

Mental Health  
Assessment for Young  
Children  
Implementation  
Survey (Fall 2022)



# Mental Health Assessment for Young Children – Organizational Implementation Survey

---

## Introduction

In January 2022, new policies collectively referred to as [mental health assessment for young children](#) (MHAYC) went into effect for children younger than six enrolled in Apple Health (Medicaid). The intent of these policies is to align Apple Health billing guidance with developmentally appropriate best practices. The Health Care Authority acknowledges that successful implementation of new policies can take time and require support and guidance. Therefore, the goal of [this survey](#) is to understand how organizations and providers are implementing these new policies, and what additional supports may be needed.

This survey is estimated to take **up to 30-45 minutes**. It is designed to be completed by organizations contracted to provide mental health services through **Apple Health**, including:

- licensed Behavioral Health Agencies,
- individual or group mental health private practices, and
- other practices with integrated mental health services (such as primary care practices)

**It is recommended that mental health providers and administrators (billing & coding staff, program managers & directors) work together to formulate their response as an organization.** This PDF version of the survey is available for organizations to review the questions in advance. Please complete the survey online [here](#).

The survey will remain open until **November 1, 2022**. If you have any questions about this survey or would like assistance in completing it, please contact Kiki Fabian ([kiki.fabian@hca.wa.gov](mailto:kiki.fabian@hca.wa.gov)) or Christine Cole ([Christine.Cole@hca.wa.gov](mailto:Christine.Cole@hca.wa.gov)). Thank you for your commitment to serving the children and families of Washington State!

# Demographics

**Note:** the word “organization” is used throughout this survey to reference organizational settings in which mental health services are provided, including but not limited to *behavioral health agencies, private practices, and other settings where integrated mental health services are provided, such as primary care clinics. (If you operate an individual private practice, your "organization" may be you!)*

<b>1) Name of organization</b>

<b>2) Is your organization contracted to provide <u>mental health services</u> through Apple Health (Medicaid)? If this does not apply to your organization, or you are not sure, please exit the survey.</b>
---

a) Yes, my organization is contracted to provide mental health services through Apple Health (Medicaid)
---

<b>3) What type of facility/practice is your organization? (Select one)</b>
---

- 1. Licensed Behavioral Health Agency
- 2. Mental health private practice (group or individual)
- 3. Other facility/practice type with integrated mental health services.
  - a. Please specify facility/practice type: \_\_\_\_\_

*Note:* for more information about facilities types that may provide behavioral health services and types of licensed mental health professions, please visit the Department of Health (DOH) webpage on [Behavioral Health Professions, Facilities and Agencies](#).

<b>4) Is your organization any of the following? (Select all that apply)</b>
--

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Indian Health Care Provider (IHCP)       | <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Health Center (RHC)                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) | <input type="checkbox"/> Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) |

<b>5) Point of Contact Information</b>
--

<b>a) Name:</b>	
-----------------	--

<b>b) Email:</b>	
------------------	--

<b>c) Title/Role:</b>	
-----------------------	--

<b>d) HCA can contact me about my responses to this survey:</b>	a) Yes b) No
---	-----------------

<b>e) Please list any other individuals, and their title/role, who worked to formulate the responses to this survey:</b>	
--	--

## Section 1 – Multi-session assessments

On January 1, 2022, [Apple Health policies](#) changed so that mental health professionals conducting a mental health assessment (i.e., diagnostic evaluation or intake evaluation) of children younger than age six can receive reimbursement for **up to five sessions to complete the assessment**. The following questions are to help us understand how we can better support organizations and providers in translating this policy into practice.

