



Aging Program Directive (APD)

APD# 24-22-01

Issuance Date: 04/22/2024

Effective Date: 05/01/2024

Program Area: Aging Services

Disposition: Rescinds APD 15-01-09

Origin: Bureau of Aging Services

Contact: Bureau of Aging Services RA-PAAgingServices@pa.gov

**Subject: Issuance of Aging Service Policy and Procedure Manual
Chapter III: Assessment**

To: Pennsylvania Department of Aging
Area Agencies on Aging
Pennsylvania Association of Area Agencies on Aging
Pennsylvania Council on Aging

From: _____
Jason Kavulich
Secretary

Purpose: The purpose of this Aging Program Directive (APD) is to issue Chapter III: Assessment, a revised chapter in the Aging Service Policy and Procedure Manual. This chapter details the assessment process and the role of the assessment process in identifying an individual's functional abilities and unmet needs for OPTIONS and to gain an understanding of the Caregiver, their perspective of the caregiving

relationship, and their needs for the Caregiver Support Program (CSP). Additionally, the Chapter defines the role of assessment in Senior Community Centers.

Background:

The Pennsylvania Department of Aging (PDA) previously provided the Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) with programmatic information and procedural guidance for the OPTIONS Program in Chapter IV: OPTIONS Program and the Caregiver Support Program in Chapter VI: Caregiver Support Program. The assessment process is vital in identifying the need for Aging Services such as OPTIONS, CSP, and Nutrition Services.

The Bureau of Aging Services, the Pennsylvania Association of Area Agencies on Aging (P4A), and several volunteer AAA staff formed a workgroup to develop a revised Assessment Chapter.

The process to revise this chapter included a thorough review of the assessment process including the assessment tools, participants of the assessment process, assessment locations, related timeframes, and responsibilities of AAA staff. This analysis resulted in a draft chapter, which was presented to the aforementioned workgroup for input and revision. Following revisions, the draft chapter was distributed to the entire Aging Network for review and comment. Additional revisions were made based on comments received leading to the final version of this chapter.

The Assessment Chapter, which is part of the *Aging Service Policy and Procedure Manual*, is posted on the PDA website with links to chapter appendices and additional reference documents, allowing all users to have easy access to the information. The documents may also be printed by local users. PDA does not provide hard copies of the documents.

Directives:

The assessment process plays an important role regarding the identification of an individual's functional abilities, met and unmet needs, and the potential need for Aging Services. PDA's assessment tools are designed to capture essential information about an individual which forms the foundation for person-centered care plans. Services within person-centered care plans shall be supported by unmet needs documented in the assessment tools.

The following highlights key sections of the Assessment Chapter:

Section I: Assessment Tools

This section identifies the assessment tools utilized by the OPTIONS Program, the CSP, and for services offered at a Senior Community Center or Satellite Center. These tools include the Needs Assessment Tool (NAT), the Needs Assessment Tool Express (NAT-E), and the Caregiver Assessment Tool (CAT).

Section II: Conducting Comprehensive Assessments

This section outlines who may conduct assessments, where assessments may be completed, who may participate in an assessment, and how to assess a consumer. It also provides information on the hybrid assessment process.

Section III: Timeframes

This section provides guidance on the timeframes Care Managers and Care Management Supervisors shall follow when completing the NAT, NAT-E, and CAT at initial assessment and reassessment.

New Policy of Note

In rare instances when the consumer is unable to provide financial verification during the home visit, the consumer shall be permitted to provide financial verification within 30 calendar days of the date of the home visit. The AAA may choose to grant a timeframe extension in instances when the consumer is unable to obtain the financial verification within 30 calendar days. AAAs shall establish a written financial verification timeframe policy to outline when a timeframe extension will be granted and determine a reasonable timeframe to allow additional time for the consumer to provide the financial verification. The extended timeframe established by the AAA shall not exceed 90 calendar days.

Section IV: Saint Louis University Mental Status (SLUMS)

This section outlines the SLUMS screening tool which helps identify signs and symptoms of mild cognitive impairment or dementia, can

be used to identify changes in cognition over time, and allows individuals to seek early medical intervention and treatment.

Section V: Creating New Assessments and Reassessments in SAMS

This section outlines the process of creating assessments and reassessments in SAMS.

Section VI: Level of Care Determinations

This section identifies levels of care and their relationship to Aging Services. When referring to long-term care services, a “level of care” is used to describe how much assistance an individual needs with activities of daily living (ADLs) and management of health conditions, as well as the setting in which the amount, or kind of care, is provided. Levels of care are differentiated by the scope of care provided, where the care is provided, and by whom the care is provided.

This chapter includes the following Appendices:

- C.1 Caregiver Assessment Tool (CAT)
- C.2 Caregiver Assessment Tool (CAT) Instructions
- C.3 Needs Assessment Tool (NAT)
- C.4 Needs Assessment Tool (NAT) Instructions
- C.5 Needs Assessment Tool Express (NAT-E)
- C.6 Needs Assessment Tool Express (NAT-E) Instructions
- C.7 SLUMS Examination (contained within the NAT)
- E.1 6 Pa. Code Chapter 21 – Domiciliary Care Services for Adults
- F.1 National Institute of Mental Health Brochures and Fact Sheets:
<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications>