

Frequently Asked Questions

Why do we do NC-TOPPS?

NC-TOPPS measures the quality of substance use disorder and mental health services and their impact on individuals' lives. By capturing key information on a consumer's service needs and life situation during a current episode of care, NC-TOPPS aids in developing treatment plans and evaluating the impact of services on a consumer's life. It supports Tailored Plans in their responsibility for monitoring services in each Tailored Plan's catchment area. The data generated through NC-TOPPS helps the DMH/DD/SAS, Tailored Plans and provider agencies improve the quality of services. In addition, NC-TOPPS provides data for meeting federal performance and outcome measurement requirements, which allows North Carolina to evaluate its service system in comparison to other states.

Where do I find the NC-TOPPS Guidelines?

The NC-TOPPS Guidelines can be found at <https://nctopps.ncdmh.net/Nctopps2/docs/july2024/NC-TOPPSGuidelinesVersion20.0July2024.pdf>

Who is required to have a NC-TOPPS completed?

NC-TOPPS Interviews are required for 100% of consumers ages 6 and above who have:

- Been formally admitted to a Tailored Plan by having an open record with a unique Tailored Plan assigned Consumer Record Number and
- Begun receiving qualifying mental health and/or substance use disorder treatment services from a publicly-funded source. (See the service codes for "Qualifying Services to Mental Health and Substance Use Disorder Consumers for Which NC-TOPPS is Required" in the NC-TOPPS Guidelines, Appendix A)

NOTE: Health Choice is a publicly funded source, but Health Choice consumers are only required to be in NC-TOPPS if they receive a NC-TOPPS service under the Tailored Plan.

NOTE: If a consumer changes health plans and no longer receives services through the Tailored Plan, NC-TOPPS is no longer required.

NOTE: All child and adolescent consumers under the supervision of the juvenile justice system who are receiving any mental health and/or substance use disorder treatment services are required to be in NC-TOPPS if a Tailored Plan enrolls them into CDW.

NOTE: High Fidelity Wraparound consumers are required to be in NC-TOPPS.

Further requirements and exclusions can also be found in the NC-TOPPS Guidelines: <https://nctopps.ncdmh.net/Nctopps2/docs/july2024/NC-TOPPSGuidelinesVersion20.0July2024.pdf>

Are consumers who are diagnosed with both DD and SUD and/or MH required to have a NC-TOPPS?

If the consumer’s primary diagnosis is DD, a NC-TOPPS is not required. All other consumers who are in the required categories should have a NC-TOPPS completed.

Who is responsible for completing the NC-TOPPS interviews?

The QP in the provider agency that provides a qualifying mental health and/or substance use disorder service to the consumer is responsible for completing NC-TOPPS Interviews. **Consumers should not complete the online or paper interviews. The QP is expected to complete an in-person interview with the consumer.**

If the consumer is seeing multiple provider agencies, which agency is responsible for completing the NC-TOPPS interviews?

When a consumer is receiving more than one qualifying service across multiple agencies, the responsibility for completing the NC-TOPPS interviews are determined by a hierarchy of services based on age-disability. The hierarchy is outlined below:

Adult SUD/MH	Child/Adolescent SUD/MH
Residential Services	Residential - PRTF
Partial Hospitalization	Partial Hospitalization
Assertive Community Treatment Team (ACTT)	Child Assertive Community Treatment Team (ACTT) – Adolescent Only
Substance Abuse Comprehensive Outpatient Treatment (SACOT)	Multisystemic Therapy Services (MST)
Substance Abuse Intensive Outpatient Treatment (SAIOP)	Intensive In-Home Services (IIH)
Community Support Team (CST)	Substance Abuse Intensive Outpatient Treatment (SAIOP)
Opioid Treatment	Child and Adolescent Day Treatment
Supported Employment	Residential Services (except PRTF) & Therapeutic Foster Care Services
Transition Management Services (TMS)	Supported Employment
Periodic (State Funded SUD Only): Consumer Group Family	Periodic (State Funded SUD Only): Consumer Group Family
	High Fidelity Wraparound

Priority for the responsible provider agency is in hierarchical order so that if a consumer is receiving two or more of the required services during a given period, the service that is in highest order on the table is responsible for NC-TOPPS. As services change within an episode of care, the NC-TOPPS record will need to be transferred to the provider agency providing the next highest service. Only one set of NC-TOPPS Interviews is completed for each consumer during a particular episode of care.

