

## The GAIN-Q4 ASAM B Dimensions Placement Decision Tree (06-28-2023)

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The Global Appraisal of Individual Needs Quick Version 4 (GAIN-Q4) now incorporates placement rules and treatment needs for the six dimensions of the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM). The ASAM Criteria uses six dimensions to comprehensively assess patient treatment needs. Placement for each dimension is determined by the intersection of problem recency/severity and recency of any treatment received. Below is a text description of the logic for each dimension followed by the Q4 coding used to determine patient placement on the six dimensions of the ASAM Criteria. Table 1 summarizes these six dimensions and the treatment needs considered for each.

Note that changes in the ASAM ratings within the Quick Recommendation and Referral Summary (QRRS) narrative will result in changes in the recommendation in the summary table and vice versa. Clinicians can choose to keep or change either set of recommendations. However, if they do make a change, they should document their “rationale” for the change to support later review for billing and/or quality assurance. This information is available as part of a clinical decision audit report section.

Table 1. ASAM Dimensions B1-B6 and Relevant Treatment Considerations.

ASAM Dimension		Treatment Needs
B1	Acute Intoxication & Withdrawal Potential	Withdrawal Management
B2	Biomedical conditions and complications	Medical Management
B3	Emotional, Behavioral or Cognitive Conditions and Complications	Behavioral Health
B4	Readiness to Change	Motivational Intervention
B5	Relapse, Continued Use or Continued Problem Potential	Relapse Prevention (including medication for opioid use disorders (MOUD))
B6	Recovery and Living Environment	More recovery support and/or controlled environment

## General Overview of Placement Determinations

The GAIN-Q4 uses the grid in figure 1 below to assign ASAM dimension ratings and treatment planning. This grid evaluates the intersection of treatment history and problem recency/severity to determine placement.

The problem recency/severity axis allows for classification of the client’s problem according to whether it is a current problem, a past problem, or there is no problem. “Current problem” is further broken down into low to moderate severity or high severity problem, and certain criteria need to be met (i.e., certain questions in the GAIN must be endorsed in particular ways) to make this distinction.

The treatment history axis classifies whether the client is currently receiving treatment for a problem, received treatment in the past, or never received treatment. Again, certain criteria (i.e., certain questions on the GAIN must be endorsed in particular ways) will assign the client to the right classification.

Figure 1. ASAM Treatment Planning and Placement Grid

		Problem Recency/Severity			
		None	Past	Current (past 90 days)*	
				Moderate	High Severity
Treatment History	None	<b>1. No problem</b>	<b>2. Past problem</b> <i>Consider monitoring and relapse prevention.</i>	<b>3. Moderate problems; Not in treatment</b> <i>Consider initial or low invasive treatment.</i>	<b>4. Severe problems; Not in treatment</b> <i>Consider a more intensive treatment or intervention strategies.</i>
	Past	<b>0. Not Logical</b> <i>Check understanding of problem or lying and recode.</i>			
	Current		<b>5. No current problems; Currently in treatment</b> <i>Review for step down or discharge.</i>	<b>6. Moderate problems; Currently in treatment</b> <i>Review need to continue or step up.</i>	<b>7. Severe problems; Currently in treatment</b> <i>Review need for more intensive or assertive levels.</i>

Together, the two axes allow for categorization of the client’s problem according to whether they have a problem and whether they are receiving treatment for it already or not. In general, more severe problems indicate the need for a higher level of care, particularly if current or prior interventions have been unsuccessful. Lower severity problems may be addressed with a lower-

intensity intervention unless there is a prior history of intervention. If a patient meets the criteria for more than one axis level, the higher severity or most recent treatment is employed. This applies to problems on any ASAM treatment planning dimension.

**Dimension 1: Acute Intoxication or Withdrawal Potential**

ASAM Dimension B1 examines a patient’s experience with substance use and withdrawal, as well as recency of any substance use treatment. Table 2 outlines the criteria for each placement. Based on where a patient falls on the criteria above, the treatment recommendations in table 3 are generated.

