

# ASAM CRITERIA®

The ASAM Criteria® formerly known as *The ASAM Patient Placement Criteria*, is the result of a collaboration that began in the 1980s to define one national set of criteria for providing results based care in the treatment of addiction. Today, *The ASAM Criteria* has become the most widely used set of guidelines for placement, continued stay and transfer of patients with addiction and co-occurring conditions. *The ASAM Criteria* are being used by states across the country to drive improvements in the quality of addiction treatment.

## ASAM Criteria Validation

*The ASAM Criteria* is the most intensively studied set of addiction placement criteria. Scientists began the crucial process of testing *The ASAM Criteria* in the early 1990s to develop decision rules not simply through expert consensus, but through an international system of data gathering, quantitative analysis, and empirical feedback. Dozens of reports published in the peer-reviewed literature have been supported by over \$7 million of US government funding. Project funding came from the National Institute on Drug Abuse, the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, and the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. A considerable body of work exists to date on *The ASAM Criteria*, including at least ten evaluations collectively involving 3,672 subjects. Several controlled studies have found that treatment based on *The ASAM Criteria* is associated with less morbidity, better client functioning, and more efficient service utilization than mismatched treatment. These results support the predictive validity and cost-effectiveness of the use of *The ASAM Criteria*. They also indicate that *The ASAM Criteria* has valid clinical decision-making guidelines, sound feasibility and reliability through a standardized computer assessment instrument, and good concurrent validity.

## How ASAM's Criteria Works

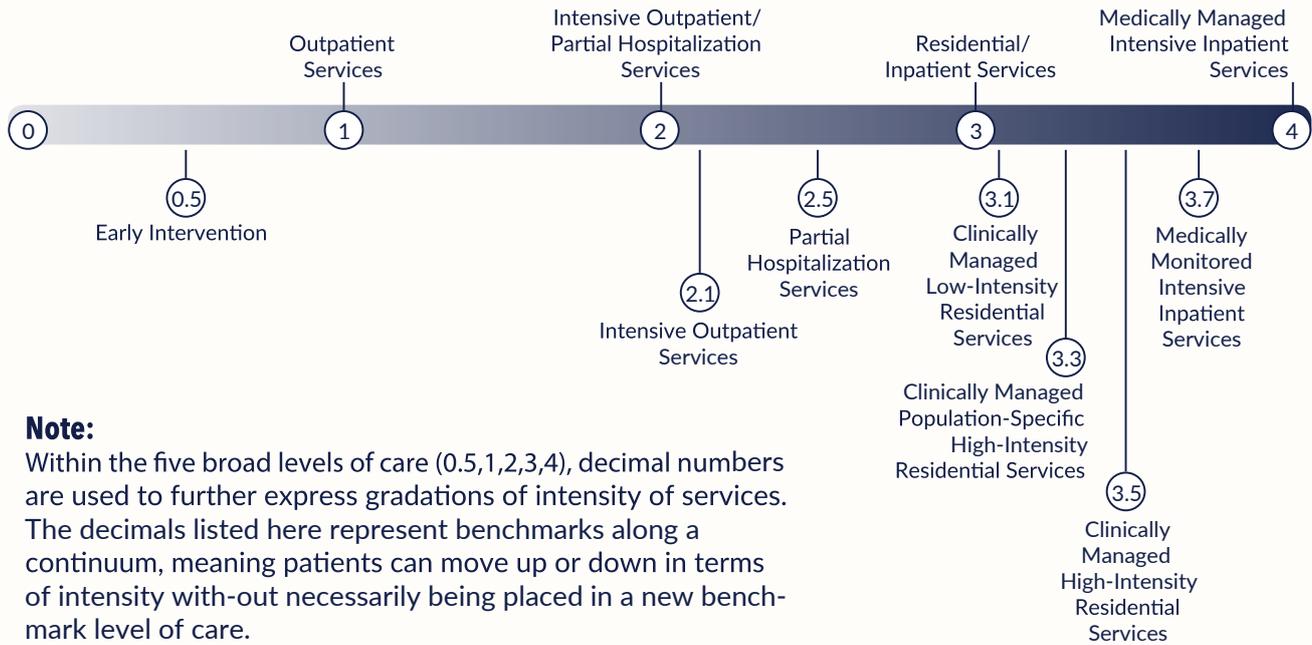
*The ASAM Criteria* guides clinicians to assess all dimensions of addiction and recovery and then use a well-defined decision logic to identify the level of care with the least restrictiveness and best opportunity for improving the patient's health. This helps develop comprehensive and individualized treatment plans for adults and adolescent. *The ASAM Criteria* Levels of Care are based on the degree of direct medical management structure, safety and security and the intensity of treatment services provided.

### AT A GLANCE: THE SIX DIMENSIONS OF MULTIDIMENSIONAL ASSESSMENT

ASAM's criteria uses six dimensions to create a holistic, biopsychosocial assessment of an individual to be used for service planning and treatment across all services and levels of care. The six dimensions are:

1	DIMENSION 1	<b>Acute Intoxication and/or Withdrawal Potential</b> Exploring an individual's past and current experiences of substance use and withdrawal
2	DIMENSION 2	<b>Biomedical Conditions and Complications</b> Exploring an individual's past and current experiences of substance use and withdrawal
3	DIMENSION 3	<b>Emotional, Behavioral, or Cognitive Conditions and Complications</b> Exploring an individual's thoughts, emotions, and mental health issues
4	DIMENSION 4	<b>Readiness to Change</b> Exploring an individual's readiness and interest in changing
5	DIMENSION 5	<b>Relapse, Continued Use, or Continued Problem Potential</b> Exploring an individual's unique relationship with relapse or continued use or problems
6	DIMENSION 6	<b>Recovery/Living Environment</b> Exploring an individual's recovery or living situation, and the surrounding people, places, and things

## REFLECTING A CONTINUUM OF CARE



The latest edition of *The ASAM Criteria* builds on the original concept that Levels of Care represent intensities of service along a continuum, each of which may be provided in a variety of program types, including those that offer more than one Level of Care or serve multiple populations. Treatment is delivered across a continuum of services that reflect the varying severity of illnesses treated and the intensity of services required.

# ASAM CONTINUUM™

ASAM CONTINUUM™ – is the decision engine for *The ASAM Criteria*. CONTINUUM provides a computer-guided, structured interview for assessing patients with addictive, substance-related, and co-occurring conditions, built from the *The ASAM Criteria*. ASAM CONTINUUM and *The ASAM Criteria* text should be used in tandem; the text to provide the background and guidance for proper use of the software, and the software to enable comprehensive, standardized evaluation. With ASAM CONTINUUM, clinicians can easily conduct a comprehensive biopsychosocial patient risk and needs assessment along all six ASAM Criteria Dimensions while determining *The ASAM Criteria* Levels of Care recommendation. ASAM CONTINUUM is part of a family of assessment products, for information please visit [www.ASAMContinuum.org](http://www.ASAMContinuum.org).