

Early Assessment and Support Alliance (EASA)

What is EASA?

The Oregon Early Assessment and Support Alliance (EASA) is the first statewide effort in the United States to provide systematic early psychosis intervention for adolescents and young adults. EASA is based on the work of the Early Assessment and Support Team, formed by Mid-Valley Behavioral Care Network in 2001. EASA follows a common set of practices based on international and national research and an iterative process of feedback and program development. EASA serves teenagers and young adults with early symptoms consistent with schizophrenia and related conditions. EASA has served over 1500 since 2001 and currently serves over 400 individuals and families per year.

What does EASA seek to accomplish?

EASA provides rapid, effective support to young people who develop the symptoms of psychosis so they can

- Complete school and enter successful careers and adult roles; and
- Experience social support, health and well-being.

Where is EASA located?

There are established EASA programs or programs being implemented in licensed public mental health centers serving 32 of Oregon's 36 counties, reaching 94 percent of Oregon's population. The Oregon Health Authority, with support from the Oregon Legislature, is working to ensure that EASA becomes available in all counties.



How are EASA teams different?

- One local team serves teens and young adults, providing psychiatry, nursing, counseling/social work, occupational therapy, supported employment and peer support
- Community education, early identification and outreach to engage young people regardless of funding or other barriers
- Feedback-informed treatment and integration of participatory decision making at all levels
- Evidence-based care
 - Comprehensive strengths-based assessment and treatment planning
 - Family partnership and multi-family psychoeducation
 - Evidence-based support for work, school and career development
 - Substance abuse services integrating motivational interviewing and a harm reduction approach
 - Intensive coordination of care within the team and with community partners
- Gradual transition to long-term supports over a two-year period
- Participation in systems change efforts focused on creating a more responsive and effective system of care

Updated Nov 2014

www.easacommunity.org



EASA Center for Excellence

Where is the EASA Center for Excellence located?

The EASA Center for Excellence is part of the Regional Research Institute (RRI), which is the research arm of the School of Social Work at Portland State University. The RRI is home to nationally recognized research and technical assistance projects, and has particular strength in the area of youth/young adult mental health.

What does the EASA Center for Excellence provide?

- Brings people together to articulate and refine EASA's vision, priorities, goals and core messages
- Iterative practice guidelines and fidelity review based on current knowledge
- Consultation and technical assistance to new and developing sites
- Workforce development opportunities including professional training, consultation and credentialing
- Communications including statewide social marketing, website and social media methods
- Data collection and reporting in support of policy makers, managers and participatory research
- Ongoing collaboration with international researchers and statewide/national partners
- Focused support for Oregon's service development and sustainability
- Coordination of statewide shared action

What are the outcomes of the EASA Center for Excellence's work?

- **Community:** Increased recognition of psychosis and related conditions; rapid, supportive response to teens and young adults when they begin to develop symptoms of psychosis.
- **Program:** Implementation of practices that improve rapid access, reduction of barriers to care and provision of effective services.
- **Clinical:** Clinicians develop and demonstrate the knowledge and skills needed to effectively assess, treat and support teens and young adults with the early signs of psychosis.
- **Individual/family response:** Individuals and families experience less trauma and are more supported and prepared from the onset of symptoms to succeed with developmental milestones (i.e. school completion, career, transition into adult relationships) and act as self-advocates. Participants transition successfully from initial identification to providing leadership and direction in addressing their own needs.



School of Social Work
Regional Research Institute for Human Services

How do I learn more?

www.easacommunity.org
www.rri.pdx.edu/Project/761
Tamara Sale, Director
EASA Center for Excellence
tsale@pdx.edu, 503-725-9620