New Jersey Department of Human Services  
Division of Aging Services  
Office of Community Choice Options

**EARC-PAS (Enhanced At Risk Criteria PAS) Screening Tool**  
**HOSPITAL PROCESS**

**Background:** The Enhanced at Risk Criteria Pre-Admission Screening Tool process (EARC-PAS) is the process utilized for individuals currently in an acute, non-psychiatric hospital setting who are seeking admittance to a Medicaid Certified Nursing Facility, or Special Care Nursing Facility Ventilator Unit with an expectation of billing NJ Medicaid for all or part of the stay. The EARC-PAS Screening Tool is valid for 10 days and **authorizes up to 90 days of NF Services.** An EARC-PAS conducted **February 2015 or later** is valid for one hospital admission only. An EARC-PAS prior to **February 2015** is valid as long as no break in service from original admitting NF.

**Purpose:** To provide information and instruction to Hospital Certified EARC-PAS Screeners on the EARC-PAS Screening Tool process, including explicit eligibility guidelines to ensure appropriate identification and completion of process.

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**I. Eligibility Guidelines for the EARC-PAS Screening Tool**

- **Target Population:**
  The EARC-PAS Screening Tool process is indicated for individuals entering a Medicaid Certified Nursing Facility with an expectation of billing Medicaid for all or part of their stay, who are:
  - Currently Medicaid eligible but not yet enrolled in NJ FamilyCare with an MCO
    - MCO enrollment cannot be initiated during hospitalization, deferred to 1st of month after D/C.; or
  - Potentially Medicaid eligible within 180 days; and/or
  - Requiring Special Care Nursing Facility Ventilator Unit (SCNF-Vent) admission.

- **Exclusions (individuals who do not qualify for the EARC-PAS Screening Tool process and will require an on-site OCCO PAS):**
  - Individuals who are being referred for placement in a Special Care Nursing Facility (SCNF) AIDS, Behavioral, Huntington’s, Medically Fragile, Neurologically Impaired, Pediatric and TBI
  - Individuals who are in a Psychiatric Hospital, Psychiatric Acute Care Unit or Long Term Acute Care Unit (L-TAC)
  - Individuals who are seeking Home and Community Based Waivers
  - Individuals who are not in a NJ hospital

- **Other Exclusions (no EARC-PAS or on-site OCCO PAS indicated):**
  - Individuals who would not qualify for Medicaid within 6 months of NF placement are considered private pay and are not eligible for the EARC-PAS Screening tool process or conventional on-site OCCO PAS.
  - Individuals enrolled in NJ FamilyCare with a Managed Care Organization (MCO) upon entrance to hospital.
    - Authorization for any NF placement is to be provided by the MCO.
II. Hospital Process

1. Certified EARC-PAS Screener identifies individuals eligible for EARC-PAS and completes the EARC-PAS Screening Tool (LTC-34) then forwards to the appropriate Regional OCCO office for review:
   - Northern Regional Office of Community Choice Options (NRO OCCO):
     Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Middlesex, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union and Warren Counties
     Phone: (732)777-4650; Fax: (732)-777-4681
   - Southern Regional Office of Community Choice Options (SRO OCCO):
     Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Mercer, Monmouth, Ocean and Salem Counties
     Phone: (609)704-6050; Fax: (609)704-6055

***Note: If PASRR Level I (form LTC-26) is positive, the submitted EARC-PAS Screening Tool must be accompanied by the PASRR Level I form and Level II determination.***

***Note: The most current forms required for this process can be found at: http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/doas/home/forms.html.***

2. The EARC-PAS Screening Tool is reviewed by the OCCO Reviewer within 24 hours of receipt.

3. After receipt of the EARC-PAS Screening tool by OCCO, if it is found that the individual is excluded from the EARC-PAS Screening Tool process, or if a valid PAS is already on file, designated OCCO Staff will notify the Hospital Certified EARC-PAS Screener by utilizing the Provider Notification form.

4. The OCCO reviewer will complete the Authorization section to indicate the EARC-PAS Screening Tool determination:
   **A. Authorized:**
   - The OCCO Reviewer will fax the completed EARC-PAS Screening Tool to the Hospital’s EARC-PAS Certified Screener who will then proceed with the patient’s discharge to the NF (Nursing Facility).
   - The EARC-PAS Screener must ensure that the EARC-PAS Screening Tool authorization is forwarded to the NF, including other required documents (PASRR Level I and Level II as applicable).
   - The EARC-PAS Screening Tool is valid for 10 days and authorizes up to 90 days of NF Services.
   - If discharge does not occur within 10 days of authorization, a new EARC-PAS must be completed.

   **B. Not Authorized:**
   - The OCCO Reviewer will fax the completed EARC-PAS Screening Tool to the Hospital’s Certified EARC-PAS Screener.
   - Designated OCCO staff will assign the referral to an OCCO Assessor who will complete the on-site PAS within 3 business days of receipt of original EARC-PAS Screening Tool request.
The patient is not to be discharged from the Hospital to a Medicaid certified NF until an on-site PAS is conducted by an OCCO Assessor and approved for NJ Nursing Facility Level of Care.

a) If Approved, the OCCO Assessor will issue an Approval Letter. The patient can be transferred to a NF with required documentation, including the Approval letter and PASRR Level I and Level II as applicable.

b) If Denied, the OCCO Assessor will issue a Denial letter and explain the appeal process, as well as discuss alternatives to NF placement. The Hospital Discharge Planner shall provide Options Counseling on placement alternatives and facilitate discharge planning to an appropriate setting.

NOTE: NF Placement is contingent upon completion of PASRR Level I and Level II if indicated. If the individual requires Specialized Services, he/she cannot be transferred to a Medicaid Certified Nursing Facility.