

ASAM Quick Reference

The American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) criteria is an evidence-based template to determine the appropriate level of substance use disorder intervention for an individual. The Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (ODMHSAS) mandates contracted treatment agencies to utilize this criteria in determining appropriate level of substance use disorder treatment (level of care). Providing too low or too high levels of care will both likely result in poor outcomes and waste available treatment resources.

Research indicates that substance use disorder treatment services should be at least 90 days in duration and be based on assessed need (NIDA). Treatment duration includes changes from one level of care to another (ex. a combination of residential and outpatient services of at least 90 days). For the highest likelihood of beneficial treatment outcomes, there should be a seamless transition of services when transitioning between levels of care as treatment needs change.

ASAM criteria uses six dimensions to provide a holistic assessment of the individual.

ASAM Six Dimensions

Dimension 1: Acute Intoxication and/or Withdrawal Potential

Past and current experiences of substance use and withdrawal.

Dimension 2: Biomedical Conditions and Complications

Physical health history and current condition

Dimension 3: Emotional, Behavioral, or Cognitive Conditions and Complications

Thoughts, emotions, mental health needs, and behavioral health history

Dimension 4: Readiness to Change

Readiness and interest in changing

Dimension 5: Relapse, Continued Use, or Continued Problem Potential

Likelihood of relapse or continued use or continued behavioral health problems

Dimension 6: Recovery and Living Environment

Relationship between recovery and living environment (people, places, and things)

The status of these six dimensions, as assessed by a trained clinician, will provide recommendations on the most appropriate treatment options.

For questions please contact Ray Caesar at RCaesar@odmhsas.org or 405-522-3870.

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This document is not intended, nor is it appropriate to be used, as an ASAM assessment instrument. It should be used to provide a brief overview of ASAM components. The below chart describes the relationships between the needs of an individual in each of the assessed dimensions and the recommended level of care.

Level of Care	DIMENSIONS					
	One Intox/Withdrawal Pot.	Two Biomedical Conditions	Three Emotional/Behavioral	Four Readiness to Change	Five Relapse/Continued Use	Six Living Environment
0.5 Early Intervention	None	None or Mild	None or Mild	Pre-Contemplation or Contemplation	Lacks Skills	Risky Support System
1 Outpatient	None or Manageable in 1 Withdrawal Management	None or Mild OR Receiving Adequate Medical Services	None or Mild OR Receiving Adequate Behavioral Health Services	None or Mild OR Moderate but Low Risk in Other Dimensions	Can Maintain Abstinence with Minimal Support	Recovery Environment is Supportive or Has Coping Skills
1 Opioid Treatment Program (OTP)	Moderate to High	None or Mild OR Receiving Adequate Medical Services	None or Mild OR Receiving Adequate Behavioral Health Services	Ready, But Cannot Obtain Sobriety without OTS Support	Cannot Obtain Sobriety without OTS Support	Recovery Environment is Supportive or Has Coping Skills
2.1 Intensive Outpatient Treatment	Minimal or Manageable in 1 Withdrawal Management	None or Mild OR Receiving Adequate Medical Services	None or Mild OR Receiving Adequate Behavioral Health Services	Ambivalent or Lacks Awareness, Requires Support in Stages of Change	High Risk	Recovery Environment is Not Supportive, but Can Cope
2.5 Partial Hospitalization	NOT AVAILABLE*					
3.1 Halfway House	Minimal or Manageable in 1 Withdrawal Management	None or Mild OR Receiving Adequate Medical Services	None or Mild OR Receiving Adequate Behavioral Health Services	Open to Recovery, Requires Support in Stages of Change	Needs On-Going Support to Act on Skills and Knowledge	Risky Recovery Environment, Recovery is Possible with Structure
3.3 Clinically Managed, Population Specific High-Intensity Residential Services	NOT AVAILABLE*					
3.5 Residential Treatment	Minimal or Manageable in 3.2 Withdrawal Management	None or Mild OR Receiving Adequate Medical Services	If Dimension 4 is Significant or High then any score in this Dimension is OK	If Dimension 3 is Significant or High then any score in this Dimension is OK	High Risk	Risky Recovery Environment, Recovery is Possible with Structure
3.7 Medically Monitored Intensive Inpatient Services	NOT AVAILABLE*					
4 Medically Managed Intensive Inpatient Services	NOT AVAILABLE*					

*Reflect levels of care not currently funded by ODMHSAS