Title 37, Chapter 2. Per Georgia law, professional staff providing treatment counseling or support group facilitation must be licensed or supervised by a licensed professional. Services will be provided by a mental health professional such as psychiatrists, psychologists, licensed clinical social workers (LCSW), and licensed professional counselors (LPC).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current licensure and certification of mental health professionals as required by the State on file • Training records
<p>C. All staff without direct experience or licensure must work under direction and supervision of an appropriately licensed/credentialed Mental Health Professional (MHP) that is qualified by the Georgia Composite Board of Medical Examiners or Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel records

**ATLANTA EMA QUALITY MANAGEMENT STANDARDS AND MEASURES
MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING AND TREATMENT SERVICES**

Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists to provide clinical supervision.	
D. Staff obtaining directed experience ¹ must document clinical supervision ² . Both supervisors and supervisees are required to maintain a record of the date, duration, type (individual, paired, or group), and a brief summary of the pertinent activity for each supervision session available upon request.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel records
E. Agency staff administering screening questions must have completed training for using the Atlanta EMA screening tool.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training records
III. Access to Services	
A. Agency is accessible to desired target populations. Accessibility includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Proximity to community impacted by HIV ✓ Proximity to mass transit ✓ Proximity to low-income individuals ✓ Proximity to underinsured/uninsured individuals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Review/Site Visit
B. Agency is compliant with ADA requirements for non-discriminatory policies and practices and for the provision of reasonable accommodations to address communication (e.g. sign language interpreter).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on file
C. Agency demonstrates the ability to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate care according to the Atlanta EMA standards for desired target population.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personnel and training records • Program Review/Site Visit • Client satisfaction survey
D. Agency demonstrates input from clients in service design and delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client satisfaction survey • Existence of Consumer Advisory Board
E. Agency is accessible using HIPAA-compliant applications to provide telehealth services with healthcare-specific features and security.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on file • Personnel and training records • Program Review
IV. Eligibility Determination/Screening	
Standard	Measure
A. Upon initial contact with client, agency will assess client for emergent/urgent or routine mental health and substance abuse needs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client record

¹ Directed Experience means time spent under direction engaging in the practice of Professional Counseling as defined in O.C.G.A. Title 43, Chapter 10A, and Chapter 135.

² Clinical Supervision is the direct clinical review, for the purposes of training or teaching, by a supervisor of interaction with a client/s in order to promote the development of clinical skills as defined in O.C.G.A. Title 43, Chapter 10A, and Chapter 135.

ATLANTA EMA QUALITY MANAGEMENT STANDARDS AND MEASURES
MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING AND TREATMENT SERVICES

<p>B. Provider determines client eligibility for services. Client eligibility will be reassessed every six months. The process to determine client eligibility must be completed in a time frame so that treatment is not delayed. Eligibility assessment must include at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Proof of HIV status ✓ Proof of income not greater than 400% of Federal Poverty Level ✓ Proof of residency within the Atlanta EMA ✓ Proof of payor of last resort ✓ Proof of active participation in primary care or documentation of the client’s plan to access primary care <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least 1 visit with a primary care provider every 6 months • For affected children < 4, at least 1 primary care visit within 12 months. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client record • Policy on file • Agency client data report consistent with funding requirements
<p>C. Client is informed of the client confidentiality policy and grievance policy at first face- to-face contact.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client record • Client satisfaction survey
<p>D. New and re-enrolling clients will be screened for case management, mental health, substance abuse and legal needs using the standardized Atlanta EMA screening tool per screening protocol during a face to face contact from appropriate program staff immediately following eligibility determination. All clients will be rescreened annually to address any new client needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client record with Atlanta EMA Screening tool • Client data entered consistent with funding requirements (CAREWare) • Client record - if client disagrees with the screening disposition, the client record must include signature of client noting this and the scheduled appointment time with the identified agency grievance staff person

V. Assessment/Treatment

Standard	Measure
<p>A. Clients who are referred shall receive an assessment within 10 business days. Assessment includes at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Medical history and current health status ✓ HIV risk behavior ✓ Available financial resources ✓ Available support system ✓ Legal history ✓ Substance use history ✓ Housing history 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client record • Agency client data report consistent with funding requirements
<p>B. Clients with a current mental health issues as determined by the standardized</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client record

ATLANTA EMA QUALITY MANAGEMENT STANDARDS AND MEASURES
MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING AND TREATMENT SERVICES

assessment who want treatment will be provided either treatment or a referral as clinically indicated.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency client data report consistent with funding requirements
C. Mental health treatment plan is developed for each client who receives treatment and counseling services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client record
D. Develop treatment plan with client within 20 business days of intake encompassing continuum of care. An appropriate treatment plan must include at a minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The diagnosed mental illness or condition ✓ The treatment modality (group or individual) ✓ Start date for mental health services ✓ Recommended number of sessions ✓ Date for reassessment ✓ Projected treatment end date, ✓ Any recommendations for follow up ✓ The signature of the mental health professional rendering service ✓ Risk reduction counseling on possible HIV re-infection and avoiding transmission to their partners ✓ Documentation of current medications if applicable ✓ Recommended mental health treatment and client’s willingness to participate in such treatment ✓ Plans for continuity of primary medical care for those clients who are currently receiving medical care ✓ Plans to link client into primary medical care with a designated time frame that is coordinated with client’s mental health treatment needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client record including completed treatment plan signed by client • Client satisfaction survey • Chart audit
E. Client’s needs and treatment plan are reviewed and revised a minimum of every 6 months. Clients receiving telehealth services should have a face-to-face visit at least once a year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client record • Agency client data report consistent with funding requirements

