ASAM CONTINUUM® Product Line User Manual

Welcome to the ASAM Criteria Decision Engine User Support Site. Please search our support knowledge base and frequently asked questions.
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Introduction to the CONTINUUM Interviewer Manual
This manual helps interviewers use the family of ASAM CONTINUUM assessment products, including: ASAM CONTINUUM, The ASAM Criteria Decision Engine, and CO-Triage.

Intended Audience
This interviewer manual is meant for all ASAM CONTINUUM and CO-Triage interviewers and topics covered include basic navigation features, system conventions, screens, and login information.
CO-Triage is a provisional referral tool for alcohol and substance use problems.

**CO-Triage product features:**

- Can be conducted by both specialists and non-specialists in addiction treatment.
- Aids clinicians in identifying broad categories of treatment need along the six ASAM Criteria Dimensions.
- Uses decision logic to calculate a 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.
  - For example, CO-Triage would recommend an ASAM Level 3 provisional placement, but would not specify a placement between ASAM Levels 3.1-3.7.
- Can be administered in person or over the phone in 10-12 minutes.
- Perfect for various settings such as: call centers, justice systems (courts, jails, etc.) primary care hospitals, emergency rooms, medical homes and addiction treatment programs that have the ASAM CONTINUUM.
ASAM CONTINUUM®
THE ASAM CRITERIA DECISION ENGINE

ASAM CONTINUUM is a computerized clinical decision support system (CDSS) that provides a recommended ASAM Level of Care for treatment.

Product features:
The ASAM CONTINUUM provides the entire treatment team with a computer-guided, standardized interview for assessing patients with substance use disorders and co-occurring conditions PLUS a sophisticated decision algorithm for calculating the ASAM Level of Care according to the ASAM Criteria (2013 Edition).

The ASAM CONTINUUM aids clinicians in conducting a full biopsychosocial assessment that addresses all six dimensions of the ASAM Criteria. The structured interview uses research-quality questions and assessment tools in an innovative way that optimally suits the provider and patient. The tools include:

- the ASI (Addiction Severity Index),
- CIWA (Clinical Institute Withdrawal Assessment)
- CINA (Clinical Institute Narcotic Assessment)

These instruments are integrated into the assessment and used to generate:

- A comprehensive patient Summary Report that includes a final ASAM Level of Care placement recommendations.
- A Biopsychosocial Narrative Report that demonstrates patient severity, substance use diagnoses, and ASAM Six Dimensional risks. The report is suitable for utilization review, treatment planning, and much more.
- To learn more information about integrated assessments, click here.
CO-Triage Interviewer Interface: Refer to Figure 1.

1. **Top Navigation Bar.** This section includes:
   a. **Interviewer** – The individual currently logged into the system.
   b. **Patient** – The profile of the patient who is being assessed.

2. **Navigation Pane.** The left-hand side window shows progress made on the CO-Triage assessment.
   a. **CO-Triage Assessment Sections** – CO-Triage consists of one section. The section can have between 2-21 questions depending on the patient's responses.
   b. Note that the questions in the Interviewing Pane change automatically based on individualized patient needs.

3. **Interviewing Pane.** The right-hand side window displays questions and response fields for the CO-Triage assessment.

4. **Bottom Navigation.** Buttons at the bottom of the assessment are not functioning buttons and are not needed for the CO-Triage assessment.
How to Navigate CO-Triage

Figure 1.

1. Top Navigation Bar.
   - Interviewer – The individual currently logged into the system.
   - Patient – The profile of the patient who is being assessed.

   - CO-Triage Assessment Sections – CO-Triage consists of one section. The section can have between 2-21 questions depending on the patient’s responses.
   - Note that the questions in the Interviewing Pane change automatically based on individualized patient needs.

3. Interviewing Pane.
   - The right-hand side window displays questions and response fields for the CO-Triage assessment.

   - Buttons at the bottom of the assessment are not functioning buttons and are not needed for the CO-Triage assessment.
How to Navigate ASAM CONTINUUM

ASAM CONTINUUM Interviewer Interface: Refer to Figure 2.

1. Top Navigation Bar. This section lists interviewer and patient information.
   a. Interviewer – The individual currently logged into the system who will conduct the assessment.
   b. Patient – The profile of the patient who is being assessed.
   c. Created By – The clinician performing the assessment.

2. Navigation Pane. The left-hand side window shows the links for the eight main assessment sections within CONTINUUM.
   a. ASAM CONTINUUM Assessment Sections – the ASAM CONTINUUM has eight main assessment sections:
      1. General Information
      2. Medical History
      3. Employment and Support Status
      4. Drug and Alcohol
      5. Legal Information
      6. Family and Social History
      7. Psychological
      8. Interview Completion
   b. Each section may contain multiple subsections based on questions asked of the patient.
      Each section and its subsections must be completed to submit the assessment for scoring and to retrieve the reports.
      Note that the questions in the Interviewing Pane change automatically as you enter answers based on your patient’s individualized needs.

