



ASAM American Society of
Addiction Medicine

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ASAM and CARF Reshape Addiction Care with Landmark Treatment Delivery Certification

*In Partnership with CARF, ASAM Level of Care Certification Will Provide an Independent,
Comprehensive Assessment of Addiction Treatment Facilities' Ability to
Deliver Care Consistent with The ASAM Criteria®*

Rockville, MD (October 15, 2018) – The American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) and CARF International (CARF) today announced the pilot launch of a national certification program for addiction treatment programs that demonstrate the ability to deliver services consistent with established national guidelines for levels of care.

“The importance of certification to the future of addiction medicine cannot be overstated,” said Kelly J. Clark, MD, MBA, DFAPA, DFASAM, president of ASAM. “ASAM has led the national movement to standardize and deliver evidence-based care for the disease of addiction. Certification is the critical next step to implement consistent standards across the nation, build transparency and consumer confidence around the services patients receive at a particular program, ensure provider fidelity to The ASAM Criteria, and address an urgent national public health need.”

The certification program will provide an independent, comprehensive assessment of an individual treatment program’s fidelity to a specific level of care as outlined in The ASAM Criteria. ASAM and CARF have clearly defined roles in the development and operation of the program to deliver accuracy and ensure independence throughout the certification process.

As an independent, non-profit entity with more than three decades of experience developing and implementing national standards in addiction treatment, CARF is uniquely qualified to partner with ASAM on the development and implementation of a national certification program for addiction treatment programs.

“CARF is pleased to partner with ASAM to deliver a certification program that will benefit patients and their families, health professionals, and insurers, with the necessary clarity to identify discrete levels of care for persons with substance use disorders,” said Brian J. Boon, PhD, president/CEO of CARF.

The ASAM Criteria is the nation's most widely used and comprehensive set of guidelines for placement, continued stay, and transfer/discharge of patients with addiction and co-occurring conditions.

“Three decades ago, a group of committed administrators, addiction clinicians, physicians, researchers, and scientists set out to define one national set of criteria for providing outcome-oriented, results-based care for the treatment of addiction – what is known today as The ASAM Criteria,” said Paul H. Earley, MD, DFASAM, president-elect of ASAM and one of the authors of The ASAM Criteria. “With today’s certification announcement, ASAM advances the specialty of addiction medicine in another significant way by giving addiction treatment programs a way to validate their ability to provide care consistent with ASAM’s nationally recognized best practices.”

ASAM and CARF anticipate piloting the certification in early 2019, adding verification in a second phase, and making the program broadly available later in the year. The ASAM level of care certification will initially offer certification standards based on Level 3 of the ASAM Criteria, specifically levels 3.1, 3.5, and 3.7, covering residential treatment programs. Certifications for other levels of care may be developed at a later date.

ASAM and CARF collaborated on the development of proprietary ratable certification elements and scoring methodology, which include certain pass/fail elements that ASAM has determined are essential to an applicant’s certification.

Importantly, CARF will evaluate programs for certification. To obtain certification, programs will need to demonstrate to CARF that they have the capacity to deliver services at the level of care defined by The ASAM Criteria, as represented by satisfaction of the applicable ratable elements in accordance with the scoring methodology. Programs will submit applications to CARF directly and CARF will independently perform the certification process, including reviewing individual provider applications and conducting site visits.

“CARF possesses the necessary infrastructure, credibility, and expertise to offer certification as a valid proxy of the ASAM levels of care delivered by providers of residential substance use disorder services,” stated Michael Johnson, MA, CAP, managing director for Behavioral Health at CARF.

Each certification will be valid for up to three years, at which time the program may reapply.

For more information on the certification program, please visit the ASAM website at www.asamcertification.org.

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About ASAM

The American Society of Addiction Medicine, founded in 1954, is a professional society representing over 6,000 physicians, clinicians, and associated professionals in the field of addiction medicine. ASAM is dedicated to increasing access and improving the quality of addiction treatment, educating physicians and the public, supporting research and prevention, and promoting the appropriate role of physicians in the care of patients with addiction. For more information, visit www.ASAM.org.

About CARF

Founded in 1966 as the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, CARF International is an independent, nonprofit accreditor of health and human service providers in the areas of aging services; behavioral health; child and youth services; durable medical equipment, prosthetics, orthotics, and supplies; employment and community services; medical rehabilitation; and opioid treatment programs. The CARF International group of organizations includes CARF, CARF Canada, and CARF Europe, and accredits more than 50,000 programs on five continents. More than 10 million persons of all ages are served annually by CARF-accredited providers. CARF International headquarters is located at 6951 East Southpoint Road, Tucson, AZ 85756-9407, toll free (888) 281-6531. CARF also has offices in Washington, D.C.; Edmonton, Alberta; Toronto, Ontario; and London, U.K. For more information, please visit the CARF International website at carf.org.

About The ASAM Criteria

The ASAM Criteria is the nation's most widely used and comprehensive set of guidelines for placement, continued stay, and transfer/discharge of patients with addiction and co-occurring conditions. Utilized by clinicians and payers across all care settings, the use of the ASAM Criteria is required in more than 30 states. Addiction treatment programs use the criteria to conduct a multi-dimensional patient assessment over five broad levels of treatment that are based on the degree of direct medical management provided, the structure, safety and security provided, and the intensity of treatment services provided. The criteria focuses on six dimensions of patient care to create a holistic, biopsychosocial assessment of an individual. This assessment is used for service planning and treatment across all services and levels of care. Learn more at <https://www.asam.org/resources/the-asam-criteria>.