**6) Was your organization aware of this policy change? Has your organization started implementing this policy? (Select one)**

- a) Not aware
- b) Aware, but it doesn't apply to my organization
- c) Aware, and planning or preparing to implement
- d) Aware, and currently implementing
- e) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**7) If you selected C, D, or E above: Policy implementation can look different for different providers and different settings. If possible, please describe what implementation of these policy looks like for your organization. This may include past, current, or future implementation steps, as well as the current status of implementation.**

**8) If you selected C, D, or E above: Implementing a new policy can sometimes be challenging. Has your organization experienced any barriers in trying to implement this policy? If so, are there any supports or resources that would help you address these barriers?**

**9) If you selected D, or E above: Mental health assessment for young children (MHAYC) policies are designed to allow organizations to provide more developmentally appropriate care to families of young children. Has your organization noted any positive outcomes for your organization, providers, and/or families through implementation of this policy?**

## Section 2 – Provider Travel to Home & Community Settings

On January 1, 2022, [Apple Health policies](#) changed so that mental health professionals conducting a mental health assessment (i.e., diagnostic evaluation or intake evaluation) of children younger than age six can receive reimbursement for **travel costs when conducting the assessment in a home or community setting**. The following questions are to help us understand how we can better support providers in translating this policy into practice.

**10) Was your organization aware of this policy change? Has your organization started implementing this policy? (Select one)**

- a) Not aware
- b) Aware, but it doesn't apply to my organization
- c) Aware, and planning or preparing to implement
- d) Aware, and currently implementing
- e) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**11) If you selected C, D, or E above: Policy implementation can look different for different providers and different settings. If possible, please describe what implementation of these policy looks like for your organization. This may include past, current, or future implementation steps, as well as the current status of implementation.**

**12) If you selected C, D, or E above: Implementing a new policy can sometimes be challenging. Has your organization experienced any barriers in trying to implement this policy? If so, are there any supports or resources that would help you address these barriers?**

**13) If you selected D, or E above: Mental health assessment for young children (MHAYC) policies are designed to allow organizations to provide more developmentally appropriate care to families of young children. Has your organization noted any positive outcomes for your organization, providers, and/or families through implementation of this policy?**

## Section 3 – Using DC:0-5™

On July 1, 2021, [Apple Health policies](#) changed so that mental health professionals conducting a mental health assessment (i.e., diagnostic evaluation or intake evaluation) of children younger than age six should **use the DC:0-5™ for assessment and diagnosis purposes**. The following questions are to help us understand how we can better support organizations and providers in translating this policy into practice.

**14) Was your organization aware of this policy change? Has your organization started implementing this policy? (Select one)**

- a) Not aware
- b) Aware, but it doesn't apply to me/my organization
- c) Aware, and planning or preparing to implement
- d) Aware, and currently implementing
- e) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**15) If you selected C, D, or E above: Policy implementation can look different for different providers and different settings. If possible, please describe what implementation of these policy looks like for you/your agency. This may include past, current, or future implementation steps, as well as the current status of implementation.**

**16) If you selected C, D, or E above: Implementing a new policy can sometimes be challenging. Have you experienced any barriers in trying to implement this policy? If so, are there any supports or resources that would help you address these barriers?**

**17) If you selected D, or E above: Mental health assessment for young children (MHAYC) policies are designed to allow organizations to provide more developmentally appropriate care to families of young children. Has your organization noted any positive outcomes for your organization, providers, and/or families through implementation of this policy?**

## Section 3a – Resources for Using the DC:0-5

To support providers in implementing this policy change, HCA has provided two resources on the Mental Health Assessment for Young Children [webpage](#) under *Resources to Support DC:0-5™ Adoption*.

18) Was your organization aware of and did you ever use either of the following resources? If so, how helpful were they?				
Resource	Not Aware	Aware, but did not use	Used, but it was not helpful	Used, and it was helpful
a. DC:0-5™ Crosswalk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. DC:0-5™ Training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Section 3b - DC:0-5™ Documentation

Some providers have noted that another helpful resource would be guidance on appropriate documentation of mental health assessment and diagnosis using the DC:0-5™. The following questions are asked to help inform our work in producing guidance on this topic.

**Note:** HCA is currently planning to host a workgroup of providers, advocates, and community members to develop a guidance document for this topic. HCA plans to launch an expression of interest (EOI) for those who are interested in participating. Subscribe to the [Prenatal – 25 Behavioral Health GovDelivery](#) email list to receive updates on this project.