VI. Service Coordination/Referral

Standard	Measure
A. Agency staff acts as a liaison between the client and other service providers to support coordination and delivery of high quality care. For those clients not in outpatient ambulatory health services, agency staff must note progress towards linking the client into outpatient ambulatory health services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client record – documentation of with whom staff are communicating and progress to linking client to primary care if appropriate
B. Agency staff implement discharge plan when appropriate in client treatment plan. The discharge plan shall be inclusive of:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client record

**ATLANTA EMA QUALITY MANAGEMENT STANDARDS AND MEASURES
MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING AND TREATMENT SERVICES**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Summary of needs at admission ✓ Summary of services provided ✓ Goals completed during counseling ✓ Circumstances of discharge ✓ Disposition 	
<p>C. Referral sources should be provided with a minimum of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Authorization form from client to provide records to referral source ✓ Concise problem statement ✓ Helpful/relevant lab tests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client record
VII. Clients' Rights and Responsibilities	
<p>A. Client confidentiality policy exists for all service settings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on file
<p>B. Grievance policy exists.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on file
<p>C. A current (in the last year) release of information form exists for each specific request for information and each request is signed by the client.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client record
<p>D. The agency has a formal policy as governed by Georgia law for clients who may be incapable of making their own treatment or care decisions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on file • Legal/medical consultation policy
<p>E. Client will be informed of the client confidentiality policy, grievance policy, their rights and responsibilities and their eligibility for services annually.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Client record • Documentation in client chart initialed or signed by client (may include electronic signature)

ATLANTA EMA QUALITY MANAGEMENT STANDARDS AND MEASURES
MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING AND TREATMENT SERVICES
Staff Credentials³

Mental Health Professional (MHP)

The following are considered to be Mental Health Professionals:

1. Physician (MD, DO, etc.) – A physician licensed to practice medicine or osteopathy by Georgia Composite Board of Medical Examiners
2. Psychiatrist – A physician licensed to practice medicine or osteopathy in Georgia, who has completed a residency in psychiatry approved by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology.
3. Physician’s Assistant (PA) – A person who completed a physician’s assistant training program approved by Georgia Composite Board of Medical Examiners with at least 1 year of experience in behavioral healthcare required to supervise Certified Psychiatric Rehabilitation Professionals (CPRP), Certified Peer Specialist (CPS), or Paraprofessional (PP) staff.
4. Advanced Practice Nurse (APRN) - An advanced practice nurse, licensed in Georgia, with one year experience in psychiatry or mental health
5. Clinical Nurse Specialist, Psychiatric-Mental Health (CNS-MH) - The holder of a master’s degree of higher in nursing with a specialty in psychiatry or mental health
6. Nurse Practitioner (NP) - A registered nurse, licensed in Georgia, who holds a master’s degree from a school of nursing or a university with a specialty in psychiatry or mental health and has at least 1 year of experience in behavioral healthcare required to supervise CPRP, CPS, or PP staff.
7. Psychologist (PhD or PsyD) – A holder of a doctoral degree from an accredited university or college and who is licensed by the Georgia Board of Examiners of Psychologists.
8. **Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW)** – The holder of a master’s degree in social work from an accredited university or college, with documentation of 3 years of supervised full-time clinical post Master’s degree and licensed by the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists.
9. **Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)** – The holder of a master’s degree from an accredited university or college, and licensed by the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists.

Mental Health Staff (MHS)

Mental Health Staff must work under the supervision of a Mental Health Professional (MHP). Their clinical work must be reviewed and signed by the MHP supervisor. The following are considered to be Mental Health Staff:

1. Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) – A person licensed for practical nursing by Georgia Board of Licensed Practical Nursing with one year experience in psychiatry or mental health.
2. Registered Nurse – A person with a bachelor’s degree in nursing with one year experience in psychiatry or mental health and licensed by the Georgia Board of Nursing.

³ Adapted from the FY2020 Provider Manual for Community Behavioral Health Providers by Georgia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Disabilities (Oct 2019). <https://dbhdd.georgia.gov/provider-manuals-archive>

ATLANTA EMA QUALITY MANAGEMENT STANDARDS AND MEASURES
MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING AND TREATMENT SERVICES

3. **Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW) / Licensed Associate Professional Counselor (LAPC)** – A person who holds a master’s degree from an accredited university or college, licensed the Georgia Composite Board of Professional Counselors, Social Workers, and Marriage and Family Therapists.
4. Clinical Interns, Practicum Students, or Trainees in one of the behavioral or social sciences program at an accredited university or college, that is primarily psychological in nature who are obtaining supervised clinical experience for licensure.