Policy Title: 8002V.1 Assessment Procedures for Emotional Functioning, Behavioral, and Substance Use Issues
Patient Age Group: (X) N/A ( ) All Ages ( ) Pediatric ( ) Adult

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to establish a structured, comprehensive process for conducting client assessments at Centro Savila. Specifically, this policy outlines procedures for evaluating a client's current emotional functioning, history of emotional and behavioral issues, substance use, and the impact of maladaptive behaviors. The goal is to ensure that all clients receive a thorough evaluation that informs appropriate, individualized treatment planning and interventions.

Scope:

This policy applies to all clinical staff involved in the assessment and intake process at Centro Savila. It is relevant to both initial and ongoing assessments and covers the evaluation of emotional functioning, behavioral health, substance use history, and the impact of maladaptive behaviors on a client's well-being and treatment needs.

Definitions:

1. **Emotional Functioning:** Refers to an individual's ability to recognize, manage, and express emotions effectively. Emotional functioning assessments consider symptoms related to mood disorders, anxiety disorders, stress, and emotional dysregulation.
2. **Behavioral Problems:** Maladaptive behaviors that may affect an individual's functioning and quality of life, such as impulsivity, aggression, self-harm, or difficulty with social interactions and relationships.
3. **Substance Use History:** The client's pattern of use of alcohol, prescription drugs, recreational drugs, and any other substances. This includes any past or current substance abuse or dependence, as well as treatment history related to substance use disorders.
4. **Maladaptive Behaviors:** Patterns of behavior that are harmful or counterproductive to an individual's well-being, such as avoidance, aggression, compulsive behaviors, or self-destructive habits. These behaviors may be linked to underlying emotional or mental health conditions.

5. **Family History of Substance Use:** The pattern of alcohol or other drug use within the client's family that may have impacted the client's emotional and behavioral health, either as a direct influence or as a learned coping mechanism.

Policy:

Centro Savila Behavioral Health Services is committed to providing comprehensive, holistic, and culturally responsive care to all clients. The assessment process will explore the client's emotional, behavioral, and substance use history to identify key factors that may affect the client's mental health and overall functioning. This information will serve as the basis for the development of a personalized treatment plan that addresses the client's unique needs.

Key Areas of Assessment:

1. **Current Emotional Functioning:**
    - Assess the client's emotional health by gathering information about their emotional state, mood patterns, coping mechanisms, and ability to regulate emotions.
    - Screen for symptoms of mood disorders (e.g., depression, bipolar disorder), anxiety disorders (e.g., generalized anxiety, panic disorder), and other emotional difficulties (e.g., emotional dysregulation).
    - Evaluate the impact of current emotional health on the client's daily life, relationships, and ability to function effectively.
2. **History of Emotional, Behavioral, and Substance Use Problems:**
    - Collect a detailed history of any past emotional difficulties, including childhood trauma, family dynamics, and significant life events that may have contributed to emotional challenges.
    - Explore any history of behavioral issues (e.g., aggression, self-harm, impulsivity) and past interventions or treatment for behavioral health concerns.
    - Gather information regarding past or present substance use, including alcohol, prescription medications, illicit drugs, and other substances. Assess the severity of use, history of addiction, and any past treatment or recovery efforts.
3. **Impact of Family Substance Use on Client:**
    - Inquire about family members' substance use patterns and how these may have affected the client's emotional or behavioral health.
    - Evaluate how the client's family history of substance use may contribute to the client's own behaviors, coping strategies, or emotional challenges (e.g., learned behaviors, co-dependency).
4. **Maladaptive Behaviors:**
    - Assess the presence of maladaptive behaviors, such as avoidance, aggression, compulsive behaviors, self-harm, or excessive risk-taking, that may interfere with the client's mental health or daily functioning.
    - Evaluate the role of these behaviors in the client's current emotional and social difficulties and explore their underlying causes (e.g., trauma, unmet needs, emotional dysregulation).

- Identify any behavioral patterns that might contribute to the client's substance use or be exacerbated by emotional or behavioral difficulties.