Table 2. ASAM Dimension B1 Classification Criteria and Syntax

Axis		B1. Withdrawal
Problem	Past Problem	Any lifetime withdrawal problems (SU1e>0).
	Current Problem	Weekly use of drugs or alcohol in the past 90 days, AND any lifetime withdrawal problems, AND past week withdrawal symptoms. (SU1a=4 and SU1e>0 and WM3b1=1).
	High Severity Problem	Any withdrawal symptoms in the past week, OR fewer than 5 days of sobriety in the past 90 days or used opioids for at least half of the past 90 days. (cws7>0) or (WM3b1=1 and (SU4h>44 or su4j>44 or su4k>44 or Su3a<5)).
Treatment	Past Treatment	Ever in a detoxification program. (WM5>0).
	Current Treatment	Any days in a detoxification program in the last 90 days. (SU2a>0).

Table 3. Treatment Recommendations for ASAM B1.

Cell	Current Severity Rating	Services and Modalities Needed
0	Inconsistent	Probe to clarify inconsistency (detox without withdrawal problem)
1	No problem	No need for withdrawal management
2	Past problem	Monitor for change in need for withdrawal management
3	Moderate problems	Provide ambulatory detox services
4	Severe problems	Consider appropriateness of ambulatory or inpatient detox
5	No current problems, in treatment	Consider referral to post detox outpatient treatment
6	Moderate problems, in treatment	Consider extending detox or post detox outpatient treatment
7	Severe problems, in treatment	Consider extending detox or post detox inpatient treatment

## **Dimension 2: Biomedical Conditions and Complications**

ASAM Dimension B2 assesses the patient’s health history and physical health needs. Table 4 explains the criteria for each axis on this dimension and the treatment recommendations generated based on Dimension 2 classification are shown in table 5.

Table 4. ASAM Dimension B2 Classification Criteria and Syntax

<b>Axis</b>		<b>B2. Biomedical</b>
<b>Problem</b>	<b>Past Problem</b>	Severe health problems in the past year, any health problems interfering with responsibilities in lifetime, OR any physical problems with vision, hearing, limbs, getting around, or communicating. (HPScrYg=2 or PH1e>0 or PH4=1).
	<b>Current Problem</b>	Any problems with vision, hearing, limbs, getting around, or communicating; OR bothered by weekly physical health problems in the past 90 days; OR physical health problems that interfered with responsibilities in the past 90 days; OR currently pregnant. (PH4=1 or PH2a>12 or PH2b>0 or (B1=2 and B17=1) or PH1e>2).
	<b>High Severity Problem</b>	Bothered by physical health problems for at least half of the last 90 days, OR weekly physical health problems interfering with responsibilities. (PH2a>44 or PH2b>12).
<b>Treatment</b>	<b>Past Treatment</b>	Ever saw a doctor or nurse or took prescribed medication for a health problem. (PH1f>0).
	<b>Current Treatment</b>	Treated for a physical health problem in the past 90 days. (PH1f5>0 or PH1f>2 or max.1(PH1f1, PH1f2, PH1f4, PH1f3, PH1f5)>0 or PH1f>2).

Table 5. Treatment Recommendations for ASAM B2.

<b>Cell</b>	<b>Current Severity Rating</b>	<b>Services and Modalities Needed</b>
0	Inconsistent	Probe to clarify inconsistency (service without problem)
1	No problem	No need for medical management services
2	Past problem	Monitor for change in need for medical management
3	Moderate problems	Consider outpatient medical management
4	Severe problems	Consider need for outpatient, more assertive, or inpatient medical management
5	No current problems, in treatment	Consider need for completion or maintenance of medical management
6	Moderate problems, in treatment	Consider need for maintenance or change in medical management
7	Severe problems, in treatment	Consider more assertive or inpatient medical management

**Dimension 3: Emotional, Behavioral or Cognitive Conditions and Complications**

ASAM Dimension B3 explores the patient’s mental health history and needs. Treatment recommendations for ASAM Dimension 3 are presented according to the individual’s placement determination. The resulting treatment needs are indicated in table 7.

