

To: AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana Providers

Date: April 6, 2026

Subject: Depression Screening and Follow-Up for Adolescents and Adults (DSF-E)

Summary: Information for Improving Depression Screening Rates in Adolescents and Adults

As one of the most prevalent mental health conditions in the U.S., major depressive disorder has a profound impact on daily life. Without treatment, it severely disrupts daily functioning, exacerbates existing health issues, and increases mortality risks. Depression during pregnancy can increase the risk of preterm birth and low birth weight. Postpartum depression can interfere with infant bonding.¹ In 2023, suicide was the second leading cause of death in individuals aged 10-35 years of age² and the 11th leading cause of death for all age groups in the United States.³

Measure Description: The percentage of people 12+ who were screened for clinical depression using a standardized instrument and, if screened positive, received follow-up care.

- **Depression Screening:** The percentage of people who were screened for clinical depression using a standardized instrument.
- **Follow-up on Positive Screen:** The percentage of people who received follow-up care within 30 days of a positive depression screen finding.

Measure Exclusions:

- People using hospice services in the measurement year.
- People with a history of bipolar disorder in the year before the measurement year.
- People with depression in the year before the measurement year.

What do you need to know?

Routine Depression Screening: The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends depression screening among adolescents 12-18 years and the general adult population, including pregnant and postpartum women.¹

Goal of Screening: Screening for depression can identify symptoms early, which allows for timely, effective treatment and can improve health outcomes.

How can you help improve Depression Screening and Follow-up for Positive Screenings?

- Integrate standardized depression screening tools, such as the PHQ-2 and PHQ-9, in your office at new patient visits, annual visits, or when clinically indicated
- Normalize conversation about mental health with your patients
- Train staff to complete the screenings before seeing the patient

- For any positive screening, a follow-up plan should be in place, such as a referral to a mental health specialist or medication intervention

Depression Screening Instruments:

Instruments for Adolescents (17 and under)	Total Score LOINC Codes	Positive Finding
Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9)	44261-6	Total score ≥ 10
Patient Health Questionnaire Modified for Teens (PHQ-9M) [®]	89204-2	Total score ≥ 10
Patient Health Questionnaire-2 (PHQ-2)	55758-7	Total score ≥ 3
Beck Depression Inventory-Fast Screen (BDI-FS)	89208-3	Total score ≥ 8
Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale—Revised (CESD-R)	89205-9	Total score ≥ 17
Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS)	99046-5	Total score ≥ 10
PROMIS Depression	71965-8	Total score (T Score) ≥ 60

Instruments for Adults (18+)	Total Score LOINC Codes	Positive Finding
Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9) [®]	44261-6	Total score ≥ 10
Patient Health Questionnaire-2 (PHQ-2)	55758-7	Total score ≥ 3
Beck Depression Inventory-Fast Screen (BDI-FS)	89208-3	Total score ≥ 8
Beck Depression Inventory (BDI-II)	89209-1	Total score ≥ 20
Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale—Revised (CESD-R)	89205-9	Total score ≥ 17
Duke Anxiety—Depression Scale (DUKE-AD)	90853-3	Total score ≥ 30
Geriatric Depression Scale Short Form (GDS)	48545-8	Total score ≥ 5
Geriatric Depression Scale Long Form (GDS)	48544-1	Total score ≥ 10
Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS)	99046-5	Total score ≥ 10
My Mood Monitor (M-3)	71777-7	Total score ≥ 5
PROMIS Depression	71965-8	Total score (T Score) ≥ 60

PROMIS Emotional Distress— Depression— Short Form	77861-3	Total score (T Score) ≥60
Clinically Useful Depression Outcome Scale (CUDOS)	90221-3	Total score ≥31

Together, we can strengthen early detection of depression and support better long-term outcomes for our members.

Questions: Thank you for your continued support and commitment to the care of our members. If you have questions about this communication, please get in touch with AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana Provider Services at 1-888-922-0007 or your [Provider Network Management Account Executive](#).

References:

¹ Depression and Suicide Risk in Adult Screening. <https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/recommendation/screening-depression-suicide-risk-adults> Published June 30, 2023

² National Vital Statistics System, National Center for Health Statistics, CDC. https://wisqars.cdc.gov/pdfs/leading-causes-of-death-by-age-group_2023_508.pdf. Accessed 3.16.26

³ Suicide. <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/suicide>. Accessed March 3, 2026

Disclaimer: Physicians and other health care providers are solely responsible for the treatment decisions for their patients and should not use the information in this communication to substitute independent clinical judgment.

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