



Australian Government



## Training - Initial Assessment and Referral (IAR) for Mental Healthcare

### March – April 2024 workshop schedule

*Northern Territory Primary Health Network in partnership with Neami National*

#### Background

The IAR Guidance and Decision Support Tool ([IAR-DST](#)) is an Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care initiative.

The objectives of the IAR Guidance and IAR-DST are:

- A person seeking mental health assistance has their experiences understood in the context of holistic assessment domains (the **8 domains**). The 8 domains help distil essential assessment information and amplify key signals (e.g., red flags) critical for decision-making.
- A person's treatment needs are aligned to a suitable intervention intensity based on the least intensive and least intrusive evidence-based intervention that will likely lead to the most significant possible gain (the **5 levels of care**). The approach is designed to minimise the risks that arise through under-servicing (poor outcomes) and over-servicing (unnecessary burden of care for the individual).
- To provide a nationally consistent decision support tool to guide, but not replace, clinical judgement and consumer choice (the **IAR-DST**).

There are commitments under the National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement and Bilateral Agreements to consider use of the IAR tool in Commonwealth funded mental health services and State and Territory mental health services. Therefore, in addition to the overall program objectives:

- Widespread use of the IAR-DST will help improve awareness and transparency about how decisions relating to referral appropriateness are made – potentially reducing some of the frustration that occurs with referrals not being accepted by service providers.
- Using the standardised IAR will help referrers communicate initial assessment and referral information consistently and articulate treatment needs using language commonly understood across the sector.
- Appropriate use of the IAR-DST may minimise the risks and liabilities associated with underestimating a person's treatment needs. The IAR-DST does not replace the user's capacity to make individualised clinical decisions based on the consumer/patient's circumstances.

#### The Workshop

The workshop will focus on:

1. Introduction to IAR and the development of the National Guidance.
2. Orientation to the domains, levels of care, and decision support tool.
3. Clinical judgement and supported decision-making.
4. Application of the IAR in referral, assessment, and intake settings (practical activity using vignettes).

## Learning outcomes

- Participants are familiar with the principles underpinning the national approach to stepped care.
- Participants have an awareness of and confidence in the IAR development process.
- Participants can apply the IAR Guidance in practice settings, using the domains and the decision support tool to generate a recommended level of care.
- Participants understand the Levels of Care and can determine regional services matched against the levels of care.
- Participants understand the principles of clinical decision-making and consumer choice and can practice following these principles and using supported decision-making strategies.

The first component of the workshop focuses on an introduction and orientation to stepped care, the initial assessment and referral process and the decision support tool. The second component of the workshop is a practical activity focusing on a consumer vignette.

## Other requirements

- Participants must join using a computer or laptop with a camera. Participants are asked to leave their cameras on during the workshops if comfortable to do so.
- You must register in advance for each workshop.
- Participants are only expected to select and attend one workshop.
- **Participant limits apply. If you cannot attend the workshop after registering, please cancel your registration to free up space for a participant on the waiting list.**

<b>Date and time</b> <i>(Darwin Time)</i>	<b>Registration link</b>
28 March 2024 (Thursday) 03.00 pm - 05.00 pm	Click <a href="#">HERE</a> to register in advance for this meeting.
29 March 2024 (Friday) 03.00 pm - 05.00 pm	Click <a href="#">HERE</a> to register in advance for this meeting.
04 April 2024 (Thursday) 03.00 pm – 05.00 pm	Click <a href="#">HERE</a> to register in advance for this meeting.
05 April 2024 (Friday) 03.00 pm – 05.00 pm	Click <a href="#">HERE</a> to register in advance for this meeting.
11 April 2024 (Thursday) 03.00 pm – 05.00 pm	Click <a href="#">HERE</a> to register in advance for this meeting.
12 April 2024 (Friday) 03.00 pm – 05.00 pm	Click <a href="#">HERE</a> to register in advance for this meeting.
18 April 2024 (Thursday) 03.00 pm – 05.00 pm	Click <a href="#">HERE</a> to register in advance for this meeting.
19 April 2024 (Friday) 03.00 pm – 05.00 pm	Click <a href="#">HERE</a> to register in advance for this meeting.

25 April 2024 (Thursday) 03.00 pm – 05.00 pm	Click <a href="#">HERE</a> to register in advance for this meeting.
26 April 2024 (Friday) 03.00 pm – 05.00 pm	Click <a href="#">HERE</a> to register in advance for this meeting.

*Note – if any of the above links do not work, please copy, and paste the link directly into your browser.*

**For more information about this training, contact:**

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## VIGNETTE- JASON

Link to online DST - <https://iar-dst.online/#/>

Jason is a 33-year-old male who calls Central Intake and tells the clinician that he feels stressed because of a restructure at work. Much of the workforce in his section are expected to be let go. Jason lives with his wife and three children (aged 8, 9 and 12).

### Domain 1- Symptom Severity and Distress

Jason tells central intake that he has been experiencing some trouble sleeping some nights. Jason links the onset of the sleep difficulties with his challenges at work. Jason notes that he is more frustrated than usual (mostly at home) and states that he has been more impatient with the kids. Jason mentions that he is often distracted by what is happening at work and feels he cannot relax. This has been happening for around eight weeks. Jason tells the clinician he has never had mental health issues before. Jason is concerned that the impending work restructure will result in him losing his job, and he worries that he will not be able to pay the mortgage, bills and support his young family. Otherwise, Jason still enjoys spending time with friends and family. The clinician administers the K10, and Jason has a score of 20.

### Domain 2- Risk of Harm

When asked, Jason denies any suicidal ideation or self-harm. Jason tells the clinician he has never experienced suicidal ideation or self-harm. Jason has not ever had thoughts of hurting others. The clinician finds no evidence of current or past perceptual disturbance, delusions or thought disorder.

### Domain 3- Functioning

Jason reports being less effective at work but still attends work daily and is mostly productive. Jason also mentions that he is communicating less with his wife and children lately but fulfils his parenting responsibilities. Otherwise, Jason is functioning well.

### Domain 4- Impact of co-existing conditions

Jason drinks beer socially (4-5 beers once per week)- but reports he is drinking less now.

### Domain 5- Treatment and recovery history

Jason tells the clinician he has never previously accessed a mental health service. He tells the clinician he recently did an online test that told him to seek help or talk to his GP.

### Domain 6- Social and environmental stressors

Jason current employment is at risk due to a company restructure. He is the primary income earner. Jason says that he finds it hard to stop worrying about losing his job. Jason is stressed about the Covid-19 pandemic and the impact on his family- the children are currently learning from home, and his wife is working from home. His wife is having a hard time juggling these additional demands, which is putting strain on the family at times.

### Domain 7- Family and other supports

Jason has a loving wife and parents who live locally and have been a great source of support.

### Domain 8- Engagement and motivation

Jason tells the clinician he would like to talk to someone outside the family about what is going on. Jason wants to learn how to cope with work-related stress and be prepared for the worst- being out of a job. Jason tells the clinician that money is an issue and it would not be possible to fund treatment out of the little money left over after paying the bills. Jason has access to a car and can get to appointments but thinks it would be best to have appointments after work or on weekends so as not to have to take time off work.

**End**