

# **AZ WITS & ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> FAQs**

**Updated: 10/9/2019**

## ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> - ASSESSMENT TOOL

### What is ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup>? – The ASAM Criteria Decisions Engine

ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> provides counselors, clinicians and other treatment team members with a computer-guided, structured interview for assessing and caring for patients with addictive, substance-related and co-occurring conditions. The decision engine is based on The ASAM Criteria<sup>®</sup> and uses research-quality questions (including tools such as the ASI, CIWA and CINA instruments) to generate a comprehensive patient report that details DSM substance use disorder diagnoses, severity and imminent risks as well as a recommended level of care determination.

### What is the difference between the ASAM Criteria<sup>®</sup> and ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup>?

The ASAM Criteria<sup>®</sup> is the most widely used and comprehensive text of guidelines for treating patients with addiction. ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> is software which guides clinicians through an ASAM Criteria<sup>®</sup> assessment and assists them with determining appropriate level of care placement. ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> and ASAM Criteria<sup>®</sup> should be used in tandem—the text provides background and guidance for proper use of the software, and the software enables comprehensive, standardized evaluation. With ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup>, clinicians can easily conduct a comprehensive biopsychosocial patient risk and needs assessment along all six ASAM Criteria Dimensions while determining the ASAM Criteria<sup>®</sup> Levels of Care recommendation.

### Will the ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> be released in another language?

The ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> is currently only available in English. The ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> platform has been programmed such that it can be readily translated into other languages.

### Can the ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> be used to assess adolescents?

ASAM is in the process of developing a continuum for use in adolescents. However, the ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> is being used now by clinicians to assess treatment needs in adolescent populations. ASAM suggests that users conducting assessments with adolescents modify ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> using their clinical judgement, as some questions may be interpreted differently based on adolescent patient needs. The final reports from the ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> can also be interpreted as needed to be appropriate for adolescents. Changes made to your electronic health record platforms such as modifications to software functionality or assessment questions would be at the discretion of your current EHR company to provide other adolescent options as needed.

### Is there training or certification requirement to purchase the ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup>?

No. You are not required to have training or certification to purchase the ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> subscription. However, AHCCCS is requesting that each provider complete the AZ WITS training prior to purchasing subscriptions from FEI Systems for access to the AZ WITS platform and ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup>.

### Who can conduct the ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> assessment?

The ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> is a computer-guided, structured-interview tools that assists clinicians and non-clinicians in conducting expert level biopsychosocial assessments.

### How long does it take to give the ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> assessment?

After training and a learning curve of 15-20 cases, the ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> assessment was independently found to take the average clinician about 60 minutes to complete. The first time an assessment is completed it might take two hours as users begin to navigate the tool. The assessment is designed to be easily broken up into separate sessions.

**Can the ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> be used in criminal justice settings?**

The ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> is being adapted for use in criminal justice populations and a fully implemented version is anticipated to launch by late 2020.

**Does the ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> assessment replace the current ASAM assessment?**

Yes, the ASAM CONTINUUM assessment is a comprehensive assessment that is for individuals with a Substance Use Disorder or Co-Occurring Disorders.

**Is the GAF Score included in the ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup>?**

Yes, although the GAF is no longer included in the DSM-5 textbook, the instrument has not lost any of its validity. The American Psychological Association (APA) dropped its multi-axial system of evaluation and functional measurement from its diagnostic criteria, but the ASAM Criteria<sup>®</sup> system involves much more than simple diagnostic criteria - and therefore requires a detailed, quantitative, functional interviewer rating across a broad spectrum of patient activities. It remains an excellent tool for characterizing multi-dimensional level of function for patients who may have substance use and/or psychiatric disorders. For this reason, its use is being continued in the ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup>.

**Is the ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> required of FFS Providers?**

The ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> is not required to be used for FFS members including AIHP, TRBHA & Tribal ALTCS members. In the event ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> is used for FFS members, coordination with the TRHBA and Tribal ALTCS should take place.

**What is CO-Triage<sup>®</sup>?**

ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> Triage (CO-Triage<sup>®</sup>) is a provisional referral tool for alcohol and substance problems. The CO-Triage questions help clinicians identify broad categories of treatment need along the six ASAM Criteria Dimensions. The decision logic in CO-Triage calculates the provisionally recommended ASAM Level of Care (ASAM Levels 1, 2, 3, 4 and Opioid Treatment Services) to which a patient should proceed to receive an ASAM CONTINUUM Comprehensive Assessment – the definitive, research-validated, level of care placement recommendation.

With CO-Triage, clinicians, as well as other health care service providers, can:

- Make provisional ASAM Level of Care treatment recommendations
- Easily identify ASAM dimensional needs that require immediate attention including any withdrawal management, co-occurring, or bio-medical enhanced services
- Increase the likelihood that patients are referred to the correct ASAM Level of Care
- Built from and easily synchronized with the research-validated ASAM Criteria comprehensive assessment tool

**Do I have to purchase a subscription?**

The ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> is a subscription based product. ASAM has agreed to provide discounted subscription rates for the next 3 years to all AHCCCS providers including those utilizing their ERH system.