Table 6. ASAM Dimension B3 Classification Criteria and Syntax

Axis		B3. Psychological
Problem	Past Problem	Moderate to severe internalizing OR externalizing mental health problems in the past year; OR any of the following in the past 90 days: bothered by nerve, mental, or psychological problems, disturbed by memories from the past, problems paying attention or controlling behavior, OR ever been diagnosed with a mental health problem by a medical professional in lifetime. (IDScrYg>0 or EDScrYg>0 or MH3a>0 or MH3c>0 or MH3d>0 or M5a=1).
	Current Problem	Any of the following in the past 90 days: bothered by nerve, mental, or psychological problems, disturbed by memories from the past, problems paying attention or controlling behavior. (Max.1(MH3a, MH3b, MH3c, MH3d)>0).
	High Severity Problem	Any of the following for at least half of the past 90 days: bothered by nerve, mental, or psychological problems, disturbed by memories from the past, problems paying attention or controlling behavior; OR weekly mental health problems interfered with meeting responsibilities. ((Max.1(MH3a, MH3c, MH3d)>44) or MH3b>12).
Treatment	Past Treatment	Ever treated by a professional or took medication for a mental health problem; OR took any medication for a mental health problem in the past 90 days. (MH2h>0 or MH2h4>0).
	Current Treatment	Treated for a mental health problem in the past 90 days. (MH2h>2 or Max.1(MH2h1, MH2h2, MH2h3, MH2h4)>0).

Table 7. Treatment Recommendations for ASAM B3.

Cell	Current Severity Rating	Services and Modalities Needed
0	Inconsistent	Probe to clarify inconsistency (service without problem)
1	No problem	No need for behavioral health services
2	Past problem	Monitor for change in need for behavioral health services
3	Moderate problems	Consider outpatient behavioral health services
4	Severe problems	Consider need for outpatient, more assertive, or inpatient behavioral health services
5	No current problems, in treatment	Consider need for completion or maintenance of behavioral health services

6	Moderate problems, in treatment	Consider need for maintenance or change in behavioral health services
7	Severe problems, in treatment	Consider more assertive or inpatient behavioral health services

**Dimension 4: Readiness to Change**

ASAM Dimension B4 examines the patient’s readiness and interest in making a change. Table 8 demonstrates the criteria used for each dimension. Based on a patient’s placement on dimension B4, the treatment recommendations in table 9 are prompted.

Table 8. ASAM Dimension B4 Classification Criteria and Syntax

Axis		B4. Readiness to Change
<b>Problem</b>	<b>Past Problem</b>	Any lifetime substance disorder problems. (SDScrL>0).
	<b>Current Problem</b>	Weekly substance use in the past 90 days, OR any days of substance use interfering with responsibilities, OR past month substance use problems. AND Not 100% ready to quit OR endorsing fewer than half of 9 reasons for quitting items. ((SU1a>2 or SU3c>0 or SDScrM>0) and (RFQ9<5 or SU9<100)).
	<b>High Severity Problem</b>	Weekly use of alcohol or other drugs in the past month, OR sober for less than half of the past 90 days, OR weekly opioid use in the past 90 days. AND Endorsed 3 or more current resistance to treatment beliefs; OR no reasons for quitting; or less than 50% ready to quit. (SU1a=4 or SU5a<45 or Su3a<45 or max.1(SU4h, SU4j, SU4k)>12) and (sum.1(SU10a, SU10b, SU10c, SU10d)>2 or sum.1(SU10e, SU10f, SU10g, SU10h, SU10j)=0 or RFQ9=0 or SU9<50).
<b>Treatment</b>	<b>Past Treatment</b>	Ever received treatment for substance use. (SU1f>0 or Max(SU1f2,SU1f3,SU1f4,SU1f5, SU1f99)>0)).
	<b>Current Treatment</b>	Treated for substance use in the past 90 days. (SU1f>2 or SU2d>0 or SU2a>0 or Max(SU1f2,SU1f3,SU1f4,SU1f5, SU1f99)>0).

Table 9. Treatment Recommendations for ASAM B4.

Cell	Current Severity Rating	Services and Modalities Needed
0	Inconsistent	Probe to clarify inconsistency (service without problem)
1	No problem	No need for motivational intervention
2	Past problem	Monitor for change in need for motivational intervention or support

3	Moderate problems	Consider motivational intervention
4	Severe problems	Consider need for motivational intervention or support
5	No current problems, in treatment	Consider need for any maintenance of motivational intervention
6	Moderate problems, in treatment	Consider need for maintenance or change in motivational intervention or support
7	Severe problems, in treatment	Consider more assertive motivational intervention or support

### **Dimension 5: Relapse, Continued Use or Continued Problem Potential**

ASAM Dimension B5 looks at a patient’s unique needs that influence their potential for relapse or continued use. Table 10 defines the criteria for each axis of this dimension and table 11 lists the treatment recommendations provided based on a patient’s placement on this dimension.

