


STATE OF VERMONT		
Agency of Human Services (AHS)		
Screening for Substance Abuse within AHS Programs	Original Policy Adopted Date: 9/16/14	Original Policy Number: 1.12
Authorizing Signature:		Date Signed: 9/16/14

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2015

TITLE: Screening for Substance Abuse within AHS Programs

PURPOSE:

To identify Agency of Human Services (AHS) clients at risk for substance abuse in order to intervene early and coordinate services within AHS. To ensure that all relevant Agency of Human Services (AHS) programs have a systematized method of screening clients for substance abuse problems on entry or exit of the AHS program or service, and have staff and managers trained in evidence-based substance abuse screening techniques.

This policy shall not be used as a means of excluding clients from a service delivery program. Rather, the purpose is to screen AHS customers in order to provide them with appropriate care and resources and to improve the system of care within AHS.

BACKGROUND AND REFERENCES:

AHS recognizes the substantial burden that substance abuse has on AHS clients, particularly those who need multiple services and therefore enter the AHS system through different doors. Within AHS, every department interacts with the substance abuse treatment system in some capacity. This is particularly evident when considering the significant correlation between substance abuse and mental health. The Secretary identified a need for departments to be integrated and collaborative in their efforts to maximize limited resources and improve quality of care for AHS clients.

In order to identify the key areas that needed to be integrated, the Substance Abuse Treatment Coordination Workgroup (SATC) was formed in February, 2013. The first recommendation from the SATC is to develop a substance abuse screening policy for relevant AHS programs.

DEFINITIONS:

Screening: A preliminary systematic procedure to evaluate the likelihood that an individual has a substance use or mental health condition.

Assessment: After a client has been screened the procedures by which a licensed or otherwise approved counselor identifies and evaluates an individual's strengths, weaknesses, problems and needs for the development of a treatment plan.

For purposes of this policy, evidence-based screening tools for substance abuse are identified in the following table. Please use this table to determine the tool that is most appropriate for the specific population being served. If there are additional tools identified by a specific program, they may be added to the table upon vetting from the Vermont Department of Health Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs Treatment Unit.

Age Group/Population	Recommended Tool
Females of child bearing age, pregnant females & sexually active females (with male partners)	Pregnancy & Alcohol Questions
Adults 18+	Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test & Drug Abuse Screen Test
Adults 18+	UNCOPE
Youth	CRAFFT
Older adults	Short Michigan Alcoholism Screening Test-Geriatric Version
Adults	CAGE, CAGE-AID
Individuals involved with Corrections	Modified Simple Screening Instrument for Substance Abuse

It is recommended that in addition to the substance abuse screen, programs consider using evidence-based mental health tool. These can be identified with the assistance of the Department of Mental Health.

Substance Abuse 101 Training is defined for the purposes of this policy as a training that covers:

- Biology of substance abuse and brain reward system
- Co-occurring disorders
- Genetic and cultural influence
- Drug testing as therapeutic rather than punishment

The purpose of the training is to ensure that participants learn:

- What makes humans vulnerable to substance use and co-occurring disorders

Substance Abuse Screening Training is defined for the purposes of this policy as a training that covers:

- DSM-V Substance Use Disorder Definitions/Criteria
- Evidence based screening/assessment/treatment
- Recovery oriented systems of care including peer supports and mentoring
- Understanding SBIRT protocols and brief treatment

The purpose of this training is to ensure that participants learn:

- Principles of effective screening and comprehensive assessment
- Principles of effective treatment and recovery
- Methods of referral for care

SCOPE:

Substance abuse 101 training will be available to all appropriate direct service personnel as defined by each Department. The trainings will be developed by the Department of Health Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs through the Screening Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment grant. Future trainings will be overseen by the Department of Health Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs in conjunction with the Human Resources and Organizational Development Director.

Each Department will identify programs that need to develop and implement substance abuse screening protocol and a plan for implementation. Within each program, key staff roles will be identified for the screening training.

Within each identified program all clients receiving services will be screened with an evidence-based tool upon entering or exiting services – screening must be done at minimum on an annual basis, or at a critical clinical

situation (e.g. pregnancy) according to the individual program protocol. As previously stated in this policy, the screenings shall not be used as a means of excluding clients from a service delivery program in any way.

The implementation plan for this policy will include: instructions for roll-out for AHS partners, designated agencies and contractors; and instructions for staff that might already have substance abuse screening training.

PROCEDURES:

AHS recognizes the substantial burden that substance abuse has on AHS program clients, particularly those who need multiple services. In light of this, AHS will screen all clients entering or exiting identified AHS programs for substance abuse problems.

AHS takes responsibility in training those program staff in evidence-based screening practices. In turn, each identified program is responsible for establishing a protocol that directs all clients through screening within their intake or exit process (or another specified point of contact).

COMPLIANCE

The overall responsibility for screening clients for substance abuse related problems rests primarily with AHS departments and their programs. To ensure a consistent and comprehensive approach, the Secretary's Office in conjunction with the Department of Health Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs shall oversee the implementation of this policy and provide direction, support and consultation.

ENFORCEMENT:

The Office of the Secretary may initiate reviews, assessments or other means to ensure that this policy is being followed.

