

## Behavioral Health Services (BHS) – Contractor Information Notice

<b>To:</b>	<b>Contracted Providers Serving Transition Age Youth (TAY)</b>
<b>From:</b>	<b>Behavioral Health Services</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>April 20, 2023</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>CANS Assessment Requirements for Mental Health Adult and Older Adult System of Care</b>

On January 25, 2018, the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) disseminated an All County Letter (ACL) [No.18-09](#) outlining the requirements for the implementation of the **Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment**, in working with Transition Age Youth (TAY). The CANS assessment tool was selected as the functional assessment tool pursuant to the [Continuum of Care Reform \(CCR\)](#) and AB 403.

**CANS Assessment:**

The CANS is a structured, 50-item assessment administered to children and youth up to the age of 21 and is used in mental health treatment programs for identifying youth and family actionable needs and useful strengths. The tool also:

- Supports decision-making by identifying which of a child/youth’s needs are the most important to address in treatment or service planning.
- Helps identify strengths, which can be the basis of a treatment or service plan and can support motivation and engagement in treatment.

Adult and Older Adult (AOA) mental health programs serving TAY will be required to complete a CANS assessment for all TAY-age participants, 18 to 21 years old.

- The CANS assessment must be completed within 30 days upon intake and every 6 months.
- The CANS data must be entered into the mHOMS database.
  - Initial CANS data must be entered into mHOMS database within 30 days of CCBH intake date.
  - CANS data must be entered within 7 days from CCBH discharge date.
- Youth who are within 6 months of turning 21 at intake are excluded from CANS assessment requirements.
- If the CANS was completed within 60 days from discharge date, a discharge CANS does not need to be administered. The prior CANS will be accepted as the discharge measure.

**Timeline:**

**As of 5/1/2023, programs should begin getting staff trained and certified to complete the CANS assessment.** The CANS assessment can only be administered by staff who have completed the certification process. To prepare for this requirement, programs may start the CANS certification process now so staff can begin administering and completing the CANS assessment upon certification. **All new admissions, as of 10/15/23, who are TAY ages 18-21 will be required to have a CANS assessment completed.**

**CANS Certification Process:**

The CANS certification process is free for AOA programs serving TAY. It involves four steps to be completed on two websites: the [BHS website](#) and the Praed Foundation website. Programs should complete the steps below to start the certification process.

1. Identify how many staff will need to be certified based on program design/staffing.

**For More Information:**

- HHSa, QI Matters: [qimatters.hhsa@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:qimatters.hhsa@sdcounty.ca.gov)

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2. Staff identified to be CANS certified can each request a coupon code on the [CANS Coupon Request Form \(smartsheet.com\)](#).
  - a. [Staff who can complete the CANS:](#) Licensed/Waivered Psychologist, Licensed/Registered/Waivered Social Worker or Marriage and Family Therapist, Licensed/Registered Professional Clinical Counselor, Physician (MD or DO), and Nurse Practitioners.
3. After coupon is requested, BHS Workforce will send an email with the coupon code.
4. Create account and redeem coupon on the [Praed website](#).
5. Complete the online course.
6. Pass the Certification Exam with a 0.7 score. *Note: annual re-certification is required.*

**NOTE:** The distribution of CANS coupons for the Praed Foundation training and certification exam which was previously managed by RIHS will now be administered internally by the BHS Workforce Team, until further notice. See [2023-03-03-BHS Contractor Memo-CANS Coupons Change](#) for more information.

We thank you in advance for your attention in this matter.

**For More Information:**

- HHSa, QI Matters: [qimatters.hhsa@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:qimatters.hhsa@sdcounty.ca.gov)