

What is the Early Assessment and Support Alliance (EASA)?

EASA is a statewide network of programs which identify youth with symptoms of psychosis as early as possible, and provide support and treatment based on current research and practice-based evidence.

Who does EASA serve?



EASA helps identify and support young people who are at risk for developing psychosis or whose

symptoms are consistent with the onset of a psychotic illness such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder with psychosis. EASA also helps clarify diagnosis and appropriate treatment, and supports referents in linking to appropriate care.

Acute symptoms of psychosis include hallucinations (seeing and hearing things others don't); delusions (bizarre, out-of-character, fixed beliefs); and disturbances to speech, emotional expression, and movement. Onset of these symptoms usually occurs gradually.

Without early identification young people with psychosis are at risk of school drop-out, loss of social support and ability to function, long-term trauma, legal involvement, disability and poverty.

WITH early intervention and appropriate support, most of these consequences can be prevented, and most will graduate from school, enter the workforce, and live a full life.

Who should I refer?

Refer anyone who you believe may be experiencing the early signs of psychosis. If a person is having ***new, significant or worsening difficulties in several*** of the following areas, call for a consultation:

1. Reduced performance

- Trouble reading or understanding complex sentences
- Trouble speaking or understanding what others are saying
- Becoming easily confused or lost
- Trouble in sports or other activities that used to be easy (Example: can't dribble basketball or pass to team members)
- Attendance problems related to sleep or fearfulness

2. Behavior changes

- Extreme fear for no apparent reason
- Uncharacteristic actions or statements that make no sense
- Impulsive and reckless behavior (giving away all belongings, etc.)
- New, bizarre beliefs
- Incoherent or bizarre writing
- Extreme social withdrawal
- Decline in appearance and hygiene
- Significant changes in sleep (sleeping almost not at all or all the time)
- Changes in eating behavior

3. Perceptual changes

- Fear that others are trying to hurt them
- Heightened sensitivity to sights, sounds, smells or touch
- Making statements like "my brain is playing tricks on me"
- Hearing voices or other sounds that others don't
- Reporting visual changes (colors more intense, faces distorted, lines turned wavy)
- Racing thoughts
- Feeling like someone else is putting thoughts into their brain or that others are reading their thoughts

Other referral guidelines include:

- Age 12-27
- Lives in local county
- No more than 12 months since diagnosed with a psychotic illness such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorder with psychosis, if applicable
- Symptoms not known to be caused by a medical condition, trauma, or drug use

What should I do if someone is experiencing these changes?

Call EASA for a consultation. Anyone can refer a youth or young adult to EASA, or they can call for an anonymous consultation. EASA teams can meet with the individual and/or family at school, home, or any other location.

Call today!

What does EASA offer?

EASA services are based on current research. They are available without regard to ability to pay.

Services include:

- Training and consultation for organizations and individuals
- Outreach, specialized assessment, and linkages to appropriate care
- Coaching to understand changes and help the young person succeed in school and elsewhere
- For youth with ongoing symptoms not better treated elsewhere, an intensive two-year transitional program from a local team including medical professionals, counselors, occupational therapists, peer support specialists, and school/work specialists
- Family groups and peer support opportunities where people come together to learn relevant information and skills and to support each other

EASA changes the way services are delivered.

EASA is committed to continuous improvement in the way Oregon supports individuals with early symptoms of psychosis. The EASA Center for Excellence and its partners work at local, state and national levels to learn from emerging research and the experiences of EASA participants and their family members and supports.

Go to
<https://easacommunity.org/>
 to find resources and contact
 information for your local EASA
 program



Early Assessment and Support Alliance



*Investing in the Wellbeing of
 Youth and Young Adults Who
 are at Risk for Developing
 Psychosis and Those Who Have
 Experienced Psychosis*

Information for Referents



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