



## GUIDELINES FOR NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING REFERRALS

### NEUROPSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING

#### **What is neuropsychological testing?**

Neuropsychological testing is the use of standardized instruments and systematic procedures to examine a person's functional abilities in the areas of intelligence, memory, language, attention, problem solving, visual-motor skills, and sensorimotor skills. Neuropsychological testing plays a significant role in diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation.

*HNE does not consider, or recommend, neuropsychological testing as a routine intervention for diagnostic determination or treatment planning. However, neuropsychological testing can be useful in determining appropriate diagnoses and treatment planning in especially complex situations. Since neuropsychological testing is a specialized procedure, it requires:*

- *Prior clinical evaluation that includes: medical/psychiatric illness history, participation in and response to treatment, substance abuse history and treatment history, mental status exam, and assessment of risk; **and/or:***
- *Prior full neurological examination.*

#### **Indications for neuropsychological testing:**

- For Adults
  - *Differential diagnosis for neurological and psychiatric disorders (e.g. depression vs. dementia, impairment in functioning because of chronic alcoholism/substance abuse vs. functional impairments because of psychiatric/medical issues).*
  - *To assess an individual's overall functioning abilities (e.g. intelligence, memory, language, attention, problem solving, visual-motor skills, and sensorimotor skills) in order to aid in diagnosis, establish limitations, or help determine best treatment approaches.*
- For Children:
  - *Complex neurodevelopment disorders;*
  - *Complex blend of psychiatric and neurological symptoms requiring differential diagnosis (e.g. co-morbid symptoms of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Pervasive Developmental Disorder and nonverbal processing disorders).*

### **Exclusions for neuropsychological testing:**

- *Individual recently in detox and/or continued substance abuse;*
- *For educational and/or vocational purposes only;*
- *If differential diagnosis for ADHD has not been completed by the primary care clinician (behavioral scales/tools completed by parents/guardians and school personnel combined with psychological testing and/or psychiatric evaluation).*
- *Request for second testing within a 12 month period unless (1) the presence of brain disorder shows substantial improvement or deterioration within this period of time or (2) the patient has undergone a clinical intervention that may have resulted in substantial change in functioning.*

### **When is neuropsychological testing approved?**

Requests for neuropsychological testing may be approved if the criteria for medical necessity are met: The criteria include:

- *Clarify diagnosis and describe functional abilities/impairments to improve behavioral health and medical care;*
- *Describe functional abilities or impairments related to brain injury, head trauma, or post-brain surgery;*
- *Identify brain abnormalities or neurological problems affecting cognitive and perceptual functioning and motor and memory skills;*
- *Specify clinical issues(s) to be addressed.*

### **How do I make a referral for neuropsychological testing?**

The provider must complete the Neuropsychological Testing Prior Authorization Request Form (PARF) and fax/mail the completed form to the HNE Behavioral Health Department. Additionally, the provider must submit documentation of the prior clinical evaluation (for example: physician progress note referring to the need for referral to a neurological examination, psychiatric evaluation, psychological evaluation; copy of actual clinical evaluation). The Behavioral Health Specialist will review the clinical information to determine if the referral is appropriate. When necessary, the Behavioral Health Specialist will review with a physician or psychologist reviewer.

### **Who can make a referral for neuropsychological testing?**

Any in-plan MD, PA, CNS, or Behavioral Health Provider.

### **Who can perform the neuropsychological testing?**

Any HNE licensed psychologist who has had formal advanced training in neuropsychological testing.