Procedure:

1. Initial Assessment:

- **Scheduling the Initial Assessment:**
  - Clients seeking services will be scheduled for an initial intake appointment with a qualified clinician (e.g., therapist, counselor, case manager).
  - Prior to the assessment, clients will be asked to complete relevant intake forms, including basic demographic information, presenting concerns, and any previous medical or mental health history.
- **Conducting the Emotional and Behavioral Assessment:**
  - The clinician will ask targeted questions and utilize evidence-based screening tools to evaluate the client's emotional functioning. This may include:
    - **Mood and Anxiety Assessments:** Tools like the PHQ-9 (for depression) and GAD-7 (for anxiety).
    - **Behavioral Health Screening:** A series of questions about impulsivity, aggression, self-harm behaviors, or compulsions.
- **Family History Evaluation:**
  - The clinician will inquire about the client's family history of mental health and substance use issues. Family dynamics and how they may have contributed to the client's emotional health or coping patterns will also be explored.
- **Evaluation of Maladaptive Behaviors:**
  - A thorough review of any maladaptive behaviors (e.g., self-harm, risk-taking, chronic avoidance) will be conducted. This may involve questions about patterns of behavior, triggers, and the client's emotional experience related to these behaviors.
- **Formulation of Diagnosis and Treatment Plan:**
  - Based on the assessment, the clinician will work with the client to identify key issues and challenges that need to be addressed. A treatment plan will be developed, which may include:
    - Individual therapy (e.g., CBT, DBT, trauma-informed care).
    - Group therapy or support groups (e.g., substance use recovery groups).
    - Referrals for additional services (e.g., substance use rehabilitation, family therapy).

2. Ongoing Assessment:

- **Regular Check-ins:**
  - Ongoing assessment of emotional functioning, behavioral issues, and substance use will be conducted at regular intervals throughout the client's treatment. This helps track progress, identify emerging issues, and adjust the treatment plan as needed.
- **Behavioral and Substance Use Monitoring:**
  - Clinicians will continue to monitor the client's engagement in maladaptive behaviors and substance use patterns. For clients with substance use disorders, relapse prevention strategies and additional screenings may be used to evaluate their recovery progress.
- **Adjustment of Treatment Plan:**
  - If new emotional, behavioral, or substance use issues arise, or if existing issues become more prominent, the treatment plan will be adjusted. This may include more intensive interventions, additional assessments, or referral to specialty care (e.g., psychiatric care for dual diagnosis, residential treatment for substance use disorders).

3. Referral for Additional Assessments or Services:

- **Identifying the Need for Specialized Services:**
  - If further evaluation is needed, or if the clinician determines that the client would benefit from a more specialized form of care (e.g., substance use rehabilitation, psychiatric evaluation), referrals will be made to appropriate providers or facilities.
  - Clients will be given assistance in making referrals, which may include helping them find services, providing contact information, or offering transportation or financial assistance if necessary.
- **Collaborating with Other Providers:**
  - When clients are referred to other providers, the clinician will maintain communication with those providers (with the client's consent) to ensure continuity of care.

Staff Responsibilities:

1. **Clinical Staff (Therapists, Counselors, Case Managers):**
   - Conduct comprehensive assessments of emotional functioning, behavioral issues, and substance use history.
   - Develop individualized treatment plans based on the assessment results and client needs.
   - Continuously monitor client progress and make adjustments to the treatment plan as necessary.
   - Ensure that clients are referred to specialized services when appropriate.

2. **Administrative Staff:**

- Assist clients in scheduling assessments and ensure that intake forms are completed prior to appointments.
- Provide clients with information on the assessment process, including expectations and required documentation.

3. **Supervisors and Clinical Managers:**
   - Oversee the assessment and treatment planning process to ensure thorough, effective, and culturally competent care.
   - Support staff in managing complex cases and coordinating with other service providers when necessary.

Client Rights:

- Clients have the right to be fully informed about the assessment process and the purpose of gathering sensitive emotional, behavioral, and substance use information.
- Clients may refuse to answer specific questions or disclose certain information, though this may impact the clinician's ability to develop a fully accurate treatment plan.
- Clients have the right to receive a treatment plan that is tailored to their individual needs, based on the assessment results.
- Clients have the right to request referrals for specialized care and to be provided with assistance in making these referrals.

Confidentiality:

All information collected during the assessment process will be kept confidential in accordance with HIPAA regulations

Approved by: William G. Wagner, Executive Director
Date: 11.12.24

Signature:

Item	*Date*	*Signature*
Executive Director	11/12/2024	
Deputy Director	11/12/2024	