**For more information - visit the American Society of Addiction Medicine at [www.asam.org](http://www.asam.org) & [www.asamcontinuum.org](http://www.asamcontinuum.org)**

## AZ WITS - APPLICATION

### What is AZ WITS?

AZ WITS (Web Infrastructure for Treatment Systems) is a web-based application designed to meet the growing need to capture client services data, including outcomes and costs, in one place. AZ WITS satisfies AHCCCS reporting requirements related to ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> assessments. These reporting requirements include aggregated reporting on assessments completed, and comparing actual level of care assigned to level of care recommended by the ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> algorithms.

### What is the benefit to using the AZ WITS platform?

When a provider utilizes the AZ WITS platform, they are using a Shared Source, Collaborative Model with providers, Managed Care Organizations (MCOs), and AHCCCS. AZ WITS facilitates cooperation and collaboration among providers by enabling the sharing of client services information via the web, and allows AHCCCS to access data as well as manage relationships with providers and community organizations.

### Who will I contact if I have technical issues with my AZ WITS platform?

Each provider agency will have a staff administrator who will be responsible for setting up staff account/subscriptions and who will be able to re-set passwords and trouble shoot issues. It is also recommended that each agency have a staff person dedicated as a Champion to assist with issues. For more advanced or complex issues the provider agency staff administrator can contact the AHCCCS ASAM Support Team.

### How do I integrate AZ WITS into my EHR?

The AZ WITS system does not integrate with other EHR systems. AZ WITS is a web-based application. Please see the ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> website for more information including a list of authorized distributors and compatible EHR systems. The length of integration varies, based on the EHR technical department and degree of integration that is desired. The provider is responsible for any cost associated with EHR integration. Please contact your EHR vendor for more information.

### What is the benefit of using the AZ WITS platform?

There are many benefits to utilizing the AZ WITS platform for access to the ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup>, including using the ASAM Criteria<sup>®</sup> to fidelity, improved patient outcomes, improved patient placement level of care, and no EHR integration cost or monthly maintenance fees.

### Is the consent form required to initiate the ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> assessment?

42 CFR Part 2 (Confidentiality of Substance Use Disorder Records) is more restrictive than HIPAA. A member must give authorization for a Part 2 Provider to bill their insurance by signing a consent. A member must give a Part 2 Provider permission to share their Substance Use Disorder records with any other person or entity including their other treating providers. And any entity that receives Part 2 records may not re-disclose them without a member's consent. Providers may not load the information into the automated tool where anyone else can see it without the member's consent.

### Can AZ WITS be used for non-AHCCCS members?

AZ WITS can be used with non-AHCCCS members or members that have not been given an AHCCCS ID yet. The consent must still be completed, select "AHCCCS" as the Disclosed to Agency. For the member ID, enter "S00000000". Once a member receives an actual AHCCCS ID, you will need to create a new client account as ID numbers cannot be changed in AZ WITS.

**Must a consent be completed to give access to the Manage Care Organization (MCO to review the completed assessment)?**

The consent is required due to HIPAA Privacy and 42 CFR Part II regulations. The MCOs and the provider are in different AZ WITS agency environments. The provider may have members\clients with different MCOs. The consent ensures that the provider is giving access to the MCOs for the member\client associated with that MCO. The AZ WITS consent form is the mechanism to make the member\client information available to the MCO viewing queue.

**Why does the AZ WITS platform have required fields highlighted in yellow but the ASAM CONTINUUM® assessment does not?**

The product is made up of two systems - the first is the AZ WITS portion (loading member details, consent, etc.), the second is the ASAM CONTINUUM® software. The bright yellow and white is specific to the AZ WITS portion. Once a member is loaded then the provider can "Launch" the assessment. The fields needed for the assessment scoring have a pale yellow background.

**Does AZ WITS have data import/export capability?**

The completed assessment can be downloaded and uploaded into an EHR with the ability to accept uploaded PDF files. AZ WITS also allows for data to be exported but there is no interface for providers to upload data to the AZ WITS platform at this time.

**What billing codes are used with the U9 modifier to receive the additional reimbursement?**

AHCCCS is providing an additional reimbursement amount of \$28.30 for each ASAM CONTINUUM® assessment utilizing the U9 modifier with the following procedure codes H0001, H0031, 90791 and 90792. Providers that have integrated the assessment tool into their EHR system can utilize the U9 modifier. **For FFS claims, U9 modifiers will be verified through the Division of Fee for Service Management.**

**Are Behavioral Health Residential Facilities (BHRF) providers able to use the U9 modifier if the ASAM CONTINUUM® assessment is completed?**

BHRFs receive a per diem rate for the provision of behavioral health services, per AMPM 320- V, the per diem rate include mental health assessment and therapeutic behavioral services as part of that rate.

