

# Behavioral Health System Information Sheet

## Early Assessment and Support Alliance-EASA

The EASA model identifies individuals in the early stages of schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders and ensures they and their families have the resources to effectively deal with the illness. The New Investment EASA sites are: Clackamas, Douglas, Jackson-Josephine, Klamath, Lane, and soon ten additional eastern Oregon Counties: Baker, Wallowa, Gilliam, Grant, Harney, Josephine, Lake, Malheur, Morrow, Umatilla, & Wheeler Counties

### People served

EASA serves young adults 12-25 experiencing symptoms consistent with early or initial onset psychosis.

### What's changing?

Since its first investment in 2007, EASA has provided services to 1,271 young adults and their families.

More than 90% of Oregonians have access to EASA teams, with an active development effort in Eastern Oregon bringing the percentage to 94.5%.

83 additional young people and their families are in services as a result of the new investments,

In EASA, young people maintain or enter school or work (44% at intake, 55% at discharge) and decrease substance abuse (15% with severe substance abuse at intake, 9% at discharge).

At discharge 59% of EASA youth are not on public disability and do not plan to apply.

While 53% of individuals were hospitalized in the three months prior to EASA, an average of 6% per quarter were hospitalized once they were in the program.

### Benefit to clients and community

Fidelity Services include:

- Outreach and engagement-Each EASA team conducts extensive and on-going community education, conducting an average of 60 presentations and contacts per year
- Referrals come from a wide range of community resources
- EASA's are connected to 24 hour crisis response teams and 80-90% of initial calls are returned within 2 business days
- Initial contact is made with the family or support system within two (2) business days of the initial screening
- Assessment and treatment uses a multi-disciplinary team consisting of a psychiatrist, social worker, occupational therapist, nurse and vocational specialist
- Multi-family psycho-education
- Cognitive behavioral therapy
- Vocational and educational support
- Support for individuals in home, community, school and work settings.

## System Impact

In the long run Early Intervention Programs like EASA have a dramatic effect on the reduced need for more institutionalized and expensive care, while promoting recovery.

The Oregon Health Authority and Portland State University EASA Center for Excellence partners with mental health agencies across the state, combining skilled practitioners with evidence based practice guidelines to provide high quality services to young adult Oregonians.

***Oregon is the first state in the U.S. to commit to universal access to early psychosis intervention, and is an established national leader.*** Congress has required all states to begin developing early psychosis or similar efforts and Oregon's expertise and experience are setting an important precedent. The EASA Center for Excellence is taking a leadership role.

***EASA graduates are becoming leaders.*** Oregon has the first-ever statewide Young Adult Leadership Council consisting of young people who have graduated from EASA programs. Graduates of EASA programs are eager to mentor others and to help spread the word.

## Participant Testimonial

Annie is an 18 year-old recent high school graduate referred to PeaceHealth's Behavioral Health Young Adult Program by her primary care physician. Annie had recently failed a college class, and was experiencing high levels of anxiety resulting in sleep disturbance, inability to focus, social isolation, and symptoms related to psychosis. Annie was admitted to the EASA program four months ago and soon began engaging in services. Annie's goals included stabilization of mental health symptoms (including reducing symptoms of psychosis and anxiety), improved academic function, and increased social interaction. After two months of treatment Annie began attending Young Adult program activities including art hour, holiday parties, and urban hiking group. Annie soon began reconnecting with old friends she had become isolated from. Recently, she reported passing all of her classes in fall term and for the first time is taking a full academic load in college. Last month, Annie began riding the bus again after many months of feeling too anxious to ride public transportation. Annie is currently working with a Vocation Specialist with the Young Adult program in the hope of obtaining part-time employment. In addition, she is an active member of the program's Youth Leadership Council run by the program's Peer Support Specialist. Annie's new goals include singing in public and performing at an upcoming poetry open mic night.

## For Information regarding EASA:

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