After an assessment is completed and the interviewer presses “Submit” for scoring, the submitted question and answer fields become greyed-out and unchangeable to allow the clinician to always see the final report answers.

3. Interviewing Pane. The right-hand side window displays questions and response fields for each section of the ASAM CONTINUUM assessment.
4. **Bottom Navigation Bar.** Buttons at the bottom of the assessment allow the clinician to move forwards and backwards between the various sections of the assessments.

5. **Training and Knowledgebase Link.** Interviewers can easily access the knowledge base section of the ASAM CONTINUUM website by clicking the Questions and Answer Knowledgebase link at the top navigation pane.

Figure 2.
Checking the Completion Status of an ASAM CONTINUUM Assessment: Refer to Figure 3a and Figure 3b.

1. **Section Check Mark.** When 100% of required questions are answered in every subsection of one of the eight main assessment areas, a green circle with a white check mark will appear in the section header. If you do not see a green circle with a white check mark next to the section header, then that section has not been completed and you must open the section to complete all its required questions.

2. **Completion Percentage.** When you click on each section, a subsection will appear. Each section includes a percentage of completion, which indicates the percent of required questions that have been answered.

Figure 3a.
3. **Submit Button.** Once all required questions in all sections are complete, the green “Submit” button appears in the bottom right of the Interviewing Pane. You will be able to submit your assessment and the software will then be capable of generating final reports.

![Submit Button Image](image-url)
Types of Assessment Questions: Refer to Figure 4a and Figure 4b.

1. **Required Questions** are any questions in the ASAM CONTINUUM or CO-Triage highlighted with a yellow background color. Required Questions must be answered to complete the assessment and are essential for running the algorithms and scoring the decision logic that comprise the ASAM Criteria.

2. **Recommended Questions** are any questions in the ASAM CONTINUUM or CO-Triage that have a white, non-highlighted background. Recommended Questions provide further detail about the patient's situation and help the clinician further explore the patient's needs. Recommended Questions are not required to be answered for the CONTINUUM or CO-Triage software to generate a final summary. **Refer to Figure 4a.**

Figure 4a.
3. **Single Person Icon Questions** are indicated by the single person icon and usually should not be asked to or answered by the patient (unless the interviewer feels the need for additional information). When this icon is displayed, the assessor should use clinical judgment to select the appropriate answer based on all available information. In some cases, the clinician may need to ask for additional information from the patient (but should not ask the question directly nor use only the patient’s stated response). Refer to Figure 4b.
   
a. Assessor should make observations using his/her judgment based upon all available information as instructed, and then make the appropriate notation.

Figure 4b.

4. **Branching Questions** are additional questions and subsections that emerge (or appear to open up) in the ASAM CONTINUUM based on the patient’s response. This individualizes every interview and allows the clinician to probe further with questions related to specific patient needs rather than having to ask all questions contained in the ASAM CONTINUUM all the time.
   
a. For example, if you select Alcohol as the only problem substance, then a detailed sub-section on Alcohol is all that needs to be completed. However, if you select Alcohol, Heroin, and Other Substances, then you will need to complete corresponding detailed subsections for Alcohol, Heroin, and Other Substances.
## CONTINUUM and CO-Triage Function Buttons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function Buttons</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Save</strong></td>
<td>The “Save” button appears when new data has been entered into the system. Click “Save” after every screen, before scrolling down again, to assure the program stores new data that has been entered or changes made to an assessment, in the event of security lock-outs, power outages or “frozen” computers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cancel</strong></td>
<td>The “Cancel” button appears on the ASAM CONTINUUM and CO-Triage assessments. If you click “Cancel,” the assessments will prompt you: “Are you sure you want to clear your unsaved answers?” If you click “Yes,” you will lose your progress on an assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;Prev</td>
<td>Next&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Submit</strong></td>
<td>The “Submit” button appears when all required questions have been answered. The “Submit” button generates final reports. Once “Submit” is clicked, all questions and answers become read-only.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Print</strong></td>
<td>The “Print” button makes a report of all the questions asked and the patient-reported answers. This may be done at any time during the assessment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overview of Response (Answer) Fields

