

Clinical Practice Guidelines and Shared Decision-Making Tools

Clinical practice guidelines are recommendations intended to help optimize patient care. They are informed by a systematic review of evidence and an assessment of the benefits and harms of alternative care options. Since beginning Medicaid managed care operations in 2012, Vaya Health (Vaya) has selected and approved clinical practice guidelines to help network providers deliver whole-person, clinically integrated care to achieve optimal outcomes for the individuals we serve. Good clinical care also requires person-centered treatment planning, which includes member choice and community standards of care. Shared decision-making tools can assist with person-centered treatment planning and a collaborative approach to care.

The production of clinical practice guidelines has accelerated significantly since the Institute of Medicine, now the National Academy of Medicine, issued its initial report, “Clinical Practice Guidelines: Directions for a New Program,” in 1990. Some of the challenges in developing and selecting clinical practice guidelines include the rapid advances in clinical treatment strategies, multiple national organizations developing guidelines, and recognition of the significance of co-occurring disorders. Many of the initial clinical practice guidelines Vaya originally shared are no longer endorsed by the peer academy that originally promulgated them (e.g., the American Psychiatric Association has moved several clinical practice guidelines to legacy status). The following list of updated guidelines from multiple subject matter experts focuses not only on behavioral health care, but also on aspects of physical health and prevention. Research suggests the risk of premature death for individuals with serious mental illness is often related to smoking, obesity, diabetes, and hypertension. With the launch of the Behavioral Health and Intellectual/Developmental Disabilities (I/DD) Tailored Plan, Vaya continues to emphasize integrated, whole-person care for members, and our clinical practice guidelines reflect an increased physical health presence.

Vaya uses current clinical practice guidelines, standardized leveling tools (for behavioral health conditions), and North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services medical necessity criteria in our effort to authorize the right services at the right level of care. Both members and providers may use these guidelines to help identify the most appropriate and effective treatment for a specific diagnosis. For individuals with treatment-resistant conditions, expert clinical consultation may be of value when progress is not meeting target goals.

Clinical Practice Guidelines

ADULT MENTAL HEALTH

American Psychiatric Association

- [The Practice of Electroconvulsive Therapy, Third Edition: Recommendations for Treatment, Training, and Privileging \(A Task Force Report of the American Psychiatric Association\) \(2025\)](#)
- [Practice Guideline for the Treatment of Patients with Borderline Personality Disorder \(2024\)](#)
- [Practice Guideline for the Treatment of Patients with Eating Disorders, Fourth Edition \(2023\)](#)
- [Practice Guideline for the Treatment of Patients with Schizophrenia, Third Edition \(2020\)](#)
- [Practice Guideline on the Use of Antipsychotics to Treat Agitation or Psychosis in Patients With Dementia \(2016\)](#)
- [Practice Guidelines for the Psychiatric Evaluation of Adults, Third Edition \(2015\)](#)

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs/Department of Defense

- [Clinical Practice Guideline for the Management of Major Depressive Disorder, Version 4.0 \(2022\)](#)
- [Clinical Practice Guideline for Management of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Acute Stress Disorder, Version 4.0 \(2023\)](#)
- [Clinical Practice Guideline for the Assessment and Management of Patients at Risk for Suicide, Version 3.0 \(2024\)](#)

CHILD AND ADOLESCENT MENTAL HEALTH**American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry**

- [Clinical Practice Guideline for the Assessment and Treatment of Children and Adolescents With Major and Persistent Depressive Disorders \(2023\)](#)
- [Clinical Practice Guideline for the Assessment and Treatment of Children and Adolescents With Anxiety Disorders \(2020\)](#)

SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS**American Psychiatric Association**

[Practice Guideline for the Pharmacological Treatment of Patients with Alcohol Use Disorder \(2018\)](#)

American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM)

[Joint Clinical Practice Guideline on Benzodiazepine Tapering: Considerations when Benzodiazepine Risks Outweigh Benefits](#) (guideline endorsed by nine additional associations, overseen by ASAM’s Quality Improvement Council and Clinical Practice Guideline Methodology and Oversight Committee, 2025)

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs/Department of Defense

[Clinical Practice Guideline for the Management of Substance Use Disorders, Version 5.0 \(2021\)](#)

Canadian Task Force on Preventive Health Care

[Recommendations on behavioural interventions for the prevention and treatment of cigarette smoking among school-aged children and youth \(2017\)](#)

INTELLECTUAL/DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (I/DD)

In its review of the literature, Vaya’s Clinical Advisory Committee found few national practice guidelines for individuals with I/DD that are applicable to NC Innovations Waiver services. Many services appropriate for individuals with I/DD are support services, rather than typical clinical interventions, and are typically provided for an extended time, often for the life of the individual with I/DD. Support needs may vary over time with changes in individuals’ lives and situations.

Vaya supports the development of practice guidelines for individuals with I/DD and believes that, with time, national consensus on guidelines for I/DD services will be achieved. Until such time, the following resources provide guidance on the provision of I/DD services Vaya reimburses:

- NC Medicaid Clinical Coverage Policy 8E, Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities: ([Program Specific Clinical Coverage Policies](#))
- NC Medicaid Clinical Coverage Policy 8P, North Carolina Innovations, which includes guidelines for Innovations services generally with specific service definitions for each Innovations Waiver service ([Program Specific Clinical Coverage Policies](#))
- [American Psychological Association: Guidelines for Assessment and Intervention with Persons with Disabilities \(2022\)](#)

PHYSICAL HEALTH PREVENTION AND TREATMENT

American Academy of Pediatrics

[Clinical Practice Guideline for the Evaluation and Treatment of Children and Adolescents with Obesity \(2023\)](#)

American Psychiatric Association

[Practice Guideline on Prevention and Treatment of Delirium, \(2025\)](#)

United States Preventive Services Taskforce

[Hepatitis C Virus Infection in Adolescents and Adults: Screening \(2020\)](#)

MCG Care Guidelines

Vaya uses [MCG Care Guidelines](#) as a tool to provide evidence-based best practices to support clinical decision-making.

Shared Decision-Making Tools

Shared decision-making in health care ensures patients are actively involved in treatment choices by discussing the potential benefits and risks of different options with their health care provider, allowing them to make informed decisions that align with their values and preferences, ultimately leading to better patient engagement and improved health outcomes.

Below are links to certified shared decision-making tools we suggest you use in addition to others you may already use:

- [Should I Get a Mammogram? \(ages 40-49\)](#), also available in [Español – Spanish](#)
- [How Often Should I Get a Mammogram? \(ages 50-74\)](#), also available in [Español – Spanish](#)
- [Should I Get a Mammogram? \(ages 75+\)](#), also available in [Español – Spanish](#)
- [Decisions in Recovery: Treatment for Opioid Use Disorders | SAMHSA Publications and Digital Products](#)