



Date: September 21, 2018

Policy Memo 02-18: **CANS and PSC-35 Implementation: MH Contractors**

Amended: 10/31/2018

Amendment Changes: Department of Health Care Services released Information Notice 18-048 with the following changes to the implementation of the CANS and PSC-35

- **Implementation date for clients 18-20 has changed to February 1, 2019**
- **CANS and PSC 35 are only to be completed for new clients ages 6-17 opened on or after October 1, 2018 and for clients ages 18-20 on or after 2/1/2019.**

To: Contracted Agencies/Providers providing Specialty Mental Health services in San Mateo County.

Authority: The purpose of this memo is to set forth new documentation requirements to ensure compliance with DHCS Notices 17-052, 18-007, and 18-029.

Implementation Date: All components of this memo must be fully implemented by January 1st, 2019.

The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) has selected the Pediatric Symptom Checklist (PSC-35) and the Child and Adolescents Needs and Strengths (CANS) tools to measure child and youth functioning. The PSC-35 is to be completed for children/youth aged 3 to 18, and the CANS is to be completed for children/youth aged 6 to 20.

CANS

The CANS is a structured assessment used for identifying youth and family actionable needs and useful strengths. It provides a framework for developing and communicating about a shared vision and uses youth and family information to inform planning, support decisions, and monitor outcomes. Providers will complete the California CANS (CANS) through a collaborative process which includes children and youth **ages 6 up to age 20**, and their caregivers (at a minimum). [CANS form](#)

PSC-35

The PSC-35 is a psychosocial screening tool designed to facilitate the recognition of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral problems so appropriate interventions can be initiated as early as possible. Parents/caregivers will complete PSC-35 (parent/caregiver version) for children and youth **ages 3 up to age 18**. [PSC-35 form](#)

Contractor Agency Staff

Use of the CANS tool requires training and certification **before** you can administer the tool. The expectation is that the CANS and PSC-35 will be fully implemented by January 1st, 2019. The state mandate is to use the California CANS (CANS 50), if your agency uses a different CANS you will still be required to submit data for the CANS 50 data set.



Timing and administration – CANS and PSC-35 are due:

1. At initial intake (within 60 days)
2. Ongoing every 6 months while case is open
3. At discharge.

For clients ages 6 to 17 the CALOCUS will no longer be required. For clients ages 18 to 20 the LOCUS will continue to be required

PSC-35 does not require training because it is completed by the parent/caregiver. For more information about the PSC-35. Including implementation, scoring and clinical utility, please visit the Pediatric Symptoms Checklist website at: http://www.massgeneral.org/psychiatry/services/psc_home.aspx.

Trainings for CANS

BHRS will be providing CANS trainings to all contract agencies. Additional information to follow.

- For agencies who have staff that have not been certified for CANS, you must provide certificate of completion of the CANS training and certification to QM immediately after completing/passing the online exam.
- For agencies that have already certified their staff in the use of the CANS Tool, please provide QM with a copy of the most recent certification.

Submitting CANS to BHRS

- **For contract agencies with administrative Avatar access** - These forms are to be completed in Avatar using the CANS form titled “**Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths**” and the PSC-35 form titled “**Pediatric Symptom Checklist**”. Additional instructions to follow.
- **For contract agencies without Avatar access**: The CANS and PSC-35 paper copies will be submitted to the BHRS MIS department. Additional instructions to follow.

BHRS staff and contractors will be expected to follow the DHCS guidelines for both functional assessment tools.

- DHCS Notice [17-052](#) Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) – Specialty Mental Health Services Performance Outcomes System Functional Assessment Tools for Children and Youth [Enclosure 1](#), [PSC-35](#), [CANS](#)
- DHCS Notice [18-007](#) Requirements for Implementing the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths Assessment Tool within a Child and Family Team [Attachment 1](#), [Attachment 2](#), [Attachment 3](#)
- DHCS Notice [18-029](#) Clarification Regarding Sharing of Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) Assessments by County Placing Agencies and Mental Health Programs DHCS Notices located at: <http://www.dhcs.ca.gov/formsandpubs/Pages/MHSUDS-Information-Notices.aspx>



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