

# Adult Needs and Strengths Assessment (ANSA) USER TIP SHEET

The ANSA is a multi-purpose tool developed for adult's behavioral health services to support decision making to facilitate quality improvement initiatives and allow for the monitoring of outcomes of services. It was developed from a communication perspective so as to facilitate the linkage between the assessment process and the design of individualized service plans, including the application of evidence based practices.

## Guiding Principles

1. Items are included because they are relevant for planning and decision making.
2. Item ratings translate into action levels.
3. Focus is on the adult's needs, not interventions or services that could mask a need.
4. Consider culture and development before establishing action levels.
5. It's about the 'what,' not the 'why.' Don't explain away needs with what you think might be an underlying cause.
6. Specific ratings window (30-days) can be over ridden based on action levels.

### Before rating an item, consider the following questions:

- Is there any evidence of a need or strength?
- Are you understanding the adult's behavior within normal development given their age?
- Have you considered the adult and family's culture? Does your approach to assessment and engagement communicate respect for the adult and family's culture?
- Is the need impacting the adult's functioning?
- How urgently is action required on a need? How useful is the adult/family strength in achieving targeted outcomes?
- Are you focused on describing the need or strength, and not the underlying cause?
- What services are already in place for the adult and/or family?



The majority of the ANSA items are rated in the context of what is normative for the adult and developmental stage.

Item Rating: Action Levels

### Rating Needs Domains

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 0 | No evidence of need; no need for action.   |
| 1 | History of or possible need; watchful waiting/ prevention/additional assessment. |
| 2 | Need is interfering with functioning; action or intervention required.           |
| 3 | Need is dangerous or disabling; immediate or intensive action required.          |

### Rating Strengths Domains

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 0 | Centerpiece strength; central to planning.                                    |
| 1 | Strength present; useful in planning.   |
| 2 | Identified strength; consider strength building or development activities.    |
| 3 | No strength identified; strength creation or identification may be indicated. |