

Substance Abuse Expert (SAE) Assessment: What to expect?

Who is the SAE Expert?

The Substance Abuse Expert (SAE) is a person whom you will meet with as part of the SAE Assessment.

The SAE conducting the assessment:

- may be a licensed or certified professional: licensed physician, registered psychologist, or a certified, registered, or licensed social worker and is able to diagnose as outlined in their provincially regulated health professional guidelines;
- has met the educational, experiential, & competency criteria to be in good standing with a professional agency that governs their respective discipline;
- has received training specific to the SAE roles and responsibilities, has knowledge of and clinical experience in the diagnosis and treatment of substance abuse-related disorders, and has an understanding of the safety implications of substance use and abuse.

The responsibility and function of the SAE is:

- to apply quality & diligence in the assessment process in order to protect your safety & the workplace's safety & health;
- not an advocate for any stakeholder in the process beyond the mandate of the assessment, rather they are to remain impartial.

What can you expect during the assessment?

- Please arrive 15 minutes early for your appointment to complete the required paperwork prior to the start of your appointment, including consent for the assessment and a release form for us to share the results of your assessment. Without the signed consent and release, we will not be able to proceed with the assessment.
- You will be asked to turn off or power down all electronic devices. The SAE will ask you to do this in their presence. The SAE Assessment will not proceed if you do not agree to this.
- Your assessment appointment will be scheduled for 2 hours. The clinical interview will cover the reason for referral and review your functioning in various areas of your life. The face to face interview includes assessment of all the relevant factors that are known to be essential in the evaluation of individuals with possible substance use disorders.
- You will be asked to complete a pen and paper questionnaire. This questionnaire can take anywhere between 10 to 30 minutes to complete. There are no right or wrong answers; please answer **all** the questions to the best of your ability.
- The SAE will schedule a date and time for a 15 minute telephone appointment following the assessment. This debrief call will review the results of the assessment and the treatment recommendations.

What to expect after the assessment appointment?

Upon leaving the SAE's office, the following occurs:

- Pen and paper questionnaire that you completed will be reviewed and the final SAE report will be prepared
- SAE will consult with a Homewood Health Clinical Manager
- A report will be written; listing recommendations about your return to work based on the results of the assessment and sent to those individuals identified on your signed Release of Information.

Please note: Our standards stipulate the report will be forwarded within 5 business days (end of day) after your assessment appointment. There are instances when the report may not be ready to be sent due to additional information we require or additional consultations. In this instance, the assessor will call you at the scheduled debrief time and advise you that the report may be delayed up to an additional 5 business days. These occurrences are not common but they do occur.

- The SAE assessment will provide a clear statement of the assessment's outcome (the diagnosis), along with treatment recommendations. These recommendations typically involve treatment options such as education, counselling or inpatient treatment services, follow- up testing, and general conditions of post assessment care.
- Before the final assessment report is released, the assessor will debrief you on the results of the assessment and the treatment recommendations (scheduled date/time established at the time of the SAE Assessment).
 - We ask that you be available at that time.
 - Please have a pen and paper handy to take down the exact information.
 - If you do not answer, the SAE will attempt to call you several *times within a* span of 1-2 hours. If there is no answer, the SAE will leave you a voice mail message only if you previously indicated that it is acceptable. The message will outline the attempts made to reach you and that the report will be sent to those individuals identified on your signed Release of Information.
 - It is unlikely that the assessor will be available outside the prearranged debrief time. In the event you missed the scheduled debrief, please do not contact the assessor directly. You will need to call the Homewood Health Client Services Center at 1-877-822-0727 and request a callback to discuss the assessment results with either the SAE or a Clinical Manager.
- The final report will be released to your case manager, other designates and the individual assessed (if they requested a copy with the diagnosis and treatment recommendations). This includes any recommendations arising from the results of the assessment, for reasonable accommodations and/or treatment to assist you to either remain at work, or to return to work.
- If you have any questions before, during, or after the assessment process, please contact the Homewood Health's Assessment Intake Team at 1-877-822-0727. They will connect you with the most appropriate person to answer your questions.

What to expect after I have been debriefed and the SAE report has been sent to my case manager and/or other designates?

Once you receive the assessment results and the recommended treatment, there are several things that you are required to do in order to get back to work quickly:

- Seek out the resources that you need to meet the recommendations that the SAE outlined during the debriefing phone call.
- If you are engaged in case management, please contact them to review next steps. Note: they will likely have the SAE report only 24-48 hours after your debrief call with me.
- If you are not engaged in case management, contact the Homewood Health Client Service Centre at 1-877-822-0727 to schedule your recommended substance use counseling sessions (if this was the treatment recommendation).

We hope this information is helpful to you. If you have any additional questions regarding the SAE process, please contact Homewood Health's Assessment Intake Team at 1-877-822-0727. They will answer your question or connect you with the appropriate person to answer your questions.

Thank you,

Homewood Health SAE Assessment Team