

What is a Risk Rating?

- A standardized way to assess the severity of a persons’ condition and degree of impairment, done at initial assessment and throughout a patient’s treatment and care
- A tool used to determine a patient-specific approach to treatment and drive the treatment plan
- A way to consistently communicate severity of risk, by assigning values that match the description of severity *in each dimension*, as described in The ASAM Criteria textbook (pgs.74-89)

Why Conduct a Risk Rating?

- Treatment is most effective and efficient when it addresses a persons’ bio-psycho-social needs to stabilize an acute episode, prevent future deterioration, and promote recovery
- Diagnosis alone is insufficient to determine treatment needs and drive a treatment plan
- Using standardized descriptions of risk eliminates confusion and creates consistency across systems

Assessing Strengths, Skills and Resources:

- Despite significant risk in any dimension, strengths, skills, and resources may exist to alleviate that risk
- Strengths, skills and resources can be incorporated into a personalized treatment plan to advance outcomes

Principles for Assessing Risk

- It is multi-dimensional
- It relates to a person’s history
- It is expressed in relation to the *current* condition
- It involves an assessment of the degree of change from the person’s baseline condition
- Risk can be moderated by client protective factors and strengths
- In addition to history and current status, *interactions with other dimensions* have the potential to increase or decrease severity for the dimension in question (See pgs. 60-65)

RISK RATING SCALE	0	Indicates a non-issue or very low risk; there is minimal current risk and chronic issues are stable	LOW
	1	A mildly difficult issue, with minor signs & symptoms; Any chronic issues or Problems could be resolved in a short period of time	↓
	2	Indicates moderate difficulty in functioning. Skills, strengths and supports may be present to mitigate risk	MODERATE
	3	Indicates serious issues or difficulty coping within a dimension. Person may be considered in or near “Imminent Danger”	↓
	4	Indicates issues of utmost severity; critical impairments in coping and functioning, indicating “Imminent Danger”	HIGH

NOTE: Risk ratings 0-4 do not equate to a level of care; e.g., level 4 risk does not mean someone necessarily needs level 4: “Medically Managed Intensive Inpatient” Services.

Important Points to Remember:

- Risk will continue to change throughout the course of treatment
- Ongoing assessment of Risk is necessary when developing client directed and outcome informed services