



Proposed Revision for the ALTCS PAS for Children Under Age 6

In February 2009, the AHCCCS Division of Member Services (DMS) initiated a workgroup to review the ALTCS Pre-admission Screening Tools (PAS) for children under the age of six. The workgroup completed a revised draft tool in June 2010.

Proposed Major Changes From The Current PAS tool:

- AHCCCS is proposing that one PAS tool will be used for children 6 months through 5 years, rather than broken into two tools for ages 0-3 and 3-5. The functional assessment contains 101 “Yes – No” developmental questions. The number of questions applied to a child increases according to age.
- Independent living skills, communication and behavior domains for the 3-5 age group are captured in developmental questions, rather than rating with questions similar to those used for adults and children over age 6.
- An autism diagnosis in conjunction with negative responses to specific questions receives a numerical score. The score varies somewhat according to age beginning at 18 months.

The overall threshold score is unchanged, and physician review continues to be an integral part of the process. The criteria for the Transitional program also remains the same.

Process in Developing the Recommendations:

- **Use of an expert clinical panel to develop the revised draft tool**
The workgroup included one nationally known developmental pediatrician and one locally known developmental pediatrician, experienced AHCCCS PAS assessors, an experienced ALTCS physician reviewer, AHCCCS PAS experts, and was led by an experienced project manager/statistician, who worked on all previous PAS redesigns for the tools for individuals with developmental disabilities and tools for individuals who are elderly or have physical disabilities.

Items for the proposed tool were selected from various standard assessment tools for children such as Ages and Stages Questionnaires II and III and Social-Emotional; Vineland II; Inventory for Client Agency and Planning (ICAP); Denver II Developmental Screening; CDC Guidelines; and Modified Checklist for Autism in Toddlers (MCHAT). The questions cover fine motor skills, gross motor skills, communication, socialization, daily living skills and behaviors.

- **Mini-pilot testing of the revised draft tool**

A group of PAS assessors completed at least 6 assessments each using the revised draft tool, and provided feedback based on their experience.

- **Finalization of the revised draft tool for pilot test**
The proposed pilot tool was finalized based on feedback from the mini-pilot and from the developmental pediatricians on the expert panel.
- **Pilot study data collection**
The revised draft tool was applied to 770 customers between August and December 2009. 67 cases included a test for inter-rater reliability.
- **Data analysis and development of scoring methodology**
Analysis included reliability test, bivariate and multivariate analyses, preliminary model selection and model refinement and finalization.
- **Evaluation of updated PAS impact**
Scoring distribution, maintenance of effort, effect on the transitional program and effect on children moving to next age group were all considered.

Major Outcomes of the Pilot Study:

- The results reflect a slight increase in eligibility in younger children, most notably for children under 12 months old. Some of these were made eligible by physician review on the current PAS. Overall, the same number of children are eligible under both tools.
- A decrease in eligibility in the 36 months to 47 month age group is offset by children being determined eligible at an earlier age.
- A slight increase in eligibility was found in children ages 48 months and older.