Table 10. ASAM Dimension B5 Classification Criteria and Syntax

Axis		B5. Relapse Potential
<b>Problem</b>	<b>Past Problem</b>	Any lifetime substance disorder problems. (SDScrL>0).
	<b>Current Problem</b>	Any past month substance use disorder problems, OR past week withdrawal symptoms, OR any past 90 day substance use, OR low self-efficacy feelings toward quitting. (SDScrm>0 or WM3b1=1 or SU3a<90 or SES<4).
	<b>High Severity Problem</b>	Weekly use of alcohol or other drugs in the past month, experienced withdrawal symptoms in the past week, sober for less than a third of the past 90 days, weekly use of opioids or stimulants, no self-efficacy to quit using, OR past month substance use problems coupled with the belief that their substance abuse is not a problem. (SU1a=4 or WM3b1=1 or SU3a<63 or Max.1(SU4e, SU4f, SU4h, SU4j, SU4k, SU4qa, SU4qb)>12 or SES=0 or (SDScrm>0 and POS=0)).
<b>Treatment</b>	<b>Past Treatment</b>	Ever received treatment for substance use OR took medication for substance abuse in the past 90 days, OR received a breathalyzer or urine test in the past 90 days. (Max.1(SU1f, SU1f5, SU2c)>0).
	<b>Current Treatment</b>	Any of the following substance use related events in the past 90 days: any treatment, ER visits, nights in residential treatment, days in intensive outpatient treatment, took medication, took a breathalyzer or urine test, attended any self-help meetings, OR any days in a controlled environment where they could not use substances. (SU1f=1 or SU1f5>2 or max.1(SU2d, SU1f2, su1f3, su1f4, SU1f5, SU1f99, SU2c)>0) or SU5>0.

Table 11. Treatment Recommendations for ASAM B5.

Cell	Current Severity Rating	Services and Modalities Needed
0	Inconsistent	Probe to clarify inconsistency (service without problem)
1	No problem	No need for relapse prevention
2	Past problem	Monitor for change in need for relapse prevention
3	Moderate problems	Consider relapse prevention
4	Severe problems	Consider relapse prevention, medication, and case management
5	No current problems, in treatment	Consider the need for any maintenance of relapse prevention
6	Moderate problems, in treatment	Consider need for maintenance or change in relapse prevention, medication, or case management
7	Severe problems, in treatment	Consider more assertive relapse prevention, medication, or case management

**Dimension 6: Recovery and Living Environment**

ASAM Dimension B6 examines the individual’s recovery or living environment, peers, and activities that may interfere with recovery. Table 12 defines the placement criteria for each axis of dimension 6. Based on classification on this dimension, the treatment recommendations listed in table 13 are shown.

Table 12. ASAM Dimension B6 Classification Criteria and Syntax

Axis	B6. Recovery Environment	
<b>Problem</b>	<b>Past Problem</b>	Ever homeless, low recovery environment risk, any lifetime history of victimization, any past year crime and violence problems, OR any past year risk behavior problems. (SS1g1>0 or RERI le 21 or VictL=1 or CVScrY>0 or RBScrY>0).
	<b>Current Problem</b>	Can't stay in current housing, OR any of the following in the past 90 days: homelessness, had to stay with someone to avoid being homeless, lived in a homeless shelter or emergency housing, lived where others were using drug or alcohol, got in trouble at home or with family members, got in an altercation, any victimization or abuse, attended activities where others were using drugs or alcohol, OR engaged in illegal activity to financially support themselves OR to obtain drugs or alcohol. (SS1g1>2 or SU11d>0 or SU11p =0 or Max.1(SU11c, SU11e, SU11f, SU11h, SU11m)>0 or RB2c>2 or SU11n>0 or SU11g>0 or Max.1(CV4a2, CV4a3)>0).



	<b>High Severity Problem</b>	Weekly homelessness; residing where others are using drugs or alcohol; participation in activities where others were using; got in trouble at home or with family, got in an altercation on at least half of the past 90 days; any victimization or abuse in the past 90 days; OR engaged in illegal activity to financially support themselves OR to obtain drugs or alcohol. (Max.1(SU11d, SU11e, SU11f, SU11g)>12 or Max.1(SU11h, SU11m)>44 or RB2c>2 or SU11n>0 or Max.1(CV4a2, CV4a3)>0).
<b>Treatment</b>	<b>Past Treatment</b>	Any of the following substance use related events in the past 90 days: ER visits, nights in residential treatment, days in intensive outpatient treatment, OR attended any self-help meetings. (Max.1(SU2d, SU11a, SU1f2, SU1f3)>0).
	<b>Current Treatment</b>	Weekly occurrences of any of the following in the past 90 days: Days in a detox program, self-help meetings, nights in residential treatment, OR days in intensive outpatient treatments. (Max.1(SU2a, SU11a, SU1f2, SU1f3)>12).