**How much is an ASAM CONTINUUM® subscription cost when utilizing the AZ WITS platform?**

When subscriptions are purchased through FEI Systems for access to the AZ WITS platform the cost is discounted 40% to 50% depending on when the purchase occurs. The provider does not have to pay any additional fees as AHCCCS has paid for the AZ WITS platform. These rates will be in effect for three years from September 2019 – September 2022. In September 2019, a full price subscription costs is \$840 per year.

**How can an ASAM CONTINUUM® subscription be purchased?**

Subscriptions can be purchased through FEI Systems when utilizing the AZ WITS platform. Subscriptions are sold in one year increments. If you are interested in purchasing AZ WITS ASAM CONTINUUM® subscriptions, email [ASAM@azahcccs.gov](mailto:ASAM@azahcccs.gov).

Please see the AZ WITS FEI Systems Order Form on the [AHCCCS ASAM webpage](#) for more information.

**Do I need to purchase a subscription if I am only reviewing and signing the ASAM CONTINUUM® reports?**

No, only staff members who are completing the ASAM CONTINUUM® assessment or need to view the actual ASAM CONTINUUM® questions and answers need to purchase subscriptions. Provider agency staffs that only need to view the ASAM CONTINUUM® Summary or Narrative reports do not need to purchase the subscription. The provider agency staff administrator will be able to set-up as many AZ WITS accounts as needed to support access to the agency's clients. The staff administrator will be able to assign appropriate security roles for staff to launch the assessment associated with the subscriptions purchased.

**Is the ASAM CONTINUUM® subscription transferrable?**

Yes, the ASAM CONTINUUM® subscriptions can be transferred within the provider agency. The staff administrators will be trained to transfer those subscriptions if a staff leaves or no longer needs access to the ASAM CONTINUUM®.

**Does AZ WITS include CO-Triage®?**

The AZ WITS platform has the option to include the ASAM CO-Triage® for an additional subscription add-on fee. FEI Systems has included the add-on subscription cost in the Order Form. Please see the AZ WITS FEI Systems Order Form on the [AHCCCS ASAM webpage](#) for more information.

## AZ WITS - HELPFUL HINTS

**What if I do not know the full name of the member when accessing a profile?**

Use the first couple of letters of the name then use "\*" - example "rob\*" for Robert.

**What web browser works with AZ WITS?**

All but Safari web browser are recommended.

**What if I completed the ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> assessment on an adolescent and the level of care recommended is not appropriate?**

If the recommended level of care is not appropriate then select the appropriate level of care with the Actual Level of Care, select the Clinical Override, and add a note in the Comments section.

**What if I am completing the ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> assessment on a recent post incarceration member?**

It is recommended to ask the member what they did prior to arrest or if they used during incarceration and change questions to past or future tense for members exiting controlled environment.

**If my agency has ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> integrated in the Electronic Health Record, would I still need to use AZ WITS?**

No, AZ WITS is a separate online portal to gain access to ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup>.

**What if I cannot access the ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup> assessment after I have created the client's profile?**

Make sure that pop-up blocker is turned off and select "always allow" and make sure you have a completed consent with the appropriate health plan selected.

**What if I do not have the ability to check the member's blood pressure and heart rate?**

If you are unable to check a member's blood pressure and/or heart rate, it is recommended that you insert the normal heart rate and blood pressure rate - 120/80 for blood pressure and 72 beats per minute. In the comment box add that the blood pressure and heart rate are not accurate and was not completed prior to completing the assessment or is not completed at this facility. *These questions will be optional in an upcoming version of ASAM CONTINUUM<sup>®</sup>.*

**What if there are multiple (Arizona Department of Health Services) ADHS licenses, per location?**

When the account is set up, multiple locations can be created. A dropdown selection of the name of the facility will be available per location that will match what is stated, per ADHS location. Please let us know how you would like your account set up by emailing [ASAM@azahcccs.gov](mailto:ASAM@azahcccs.gov) prior to submitting your order form.

**Can you change the member's AHCCCS ID if you enter it incorrectly?**

No, once a member's AHCCCS ID has been created it cannot be edited. If a duplicated AHCCCS ID has been entered AZ WITS, the system will provide a message – "Similar Clients already exist in the System and are listed below. Do you wish to continue inserting this client record? Click "Override and Add" to continue to Add..."

**Can a member's address be updated in AZ WITS?**

Yes, a member's demographic data can be updated at any given time.

**Can more than one chart be opened at any given time in AZ WITS?**

No, only one member's chart can be open at one given time.

**How can I train new staff?**

The AZ WITS training site will be available for new staff to train and practice in prior to utilizing the production site. Email [ASAM@azahcccs.gov](mailto:ASAM@azahcccs.gov) for a training account login. The September Training was recorded and posted in Relias – titled “AHCCCS - ASAM Continuum Videos.”

**For additional information - visit:**

<https://www.azahcccs.gov/PlansProviders/CurrentProviders/ASAM.html>

**For questions - email [ASAM@azahcccs.gov](mailto:ASAM@azahcccs.gov)**