



GUIDELINES FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL TESTING REFERRALS

What is psychological testing?

Psychological testing is the use of standardized instruments and systematic procedures to assess a patient's affective, cognitive, perceptual, visual-motor and/or verbal functioning. Such instruments and procedures are typically used for clarification of differential diagnostic and treatment issues.

When is psychological testing approved?

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

- Requires identification or clarification of diagnosis(es) to improve behavioral health and medical care or track changes over time in level of psychological functioning that would potentially impact treatment decisions.
- Individual presenting with psychiatric symptoms and functional impairment that requires clarification of diagnosis or further assessment due to treatment non-response. Psychological testing may be appropriate in cases where the differential diagnosis is especially complex.
- Results of psychological testing are likely to lead to changes in treatment plan.
- Prior clinical evaluation that includes, but not necessarily limited to, history of psychiatric illness, participation and response to current and prior treatment, substance abuse history, mental status exam, and assessment of risk.
- Active or recent substance abuse can affect the accuracy of psychological testing. Testing should be postponed until individual has sustained sobriety, of at least 10 days.

Exclusions for psychological 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.
- Request for second testing within a 12 month period must come from the individual's PCP or other provider(s).

How do I make a referral for psychological testing?

The treating provider must complete the Testing Prior Authorization Request Form (PARF) and fax or mail to the HNE Behavioral Health Department. The provider must meet the above criteria (listed under “When is Psychological Testing Approved) and must present a clinical rationale for the testing. 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 psychological testing?

Any in-plan MD or Behavioral Health provider.

Who can perform the psychological testing?

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