Table 13. Treatment Recommendations for ASAM B6.

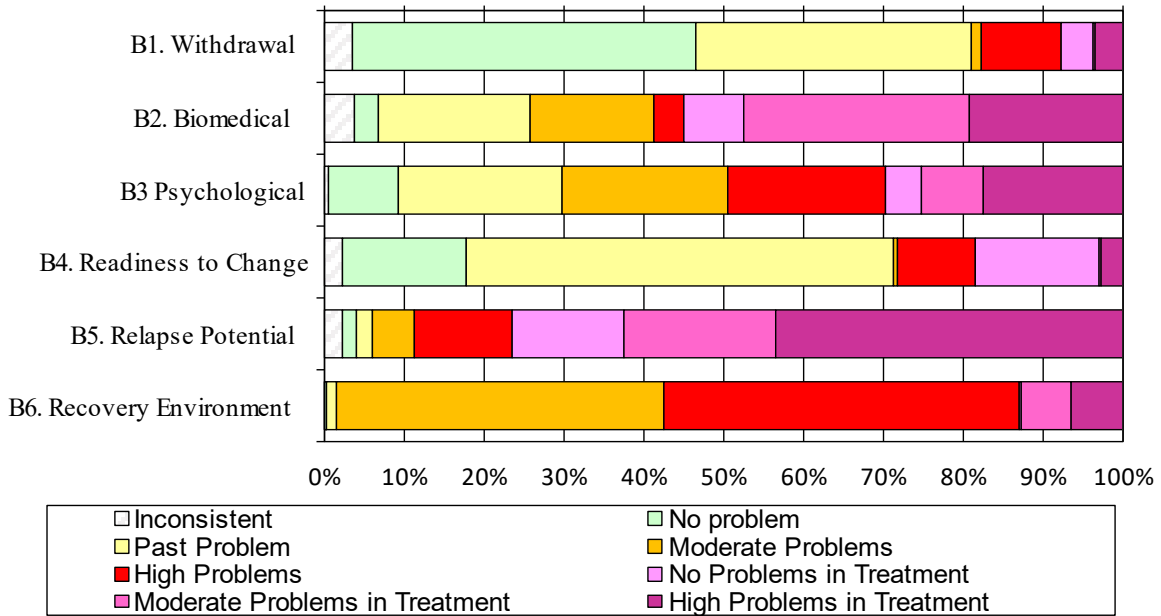
<b>Cell</b>	<b>Current Severity Rating</b>	<b>Services and Modalities Needed</b>
0	Inconsistent	Probe to clarify inconsistency (service without problem)
1	No problem	No need for recovery or environmental support
2	Past problem	Monitor for change in need for recovery or environmental support
3	Moderate problems	Consider increasing recovery or environmental support
4	Severe problems	Consider more assertive or residential recovery or environmental support
5	No current problems, in treatment	Consider need for maintenance or community re-entry recovery or environmental support
6	Moderate problems, in treatment	Consider need for maintenance or change in recovery or environmental support
7	Severe problems, in treatment	Consider more assertive or residential recovery or environmental support

### **Predicted placement on ASAM Dimensions 1 through 6**

Figure 2 estimates the expected breakdown of each dimension based on interviews using the full Global Appraisal of Individual Needs Initial (GAIN-I) with 301,853 patients presenting for behavioral health services by 5,292 staff in 518 U.S. sites between 2002 to 2018. The patients were 65% male and 35% female. They self-reported being a mix of Caucasian (56%), African American (17%), Hispanic (16%), Mixed Race (9%), and Other Races/Ethnicities/Tribes (3%). They ranged from 12 to 99 years old, with an average age of 28. Based on substance use disorder criteria, frequency of use, and preference, their primary substance was cannabis (32%),

alcohol (31%), heroin/other opioids (19%), cocaine/other stimulants (15%), and other drugs (3%). Staff were trained and certified in the use of the GAIN. The sites included a variety of institutional settings (e.g., addiction and mental health treatment agencies, justice agencies, child protective service agencies, student assistance programs) and ASAM levels of care.

Figure 2. Predicted ASAM Ratings Distribution



Source: GAIN Summary Analytic Data Set(n=301,853)