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTINUUM and CO-Triage Assessment Fields</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mandatory Field:</strong> Highlighted yellow and MUST have data to complete the assessment. Once all required questions in all sections and subsections have been completed, a green “Submit” button will appear at the bottom right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Optional Field:</strong> Clinically important, but not highlighted in yellow and will not affect completion or submission of an assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Note: Some questions do not have an answer. This is alright and will not affect the results of the assessment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Yes or No: Allows you to give only one answer. |
| Note: Not found in CO-Triage assessment. |

| Comment Box: Allows clinicians to enter one or more lines of text. Use these to type in important specific patient information, explanations, and data about any patient characteristics that are not specifically asked. These may include details about the patient’s housing, family circumstances, and spirituality. In some cases, completed comment boxes appear on the report and are found at the end of each section. |

| Likert Scale: Measures the patient’s attitude toward a topic or interviewer observation ratings. Green color indicates less severe and red color indicates more severe circumstances. |
| Example: The assessor asks the patient if he/she needs medical care. Depending on the patient’s response, the Likert scale will measure how much the patient feels they need to visit the hospital. |

| Drop Box: Click the arrow to display a list of choices and select the appropriate choice. If the list is long, use the scroll bar to the right to display all of the choices. |

| Check List: Allows you to check one or more boxes, as needed, to indicate the appropriate choices. If the list of choices is long, use the scroll bar to the right to display all the choices. |
## Overview of Response (Answer) Fields

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTINUUM and CO-Triage Assessment Fields</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Two-person icon:** Indicates a dialogue question between the assessor and the patient. Question appears in quotes and italics.  
**IMPORTANT:** Instead of always asking the question exactly as written, the assessor should paraphrase the question to suit the patient's unique cognitive, language and cultural needs. Do not read material in parentheses to the patient but utilize it to adjust the questioning to best elicit the needed answer(s) from the patient. |
| **Single person icon:** When this icon is displayed, the assessor should use clinical judgment to select the appropriate answer based on all available information. In some cases, the clinician may need to ask for additional information from the patient (but should not ask the question directly nor use only the patient's stated response).  
A single person icon can indicate:  
  - Observational questions: to be answered by an interviewer based on his/her clinical observation or assessment.  
  - Interview questions: For example, when measuring tremors, the assessor will need to document their observations.  
*Note: Not found in CO-Triage Assessment.* |
Assessment Editability

Once an assessment is created it can be modified until it is submitted. Once the assessment is submitted, it cannot be edited. However, for reassessment purposes, a clinician can pull forward a completed assessment if it was performed within the last 60 days. Refer to Figure 5a and 5b.

Figure 5a.

![Pull Forward Assessment]

Do you wish to pull forward the CONTINUUM Comprehensive Assessment performed on 3/22/2017?

Yes  No

Figure 5b.

![Pull Forward Assessment]

Do you wish to pull forward the CONTINUUM Triage performed on 3/29/2017?

Yes  No
CONTINUUM Review Section

IMPORTANT: A pop-up will appear prior to the Review Section. This is the clinician’s chance to notate a different level of care than the ASAM CONTINUUM’s recommended treatment level. ASAM architects use the feedback provided to further improve the tool. The information included here populates part of the Review Section.

The Review Section appears after the interview has been submitted, final reports have been generated, and the patient is advised of the recommendations and ultimate placement. Refer to Figure 6.

Figure 6.
The Review Section presents an opportunity for the interviewer as well as the patient to answer questions related to their satisfaction of the assessment, likeliness of recommending the use of the ASAM CONTINUUM software for level of care placement, patient's intention to follow through on placement in a level of care, potential disagreement with level of care placement, and other items. Refer to Figure 7.

Figure 7.
05. Understanding ASAM CONTINUUM/CO-Triage Reports

CO-Triage Reports

1. **Provisional Referral Report** captures questions asked and answers, including those recorded in comment boxes, during the screening. It is structured using clinical information according to *The ASAM Criteria*. The report identifies a provisional ASAM Level of Care to which the patient should be referred for an ASAM CONTINUUM comprehensive assessment as well as any major medical and psychological conditions.

CONTINUUM Reports

1. **The ASAM CONTINUUM Summary Report** is a clinical report suitable for placement, referral, and utilization review. This automatically-generated clinical report covers patient severity, substance use diagnosis, needs along all six ASAM dimensions, psychological/psychiatric needs, access to treatment needs, and the recommended ASAM Level of Care placement. This report can be generated upon submitting an assessment.

2. **The ASAM CONTINUUM Biopsychosocial Narrative Report** generates a narrative description of patient treatment needs along all seven ASI subscales (Medical, Alcohol, Drug, Psychological, Employment, Family/Social, and Legal). The Narrative Report also includes any clinician generated comments captured during the assessment. This report can be generated upon submitting an assessment.

A. **The ASAM CONTINUUM ASAM Dimensional Problem List**, including the patient's perceived need versus actual need for treatment, is included in the Narrative Report and is suitable for treatment planning along all six ASAM dimensions.

3. **The Comprehensive Data Listing** is a linear presentation of all the questions that were asked of the patient and their respective answers. This is accessible by using the print button from any submitted the ASAM CONTINUUM assessment.
06. Additional Information

ASAM CONTINUUM & CO-Triage Knowledge Base. Please refer to the Knowledge Base (http://asamcontinuum.org/knowledgebase) for answers to frequently asked general clinical questions, and much more.

Additional Interviewer Support. Please contact your EMR for questions that cannot be answered by material found in the ASAM CONTINUUM & CO-Triage Knowledge Base.