

Assessment Clinic Program Description

SERVICES OFFERED

Comprehensive Psychological and Neuropsychological Evaluations:

Comprehensive psychological and neuropsychological evaluations are offered. In most cases this includes an intake to gather biopsychosocial history, one or two testing sessions with the client, gathering collateral information from people in the client's life, report writing, and an interactive feedback session.

ECAS ASSESSMENT CLINIC VALUES

ECAS strives to bring a comprehensive and collaborative assessment approach to the community. We strive to not simply answer yes or no to one specific diagnostic question, but rather give clients and their treatment team a comprehensive mental health evaluation. This includes examining multiple factors that could be contributing to a client's concerns and providing robust recommendations based on diagnostic findings. We aim to do this by using evidence-based assessment measures, using multiple data points to come a diagnostic decision, practicing cultural humility, and committing to providing a collaborative and supportive assessment and feedback process.

Importantly, each assessment provider holds the key to implementing these values with their clients. Training and consultation are provided and available, but ultimately each ECAS assessment psychologist needs to:

1. Gather information from multiple sources including client reports, collateral report, test data, and behavioral observations.
2. Use and gain training in evidence-based assessment measures and keep up to date on research related to diagnostic decision making.
3. Engage in cultural humility and create an atmosphere that allows for conversations about culture, inequities, and differences.
4. Commit to a collaborative assessment and feedback process that answers client's assessment questions, illuminates both strengths and areas of challenge, and provides robust recommendations based on the client's presenting concerns and needs.

Comprehensive Evaluations

The ECAS assessment clinic focuses on psychological and neuropsychological testing and evaluation for children and adults. We complete a comprehensive assessment process that considers multiple factors that might be contributing to individual's challenges. We can complete evaluations to determine the presence of neurodevelopmental or other psychiatric conditions including Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, autism spectrum disorder, learning disorders, intellectual disabilities, and mood disorders. We do not complete evaluations for individuals struggling with traumatic brain injuries or for concerns related to dementia.

Assessment providers at ECAS implement this clinical value in the following ways:

- ⌘ Using the intake interview to determine if the client's presenting problems are a good match for our clinic. If the intake interview suggests that the primary assessment questions are outside the scope of the clinic's specializations, ECAS assessment providers refer the client to a more appropriate clinic.
- ⌘ Completing two-hour intakes with clients to allow enough time to gather full biopsychosocial history and clarity on the presenting concerns and assessment questions.
- ⌘ Obtaining and reviewing relevant and available records related to the client's presenting concerns.
- ⌘ Making attempts to gather collateral information from people close to the client.
- ⌘ Administering a variety of psychological and neuropsychological test measures that are chosen based on the client's presenting concerns.

Evidence-based Approach

ECAS is committed to using evidence-based assessment measures and staying up to date on current research related to assessment and diagnosis. Clinicians will use evidence-based approaches related to assessment and diagnosis.

Assessment providers at ECAS use evidence-based treatment by:

- ⌘ Participating in monthly assessment consultation groups where evidence-based measure selection and interpretation is discussed.
- ⌘ Having new psychologists have their first four assessment reports reviewed by the assessment director to ensure all new staff are using evidence-based assessment practices.
- ⌘ Using available research to inform assessment interpretation and diagnostic decisions.
- ⌘ Being aware of their own limitations and areas of growth and seeking training and consultation as needed.

Cultural Humility

Cultural Humility is the ability to be open to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to others in one's interpersonal interactions. Assessment providers at ECAS strive to develop cultural humility in their interactions with clients and staff. Assessment providers implement cultural humility by:

- ⌘ Utilizing *cultural opportunities* in the scope of conversations with colleagues and clients to address aspects of cultural identity or experiences of oppression or privilege.
- ⌘ Acknowledging limitations and biases in our test measures and naming and discussing the implications of these limitations when providing feedback to clients and communicating results in the report.
- ⌘ Attending and participating in multicultural staff meetings, and using these as opportunities to grow in cultural awareness and multicultural orientation
- ⌘ Being curious about the experiences of others with a non-defensive stance, and to become aware of areas of privilege

Collaborative Assessment Process

ECAS assessment providers strive to make the assessment as collaborative and personalized as possible. We view the feedback process as the most important part of the assessment process as it provides the psychologist with an opportunity to explain the results and how they relate to the client, ensure understanding, answer client questions and concerns, enhance client motivation to follow-up on recommendations, and hold space for client reactions.

ECAS assessment providers aim for a collaborative assessment process by:

- ≠ Summarizing presenting concerns at the end of the intake appointment to assure their understanding of the assessment questions.
- ≠ Reviewing feedback verbally and providing the client with a written report that outlines history, test results, summary, conclusions, and specific recommendations.
- ≠ Discussing both areas of strength and areas of challenge based on testing and how this translates into strategies clients can use in their daily lives.
- ≠ Tailoring recommendations to be specific to each client's presenting concerns and assessment results.
- ≠ Checking in with clients to assure understanding in the feedback process and working with clients to resolve areas of confusion or disagreement.
- ≠ Referring to case management or peer support when appropriate to assist clients in following up on recommendations.

ECAS CLIENT FACTORS

Client Demographics

Clients seen by our assessment psychologists include children, adolescents, and adults. Due to our focus on equity and multicultural competence, clients from marginalized groups may be more willing to seek services at our clinic and thus may make up a higher proportion of our clients. As one of the only assessment clinics in the area that takes almost all insurance types, including Medicaid, we often see clients who are unable to afford to pay for assessment services out of pocket.

Client Severity

We see a variety of mental health concerns and severities through the assessment clinic. Often people seek an assessment because their diagnoses are unclear or there are multiple overlapping conditions, thus we often see individuals with co-morbid mental health concerns. Given the impact of substance abuse on testing and assessment results, individuals with moderate to severe substance dependence are screened either by the online webform or in the intake appointment with their assessment provider. The assessment process is designed to provide diagnostic clarity but can be an intensive and stressful process. Thus, we are not able to provide ongoing safety planning and support for clients with active suicidal intent or intent to harm others. These clients are screened and referred to more intensive therapy services to help them stabilize risk before seeking an assessment.