

1. What is SCALE?

SCALE (Screening, Centralized, Assessment, Level of Care Assignment and Engagement/Linkage to Treatment) grew out of the Centralized Intake Project, Phase I & II, conducted over the past year.

The SCALE program was developed to create a single point of entry into the community mental health system to better serve uninsured adults with behavioral health needs. Secondly, SCALE seeks to improve the utilization of limited non-Medicaid funds.

The ADAMHS Board of Cuyahoga County has contracted with Connections: Health•Wellness•Advocacy to implement the program. Nine ADAMHS Board service providers are currently participating in SCALE: Center for Families & Children, Connections, Eldercare, Epilepsy Association, Far West Center, Jewish Family Service Association, Mental Health Services, Inc., Murtis Taylor Human Services System and Recovery Resources.

SCALE begins January 3, 2011.

2. Who qualifies for SCALE?

Qualified individuals for the SCALE program are persons requesting mental health services who are aged 18 or older, residents of Cuyahoga County, uninsured, and new to the community mental health system. New, or unlinked, is defined as an individual who has not been seen within the previous six months (except for crisis services) by a service provider within the community mental health system.

The community mental health system is designed to serve the most severely mentally ill, including, but not limited to, individuals with the following diagnoses: Schizophrenia, Schizoaffective Disorder, Bipolar I Disorder, Bipolar II Disorder, Major Depression with Psychotic Features and Major Depression, Recurrent.

Individuals who have other diagnoses may also be appropriate for this system if they also have major deficits in psychosocial functioning (e.g. an inability to perform Activities of Daily Living, recurrent hospitalizations, etc.), co-occurring personality disorders, co-occurring substance use disorders, and/or co-morbid medical illnesses.

Appropriateness for the community mental health system is determined through a combination of diagnosis and functioning (Level of Care). The Level of Care assignment will help determine if an individual is SCALE-eligible.

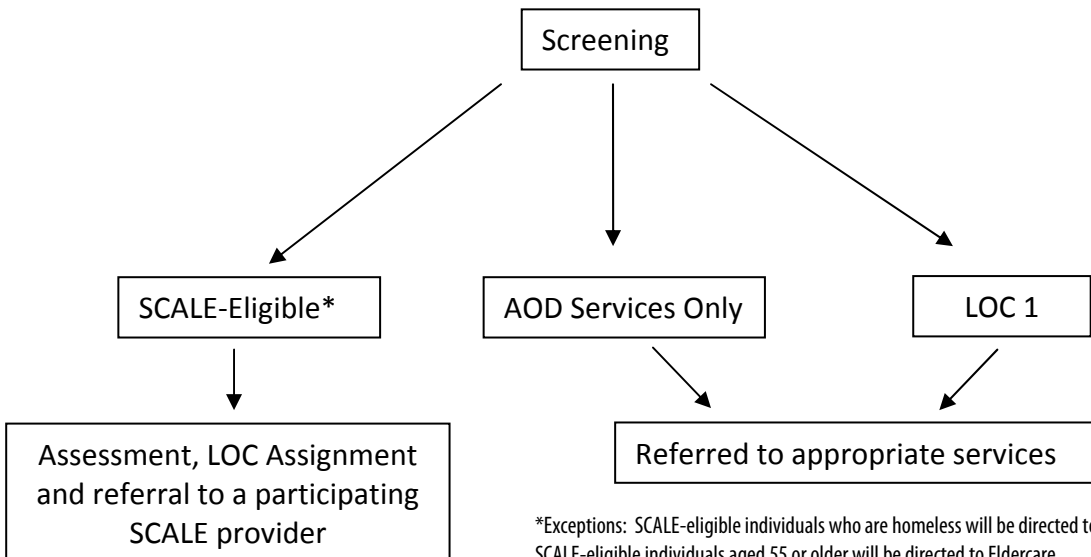
3. What happens to individuals who do not meet SCALE requirements?

- Connections will refer individuals seeking AOD services only to Centralized Assessment at Hitchcock Center for Women.
- Connections will refer individuals meeting the federal definition of homelessness to Mental Health Services, Inc. (MHS).
- Connections will refer individuals age 55 or older directly to Eldercare.
- Connections will refer individuals assigned Level 1 status to other, more appropriate services that may include a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), The Free Clinic, MetroHealth, or his/her primary care physician.

4. After the Assessment occurs, what is the process for non-Medicaid referrals?

Connections will perform assessments, assign a Level of Care and make referrals to one of the nine (9) participating SCALE service providers based on the following criteria: the kind of services needed, the geographic location of the provider, consumer preference and any prior community system linkages.

Each SCALE-participating service provider will notify Connections via email twice a week, Tuesdays and Thursday mornings before 10:00 a.m., as to their slot availability and/or capacity for Open Intake in order to facilitate the appropriate referrals. Open Intake is an agency's ability to schedule an appointment within five (5) business days of the initial request for service.



5. What is the process for State Hospital referrals?

The referral process for the Northfield and Cleveland campuses of Northcoast Behavioral Healthcare will remain the same.

- Connections will continue to assess and assign a Level of Care and refer to a receiving agency those individuals who are new to the system or who have not been seen within six (6) months by a community mental health service provider.
- For individuals who have a forensic legal status (including, but not limited to ISTU) the Northcoast social worker will contact the adult agency directly and make a referral.

6. What is the process for individuals involved with Mobile Crisis?

The process remains the same for linked consumers. For unlinked/new consumers in need of mental health services, Mobile Crisis will stabilize the individual and refer him/her to SCALE.

7. What is the process for prison re-entry?

The ODMH Linkages program person will direct referrals from the prison system to the Mobile Crisis Team. Jail referrals will be coordinated through the mental health jail liaison with Murtis Taylor, Mental Health Services, Connections and Recovery Resources. Unlinked persons released from either jail or prison who meet the eligibility requirements will be directed to SCALE.

8. What is the process for transitional youth?

Transitional youth will be managed on a case-by-case basis. Individuals who are Cuyahoga County residents, 18 years old, uninsured and requesting mental health services will be directed to SCALE.

9. What about the routing and tracking forms? Do agencies have to complete them?

No. There are no more routing and tracking forms. There will be a referral form issued by SCALE to the receiving agency.

10. What if the receiving agency disagrees with the Level of Care assignment?

Initially, the agency should discuss the LOC assignment with Connections. If it is not resolved, the receiving agency should contact the ADAMHS Board's Chief Clinical Officer to discuss.