

## Optum Salt Lake County

### Quality Assurance and Performance Improvement

#### Resource Guide

December 1, 2022

#### Tips for substance use screening

##### Why assess for substance use?

- Substance use impacts physical, mental and spiritual health, relationships, and daily functioning
- Children, adolescents and elderly have different needs
- Intoxication and withdrawal can present like symptoms of other mental health diagnoses
- Period of abstinence may be required before diagnosing some mental illnesses
- Feelings associated with use or relapse can impact treatment engagement and needs.



##### The following should be included in your assessment:

- Drug(s) used/drug of choice
- Past use
- Current use
- Periods of sobriety
- Feelings about use
- Problems in life domains
- Alcohol and nicotine use/vaping

# Substance Use – Assessment Tips



## Assess - reassess

Assessments should be ongoing.  
Answers may change over time.



## Clarify

Ask for clarification if you do not understand what the individual says... (different drugs have different names or terms).



## Support

Be supportive.  
Do not judge.



## Educate

It is important to educate individuals on the impact of drugs on mental health symptoms.



## Be aware

Be cautious about your verbal and nonverbal responses to the individual's answers



## Remember

There are supportive services available for the person you are trying to help.