

# Health Plan of Michigan Clinical Practice Guideline Screening, Diagnosis and Referral for Substance Use Disorders

The following guideline recommends detection, diagnosis, treatment and referral considerations for substance use disorders

Eligible Population	Key Components	Recommendation and Level of Evidence
Adolescents and adults	Detection/Screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Screen by history for substance use at every health maintenance exam or initial pregnancy visit (repeat as indicated), using a validated screening tool (improves accuracy of detecting alcohol abuse or dependence)<sup>1</sup> <b>[D]</b></li> <li>• Maintain high index of concern for substance use in persons with:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li style="width: 50%;">• Family history of substance abuse disorder <b>[B]</b></li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Drug seeking behaviors</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Recent stressful life events and lack of social supports</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Physical and cognitive disabilities</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Chronic pain or illness, trauma</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Alcohol before age 15</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Mental illness</li> <li style="width: 50%;">• Medical conditions associated with substance abuse</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<b>Substance dependence or abuse indicates a maladaptive pattern of substance use resulting in clinically significant impairment of distress. Relevant issues include:</b>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recurrent substance use resulting in a failure to fulfill major role obligations</li> <li>• Recurrent substance use in situations that are physically hazardous</li> <li>• Recurrent substance-related legal problems</li> <li>• Substance use despite having persistent or recurrent social or interpersonal problems</li> <li>• Tolerance, withdrawal, use in larger amounts or over a longer period than intended</li> <li>• Persistent desire or unsuccessful efforts to cut down</li> <li>• Great deal of time spent in obtaining, using or recovering from use of the substance</li> <li>• Reduction in social, occupational or recreational activities because of substance use</li> <li>• Substance use continues despite knowledge of problems</li> </ul>
<b>Patients with Substance Use Disorder</b>	Patient Education and Brief Intervention by PCP or Trained Staff (e.g. RN, MSW, etc.) <b>[A]</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discuss the relationship to presenting medical concerns or psychosocial problems</li> <li>▪ Assess the patient's readiness to change</li> <li>▪ Negotiate goals and strategies for reducing consumption and other change</li> <li>▪ Involve family members as appropriate</li> <li>▪</li> </ul>
	<b>Referral Considerations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider referral to community-based services (e.g., Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Cocaine Anonymous) or Employee Assistance Program, or (especially if substance dependent) a substance abuse or behavioral health specialist. <b>[D]</b></li> <li>• Pharmacologic management should be conducted by or in collaboration with physicians who have expertise in the area of substance abuse disorders <b>[D]</b></li> <li>• Schedule follow-up at least 2 visits within 30 days to re-assess and support behavior change</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup>Validated tools include: Alcohol Use Disorders Identification Test (AUDIT), TWEAC (for pregnant women), Michigan Alcohol Screening Test (MAST, MAST-G), CAGE Survey, Substance Abuse Subtle Screening Inventory (SASSI)

<sup>2</sup> At risk substance use is defined as any illicit drugs; >3 drinks/day or >7drinks/week in women; >4 drinks/day or >14 drinks/week in men, >1 drink/day if age >65

**Levels of Evidence for the most significant recommendations:** A=randomized controlled trials; B=controlled trials, no randomization; C=observational studies; D=opinion of expert panel

This guideline lists core management steps for non-behavioral health specialists. It is based on several sources including, Practice Guideline for the Treatment of Patients with Substance Use Disorders, American Psychiatric Association, August 2006 (www.psych.org). Individual patient considerations and advances in medical science may supersede or modify these recommendations.

Approved by MQIC Medical Directors August 2007

www.mqic.org