# NYS DCJS JMHCP Technical Assistance Bulletin

## Intercept 2: Pretrial Screening and Identification of Individuals with SMI (*also for Intercepts 3, 4 & 5)*

**Introduction:**

DCJS OPCA supports the use of a screening tool to identify persons involved in the criminal justice system that may have mental health and/or mental health and substance use needs. Screenings should occur early in criminal processing and should be available for use at all sequential intercepts. The OPCA will have Behavioral Health and Substance Use screens available for use through NYCOMPAS.

**Benefits of Mental Health and Co-occurring Substance Use Screening Tools:**

Screening is a brief process designed to identify indicators for the presence of mental health issues and/or co-occurring disorders (mental health and substance use) that reflect an individual's need for further evaluation and assessment. Screening for behavioral health needs in the criminal justice system should be done routinely and in a standardized manner shortly after entry into the system and may need to be repeated as a person progresses through the criminal justice system. Recognizing that the level of functioning and/or symptomatology of an individual may change, particularly for those persons in detention, it is recommended that the ability to screen be ongoing throughout all intercept points; with a JMHCP focus on **Pretrial**, in the **Jails**, at the time the **Probation** presentence investigation is prepared and once a person is **placed on probation supervision**. Systemically, a jurisdiction may choose to use the same screen at all intercepts or different screens at different intercept points.

A review of the literature indicates:

- When screening for mental illness, you should also be assessing for substance use.
- Screening and assessment should be introduced at Pretrial.
- Screening should lead to who should have a full assessment.
- The focus should be on the degree of functional impairment that could be caused by either the mental health or the substance abuse issues.
- The level of functioning could change at any time during a person's incarceration, so the ability to screen and assess should be ongoing.
- The intervention is determined by the severity of the impairment.
- A screen and additional assessments may be done to aid in preparing the re-entry plan.
- A basic screen for co-occurring disorders may be made up of Texas Christian University II (TCU II) and a mental health screen like the MINI or the Brief Jail Mental Health Screen (BJMHS).

The overall goal is to identify persons in need of further evaluation or assessment and to provide those persons with the appropriate referrals for services and medications.

**Potential Impact of Screening:**

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Screening for behavioral health needs may have an impact on access to healthcare insurance, medical and behavioral health care, substance use services and medications. Screening at multiple points (such as Pretrial, jail admission and stay, and Probation presentence and supervision) increases the opportunities for connecting the person with needed services. This is also important for continuity of care upon release from court or jail.

**Screening in New York City's Department of Probation:**

NYC DOP is implementing the Modified Mini Screen (MMS) and the Modified Simple Screening Instrument for Substance Abuse (MSSI-SA) in the coming months. These screens will be completed for all probation bound clients at the investigation stage.

**Criteria for Selection of Screens in this Bulletin:**

There are a number of mental health screens available both in the public domain or not. All of the screens mentioned here are in the public domain. They are fairly easy to administer and score and a minimal amount of training is required. OPCA focused on a review of the screens that:

- achieved the goal of identifying individuals in need of further evaluation or assessment;
- were "doable" in a detention setting;
- did not require extensive training;
- were able to be administered by Police, Pretrial, Jail or Probation personnel;
- and were cost effective.

**The following screens are in the public domain and will be available through the DCJS COMPAS Suite.**

**The Brief Jail Mental Health Screen (BJMHS)**: The **BJMHS** has recently been revised and re-normed. It has 8 items or questions and takes about 5 minutes to complete.

**The Texas Christian University II (TCU II)** substance abuse screen: The TCU II was developed at the Texas Christian University. It has 8 questions and takes about 5 minutes to complete.

**The Modified MINI Screen (MMS)**: The MMS is a 22 item scale designed to identify persons in need of an assessment in the domains of Mood Disorders, Anxiety Disorders and Psychotic Disorders. It can be administered in 5-10 minutes and scored in less than 5 minutes.

**Modified Simple Screening Instrument for Substance Abuse (MSSI-SA)** is a 16 item scale used to flag individuals for further evaluation for symptoms of alcohol and drug dependence including over the counter prescription medications. It can be self-administered or administered by interview in 10 minutes or less.

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**Resources:**

Fred Osher, MD; David A. D'Amora, MS; Martha Plotkin, JD; Nicole Jarrett, PhD; Alexa Eggleston, JD. Council of State Governments Justice Center Criminal Justice/Mental Health Consensus Project 2012 "Adults with Behavioral Health Needs Under Correctional Supervision: A Shared Framework for Reducing Recidivism and Promoting Recovery"

Roger H. Peters, Marla G. Bartoi, Pattie B. Sherman with the CMHS National GAINS Center, "Screening and Assessment of Co-Occurring Disorders in the Justice System"

The Brief Jail Mental Health Screen- SAMHSA's GAINS Center mental health screen
htttp://gainscenter.samhsa.gov/topical_resources/bjmhs

http://gainscenter.samhsa.gov/pdf/jail_diversion/Psychiatric_Services_BJMHS.pdf

The MINI, a Mental Health Screen
http://www.omh.ny.gov/omhweb/resources/providers/co_occurring/adult_services/screening.htm

The Texas Christian University (TCU) II, a substance use screen
http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3325103/

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