**19) What diagnostic manuals do you/your organization currently use for the assessment and diagnosis of mental health conditions for children birth to age 6? (Select all that apply)**

- DC:0-5™
- DSM-5
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**20) How do you/your organization currently document diagnoses and/or clinical justification for diagnoses in client records? (Select all that apply)**

- Claims/encounters
- Clinical notes
- Paper files
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**21) For each of the items you selected above, please describe how diagnoses and/or clinical justification for diagnoses are captured within that item.**

22) If you/your organization currently uses both the DC:0-5™ and the DSM-5, please note any differences in how DC:0-5™ vs DSM-5 diagnoses are documented.

## Section 4 – Communication

HCA and our partners have implemented several different communication channels to alert providers to the Mental Health Assessment for Young Children (MHAYC) [policy changes](#) and to provide support in implementing them in practice. The following questions are to help us understand how we can better communicate with organizations, providers, and the field.

23) Were you aware of and did you ever use any of the following communication resources? If so, how helpful were they in learning about mental health assessment for young children?

Resource	Not Aware	Aware, but did not use	Used, but it was not helpful	Used, and it was helpful
a. GovDelivery emails about MHAYC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. MHAYC Webpage	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. MHAYC Billing Webinar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. MHAYC Office Hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Meeting with HCA Staff about MHAYC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Guidance about MHAYC from an MCO	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Community Presentation(s) on MHAYC	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

24) Do you have any other comments or suggestions on how HCA can communicate with providers, billers, and partners?

## Section 5 – Equity and Family Voice

Well-intended policies can often have unintended consequences, that disproportionately and negatively affect communities who been marginalized by dominant power structures. Mental Health Assessments for Young Children (MHAYC) is a set of policies intended to benefit all young children and families enrolled in Apple Health (Medicaid); however, without special attention, marginalized families and communities, especially communities of color and rural communities, may not be able to access the care and supports they need.

The following questions are intended to help HCA understand how Mental Health Assessments for Young Children (MHAYC) policies are addressing (or not addressing) issues of equity\* within the behavioral health system.

Note: You may have already outlined positive outcomes and/or challenges related to equity in your responses to the questions above. If so, you may note “See our response(s) to Question X, etc., above” and skip to the next question.

**\*What is Equity?** To HCA, [health equity](#) means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. This requires removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care.

25) Has your organization noted any ways in which mental health assessment for young children (MHAYC) policies have helped to address issues of equity for providers in your community/working at your organization?

26) Has your organization noted any ways in which mental health assessment for young children (MHAYC) policies have helped to address issues of equity for families in your community/receiving services at your organization?

27) Has your organization noted any ways in which the mental health assessment for young children policies are **NOT** equitably accessed or experienced by all providers? If so, are there any supports or resources that would help address these inequities?

**28) Has your organization noted any ways in which the mental health assessment for young children policies are NOT equitably accessed or experienced by all families? If so, are there any supports or resources that would help address these inequities?**

HCA is also interested in understanding how families of young children experience services like mental health assessment. Families' perspectives are critical to shaping equitable supports and solutions.

**29) Does your organization connect with the perspectives of families in any of the following ways? (Select all that apply)**

- Family advisory councils/committees
- Focus groups/interviews
- Surveys
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Other Comments

**30) Do you have any other comments you would like to share?**

## Closing

Thank you for completing the survey. HCA will plan to publish a report on the responses received through this survey in the Winter/Spring of 2023. Be sure to subscribe to the [Prenatal – Age 25 Behavioral Health](#) email list to be updated when this report is released.

If you have any questions about this survey or about [Mental Health Assessment for Young Children](#), please contact Kiki Fabian ([kiki.fabian@hca.wa.gov](mailto:kiki.fabian@hca.wa.gov)) or Christine Cole ([Christine.Cole@hca.wa.gov](mailto:Christine.Cole@hca.wa.gov)). Thank you for your commitment to serving the children and families of Washington State!