

Six Key Components of a Communimetric Tool

The CANS has six key principles that, if remembered, will make the assessment process move more smoothly.

- 1. Items impact service planning.** An item exists because it helps in identifying needs for the treatment plan.
- 2. Items ratings translate into Action Levels.** An item rated 2 or 3 requires action.
- 3. Consider culture and development.** Culture and development must be considered before establishing the action level for each item.
- 4. Agnostic as to etiology.** It is descriptive tool. Rate the “what” and not the “why”. The CANS describes what is happening with the individual, but does not seek to assign a cause for a behavior or situation.
- 5. It’s about the individual, not the service.** Don’t rate behavior with a low score if the individual has been in a controlled environment. If an intervention is present that is masking a need but must stay in place, it is factored into the rating and would result in a rating of an actionable need (i.e., 2 or 3).
- 6. Specific ratings window (e.g. 30 days) can be over-ridden based on action levels.** Keep the information fresh and RELEVANT. Don’t get stuck on 30 days – if the need is relevant and older than 30 days, still use the information. Action Levels trump Time Frames – if it should be on your treatment plan, rate it higher!