

Core and Specialist Skills Assessment

AREA 4: Practice Area – Child and Youth Mental Health


Scope and Objectives

This Core and Specialist Assessment (CSAt) will enable the allied health professional to:

- Build on their knowledge and skills within a *Child and Youth Mental Health Service (CYMHS)*. This includes understanding their professional role within a CYMHS team, whilst also building on core skills of mental health allied health practitioner service to this consumer group.
- Develop a sound understanding of child and youth mental health practice and the opportunities and challenges in providing this service to consumers, families and carers living in the community.
- Develop a sound understanding of child and youth assessment, intervention and evaluation.
- Develop a sound understanding of mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention principles for children and young people.

This CSAt outlines the core practice skills and considerations for graduates working in child and youth mental health.

This CSAt should be used in conjunction with professional supervision and the Allied Health MHAOD New Graduate Program Framework. The framework and associated resources are available at: <https://qheps.health.qld.gov.au/allied-health/mental-health>

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Requisite training, knowledge, skills and experience

Training opportunities

- Training as outlined in the New Graduate Framework “Graduate Training Schedule and Record”.
- [Australian Mental Health Outcomes and Classification Network \(AMHOCN\)](#) Child and Adolescent training.
- Evolve Therapeutic Services Statewide training workshops and professional development.
- [Childrens' Health Queensland HHS - CYMHS Education and Training](#) SharePoint page
- Internal linkage opportunities within the HHS:
 - Connect with the child and youth teams within the HHS such as Acute Response Team (ART), Assertive Mobile Youth Outreach Service (AMYOS), Evolve Therapeutic Services, Forensic CYMHS, and Youth Step-Up Step-Down (SUSD), as well as specialised roles including Child Protection Liaison Officer (CPLO), Ed-LinQ Coordinator, headspace liaison, Perinatal and Infant Mental Health (where available).
 - Senior or advanced clinical roles of each profession within the team.
 - Connect with child and youth community health services within the HHS such as Child Health Services, Child Development Service (CDS).
- External linkage opportunities:
 - Other government agency linkages may include Education Queensland (e.g. school guidance officers), Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety, National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), Department of Housing and Public Works, Queensland Public Trustee, Office of the Public Guardian.
 - Local community supports, social infrastructure and organisations which offer sustainable community connections. These might include:
 - Common support pathways including Family and Child Connect (FACC), headspace, Bravehearts, Raising Children Network, and Autism Queensland.
 - Child, youth and family focused community centres and Non-Government Organisations (NGO's) which offer groups, activities and psychosocial supports such as Police and Community Youth Clubs (PCYC).
 - Council facilities and activities such as libraries, pools, groups.
- Graduate Reflective Learning Sessions or peer learning groups and supervision.

Clinical knowledge/evidence

The following are examples of demonstrating content knowledge by an allied health professional:

- Demonstrates an understanding of the variety of consumer presentations encountered by a CYMHS team, utilising an early intervention framework, including prevalent diagnoses, levels of complexity and risk, and the treatment and referral pathways for care within the community.
- Recognises deteriorating mental state and/or escalating risk and discusses plans to support a consumer, family and carers with senior clinicians and/or medical staff as per local clinical governance processes.
- Identifies and connects with the child or young person's key supports including family, carers, school guidance officers, child safety, NGO supports.
- Links consumers with:

- General Practitioner (GP) and other healthcare providers, encouraging regular monitoring of physical and mental health.
- Other community-based support providers which may include support to navigate and access and appropriate sharing of relevant clinical information.
- Utilises child and adolescent outcome measures (HONOSCA, CGAS, SDQ, FIHS) as a therapeutic engagement tool encouraging the consumer, family and carers to reflect on their health and wellbeing through comparing results over time.

References and supporting documents

National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards (second edition) alignment



1. Clinical Governance Standard



2. Partnering with Consumers Standard



4. Medication Safety Standard



5. Comprehensive Care Standard



6. Communicating for Safety Standard



8. Recognising and responding to Acute Deterioration Standard

National

- Australian Mental Health Outcomes and Classification Network (AMHOCN).
- The Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and Australian Government National Mental Health commission publish strategies and frameworks including:
 - [Medicare Mental Health Kids National Service Model](#). (2025).
 - [National Action Plan for the Health of Children and Young People 2020 – 2030](#). (2019).
 - [The National Children’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#). (2021).
 - [National Guidelines for including mental health and wellbeing in early childhood health checks](#).(2025).
- Mental Health Australia. [National Child and Youth Mental Health Priorities](#). (2025).