If the consumer moves from one Tailored Plan to another, how do I change the Tailored Plan for the consumer?

In this situation, an Episode Completion should be submitted from the previous Tailored Plan and the consumer should be opened with a new Initial with the new consumer record number under the new Tailored Plan.

How do I get trained for NC-TOPPS?

Tailored Plans are responsible for ensuring that its provider agencies are trained on the web-based NC-TOPPS tools and protocols. DMH/DD/SAS, through its contractors, will continue to provide technical assistance and training support as needed.

How do I register or change my current registration?

QPs who have never had an NC-TOPPS Username and Password with any provider agency should go to the NC-TOPPS website (<http://www.ncdhhs.gov/providers/provider-info/mental-health/nc-treatment-outcomes-and-program-performance-system>), click on “NC-TOPPS 2.1 Website,” and then select “Create NEW NC-TOPPS User Profile.” The QP will need to provide their name, a unique email address, phone number, and password to submit information into the NC-TOPPS New User system (it is strongly recommended that a provider agency email address be used instead of a personal email address). All QPs at a provider agency should have their own username and password. Next, they will confirm that they are the person whose profile is being created and submit the information. They will then select the appropriate Tailored Plan(s) and provider agency(ies), verify whether or not they are a QP and/or Data Entry User (DEU) and select the option to receive email notifications for Updates Needed once the provider agency(ies) are selected. Once the new user selects ‘Save Changes,’ the request will be submitted and an email containing the new user’s username assigned by the NC-TOPPS system will automatically be sent to the new user as well as the selected provider agency(ies)’s superuser(s). The superuser at the provider agency is responsible for approving or rejecting the new user. Access will not be granted to the new user until the approval has been submitted. The new user will be notified of the approval via email.

QPs who already have an NC-TOPPS username and password and need to add or change their Tailored Plan and/or provider agency information should go to the NC-TOPPS website (<http://www.ncdhhs.gov/providers/provider-info/mental-health/nc-treatment-outcomes-and-program-performance-system>) and click on “NC-TOPPS 2.1 Website.” The user will log in with their most recent username and password, go to the “User Tools” tab and select “Manage Provider Agencies.” The QP will then select the appropriate options to add or change their information. Once the information is submitted, if the QP has added an agency(ies), an email will automatically be sent to the user as well as the superuser(s) for the selected provider agency(ies). The superuser at each provider agency is responsible for approving the user to give them access to the NC-TOPPS system.

I can not log in to NC-TOPPS, what do I do?

Users who do not remember their password will need to use the Password Recovery Tool by going to the NC-TOPPS website (<http://www.ncdhhs.gov/providers/provider-info/mental-health/nc-treatment-outcomes-and-program-performance-system>), click on “NC-TOPPS 2.1 Website,” and then select “Recover Password.” The user will need to contact the NC-TOPPS Help Desk (nctopps@ncsu.edu) if they can not remember their username or can not recover their password because their current email address is not in the system.

What is a superuser and how do I become one?

Superusers are individuals who have oversight responsibilities for their Tailored Plan or provider agency. Every provider agency is required to have a superuser. Individuals needing to become superusers should follow the same process for enrolling in the web-based system as a user. Once they have been approved for the agency, they should contact the NC-TOPPS Help Desk (nctopps@ncsu.edu) to request a Superuser Enrollment Form. The form will need to provide information verifying that they have authorization. Information needed for this authorization will include supervisor name, title, phone number, and email address.

What is a Data Entry User (DEU)?

A Data Entry User (DEU) has the ability to enter interviews for other QPs located in their provider agency, if needed. The DEU has his/her own login and will be prompted to select which QP they are entering the NC-TOPPS under. If a DEU is entering an interview online for a QP, a signature is required to be on the printable version of the interview by the QP responsible for the consumer’s NC-TOPPS. The signature certifies that the QP conducted and completed the interview. The signed printable version must be placed in the consumer’s chart along with the summary page generated by the online system.

Why will the system not let me do an Initial for my consumer?