Queensland

- Clinical guidelines, policies and resources developed by the Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs Branch (the Branch) supports the statewide development, delivery and enhancement of safe, quality, evidence-based clinical and non-clinical services in the specialist areas of mental health and alcohol and other drugs treatment. Key documents include:
 - [Comprehensive Care - Partnerships in Care and Communication](#). (2020).
 - [Co-occurring substance use disorders and other mental health disorders: policy position statement for Mental Health Alcohol and Other Drugs Service](#). (2021).
 - [Early Psychosis Care Pathway](#). (2025).

- [Strengthening the state funded mental health alcohol and other drugs \(MHAOD\) service response for people from culturally and linguistically diverse \(CALD\) communities.](#) (2023).
- Additional resources available via [Dovetail](#), Insight, Queensland Health.
- Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSICPP) as the peak organisation representing all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child protection and family support services sector in Queensland at both a state and national level.

Assessment: performance criteria

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Name:

Position:

Work Unit:

Assessment criteria		Applicable (Y/N)	Date achieved	Assessor initial
1	Completes CYMHS assessments including mental state, risk assessment, exploring developmental and family history, recovery goals, and brief intervention in line with the HHS policy and procedures with a child or young person, their family or carers.			
2	Demonstrates an understanding of the role of graduate's profession within CYMHS including their scope of practice, assessments, professional formulation and treatments provided.			
3	Develops a therapeutic relationship with the child or young person, their family or carers, utilising age and stage appropriate strategies, to build trust, rapport and enable effective communication.			
4	Demonstrates an understanding of how to effectively work with family or carers considering factors including competing demands and priorities, intergenerational trauma, health literacy, family structures and dynamics.			
5	Demonstrates an understanding of key considerations for child and youth populations including developmental age and stage, family structures and dynamics, school participation, identity development, capacity and consent.			
6	Explains risk considerations when working with a child or young person. Examples may include child protection and safety considerations, domestic and family violence, bullying, recognising and responding to a deteriorating person (RRDP), body image, school avoidance.			
7	Completes consistent, high quality clinical documentation relevant to children, youth and families in alignment with the MHAOD comprehensive care resource guide e.g. Child and Youth Mental health Assessment, Family Support plan/Carer Support Plan and care review summary.			
8	Demonstrates the ability to identify risks or recognise and respond to a deteriorating person (RRDP) such as recognising early warning signs and symptoms of deterioration while in the community and implements agreed management strategies as per their recovery and care plans.			
9	Provides a range of psychoeducation sessions for core diagnoses, clinically significant outcomes and other key concepts including attachment theory, emotion regulation and emotion coaching, family and carer education.			
10	Demonstrates sound knowledge of other service providers (e.g. Child Safety, CPLO's, school guidance officers, etc.) and non-government organisations that work with the CYMHS team to deliver a seamless/integrated service to consumers.			
11	Demonstrates a sound understanding of the local process required when supporting an acutely unwell/crisis presentation of a child or young person. This may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop safety plans and collaborate with the family, carers and key supports that balance identified risks, safety and recovery philosophies. urgent assessment – outpatients or Emergency Department. admission to the paediatric ward / inpatient unit or Youth SUSD. 			
12	Demonstrates an understanding of the Mental Health Act (2016) and the requirements of an allied health professional within the CYMHS setting.			
13	Demonstrates understanding of child safety considerations (as relevant to specific work unit/area) which may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consent, parental responsibility and guardian roles; Mandatory reporting obligations; Recognising harm types; Understanding child protection pathways; Working collaboratively with Child Safety 			
14	Demonstrates understanding of the purpose and roles of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Safety; the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) the Queensland Public Trustee; And relevant legislation including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Child Protection Act (1999); Child Safe Organisations Act (2024); Public Guardian Act (2014); Guardianship and Administration Act (2000); The Public Trustee Act (1978). 			
15	Identifies and escalates concerns about a child or young person's mental state and/or risk as per local clinical governance processes and procedures.			

Reflective practice		Date achieved	Assessor initial
R1	Completes a clinical case study of care provided from a discipline specific perspective reflecting on professional practice learnings. Within this case study, consider the experience/perspective of the child or young person, their family or carer, school supports and guidance officers, and other key stakeholders.		
R2	Reflects on how to build rapport, trust and engage a child or young person in their treatment and work towards the goals of child or young person, their family and carers. This includes consideration of confidentiality and informed consent at different ages.		
R3	Reflects on cultural, developmental, professional and personal factors that influence engagement, assessment and intervention, identifying strategies for future growth.		

Comments:

Record of assessment competence:					
Assessor name and signature:		Assessor position:		Competence achieved:	/ /
Assessor name and signature:		Assessor position:			
Assessor name and signature:		Assessor position:			