There are a couple of reasons why you may not be able to do an Initial interview. Your Tailored Plan should be able to help determine why you can not do an Initial. Most of the time, the reason is because the consumer is currently under a different provider agency with NC-TOPPS. Depending on the situation, the Tailored Plan can either transfer the consumer to your provider agency or get the other provider agency to do an Episode Completion so you can do an Initial. If the Tailored Plan checks and the consumer is not currently open with a different provider agency, another reason why an Initial would not be able to be completed is if the previous episode of care for a consumer was entered with a different DOB. If you are still having problems, you should contact the NC-TOPPS Help Desk: nctopps@ncsu.edu

If an Update is missed and the next Update is now due, do I still need to complete the Update that was missed?

The NC-TOPPS system will not allow you to submit an Update that has been missed. You should only complete the Update that is currently due.

Can I complete an Update if I was not the last QP to enter an interview for the consumer?

If the previous QP entered the interview for the consumer at the same provider agency address and Tailored Plan the current QP is registered with, the current QP can complete an Update for that consumer.

Can I change information that has already been submitted?

Once an interview has been submitted, you can only change incorrect information by sending a request to the NC-TOPPS Help Desk: nctopps@ncsu.edu

What should I do if I don't have access to a computer when interviewing the consumer?

If the QP provides services at a location where internet access is not available, QPs may use printable versions to gather NC-TOPPS information on site. This information must then be entered into the web-based system by the QP or by the Data Entry User (See "What is a Data Entry User (DEU)?" above). Printable versions are available on the NC-TOPPS website (<http://www.ncdhhs.gov/providers/provider-info/mental-health/nc-treatment-outcomes-and-program-performance-system>) by clicking on "Locate what you need to get started using NC-TOPPS." You can then select the appropriate link for the Printable Interview Forms you need. **Consumers should not complete the online or paper interviews. The QP is expected to complete an in-person interview with the consumer.**

Are NC-TOPPS interviews required to go in the consumer's record?

Yes, all NC-TOPPS interviews are required to go in the consumer's record.

I lost or forgot to print out the NC-TOPPS interview. Can I print/reprint the interview?

Yes, you can access the interviews by logging in, selecting your location, and then going to the Reports tab and Interview Search. You can enter the Consumer Record Number that you need to print and select 'Find Interviews.' A Print button will appear next to interviews that have been submitted for the consumer.

How do I find an interview I started, but did not complete or submit?

You can access the interview by logging in, selecting your location, and then going to Website Submission and Manage Episodes of Care. You will find the interview you started under the box that has all of the Incomplete Interviews. You will select the row of the consumer and the consumer's episode of care will appear in the lower box titled: "List of Interviews for Selected Consumer." You can select Resume to finish and submit the interview.

How can I get access to data and reports?

The “Outcomes At a Glance 2.0” online dashboard system allows any public user to view and print graphs showing NC-TOPPS outcomes measures for particular age/disability groups for Tailored Plans and provider agencies. The dashboard can be accessed from the NC-TOPPS website (<https://www.ncdhhs.gov/providers/provider-info/mental-health/nc-treatment-outcomes-and-program-performance-system>) and clicking on “The NC-TOPPS Outcomes At a Glance 2.0 dashboard.”

Superusers at provider agencies and Tailored Plans have access to a Simple Query Report that will generate graphs for questions that are asked in the NC-TOPPS Interviews. Superusers will be able to select criteria such as location(s), date range, age/disability group, interview type, and service (optional) to generate this report. Reports can be printed in chart form and/or export the CSV file to Excel for further analysis.

Superusers at provider agencies and Tailored Plans also have access to the Advanced Query Report to generate cross-tabular reports for questions in the NC-TOPPS interviews by selecting criteria such as location(s), date range, age/disability group, interview type, service (optional) and up to 3 variables. The Advanced Query Report can be used to support outcome requirements for accreditation and monitor service outcomes. Reports can be exported as a CSV file to Excel for further analysis and/or printing.

The NC-TOPPS Individual Report shows the progress of a particular consumer from the Initial Interview at the beginning of the consumer’s episode of care and the two most recent Updates submitted. This report can be accessed by superusers and registered QPs.

The Interview Method Report shows how sections of the interviews are being gathered. Section II of the interview can be gathered with the consumer in person, by telephone, and/or with records and notes. Section III of the interview is only gathered by an in person or telephone interview.

Can I get raw data for my Tailored Plan or provider agency?

Yes, you should contact the NC-TOPPS Help Desk, nctopps@ncsu.edu, if you would like to receive raw data.