



Complex Behavior Collaborative (CBC) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

What is the Complex Behavior Collaborative (CBC)?

The Complex Behavior Collaborative (CBC) is a statewide consultation program administered by the Alaska Division of Behavioral Health. The CBC provides behavioral consultation, assessment, training, coaching, and technical assistance to individuals with complex behavioral needs and the people who support them.

The CBC works with agencies, families, providers, and other members of an individual's support team to develop practical and effective strategies that improve quality of life, increase stability, reduce behavioral crises, and build the knowledge and skills needed to support the individual successfully.

CBC is a collaborative consultation service. The goal is to strengthen the skills and capacity of the existing support team so that the team can continue to support the individual successfully after CBC services end.

What does the CBC do?

The CBC's overall goal is to improve an individual's quality of life while building the capacity, confidence, and expertise of the people and agencies supporting that individual.

CBC consultants may:

- Learn about the individual's strengths, needs, preferences, history, and environment
- Assess complex or challenging behaviors
- Identify factors that may contribute to challenging behaviors
- Develop individualized recommendations and behavior support strategies
- Provide training, coaching, and technical assistance
- Assist teams with implementation of recommended strategies
- Monitor progress and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions
- Make adjustments to recommendations when appropriate
- Help the team develop strategies that can be maintained after CBC services end

CBC strives to provide individualized, culturally respectful, and responsive consultation that considers each person's preferences, strengths, history, community, environment, and support needs.

CBC Eligibility

What individuals may qualify for CBC services?

Individuals referred to the CBC have complex behavioral support needs that may require specialized consultation beyond the typical scope of services available through their existing support team.

In addition to complex behavioral needs, an individual may also experience one or more of the following:

- Intellectual and developmental disability
- Serious or chronic mental illness
- Alzheimer's disease or a related dementia
- Traumatic brain injury
- Chronic alcoholism with cognitive impairment
- Other conditions that result in complex behavioral support needs

What else may make an individual appropriate for CBC services?

An individual may be considered for CBC services when they:

- Demonstrate significant difficulty functioning in the community beyond what would be expected based on their disability or condition
- Are at risk for placement at a higher level of care within Alaska
- Are at risk for psychiatric hospitalization or other institutional placement
- Are at risk for placement in an out-of-state facility
- Frequently utilize high-end resources such as emergency rooms, acute psychiatric care, substance use programs, or correctional services
- Require behavioral interventions or support strategies that are outside the current skill set of the staff responsible for supporting the individual
- Present a significant risk of harm to themselves or others without additional intervention

Eligibility and appropriateness for CBC services are determined through the referral and review process.

Who can refer an individual for CBC services?

A referral must be submitted through an agency currently serving the individual. A case manager, supervisor, or other appropriate staff member may complete the referral; however, the referral must ultimately be approved and signed by the agency director or an authorized decision-making designee.

Agency and Team Commitment

What is the agency's commitment when receiving CBC services?

Once a referral is assigned by the Division of Behavioral Health to a CBC consultant, the agency and support team become active partners in the CBC process.

The agency and support team are expected to:

1. Continue providing appropriate services and supports to the individual throughout CBC involvement.

2. Include the CBC consultant in relevant treatment planning and behavioral support meetings.
3. Communicate significant changes in behavior or circumstances, including escalation in aggression, police intervention, hospitalization, or other critical incidents.
4. Incorporate applicable CBC recommendations into the individual's existing Plan of Care, Treatment Plan, or other appropriate support plans.
5. Make staff available to participate in training and coaching.
6. Implement agreed-upon strategies consistently.
7. Provide the CBC consultant with relevant clinical, behavioral, and other documentation as needed.
8. Collect behavioral data as requested to assist with assessment and evaluation.
9. Provide feedback regarding what is and is not working.
10. Complete surveys or other requested activities used to evaluate CBC outcomes and services.

CBC recommendations are intended to complement and support existing care plans, support plans, care coordination, and provider oversight. CBC consultation does not replace the responsibilities of the individual's existing providers, care coordinators, guardians, or other members of the support team.

Is the agency required to continue serving the individual while CBC is involved?

Yes. CBC is a consultation service and does not replace the individual's existing services or providers. The agency remains responsible for providing appropriate services and supports while CBC consultation is occurring.

The agency should communicate with the CBC consultant if changes in the individual's circumstances affect its ability to continue providing services.

The CBC Team

Will the CBC consultant join the team working with the individual?

Yes. The CBC consultant becomes a member of the individual's support team and works in partnership with the agency and other team members.

Each team will look different depending on the individual's needs, the services being provided, and the people involved in the individual's life.

Will the CBC consultant coordinate the team?

No. The primary agency remains responsible for coordinating the individual's support team.

This includes responsibilities such as:

- Scheduling team meetings
- Communicating with team members
- Ensuring appropriate team members are invited and able to participate
- Coordinating implementation of agreed-upon strategies
- Following up on assigned responsibilities

The CBC consultant works with the designated team lead to support:

1. Team meetings
2. Assessment of complex behaviors

3. Development of behavior support strategies
4. Training and coaching
5. Ongoing monitoring and evaluation

Why doesn't the CBC consultant coordinate the team?

The CBC is designed to build capacity within the agency and support team. Having the agency maintain responsibility for team coordination helps ensure that knowledge and experience remain within the agency after the CBC consultant transitions off the case.

The long-term goal is for the agency and support team to have the skills and confidence necessary to continue supporting the individual independently.

Who should be on the team?

The team should include people who are directly involved in supporting the individual and those who have a role in decision-making or care planning.

Depending on the individual, this may include:

- Direct support professionals
- Residential providers
- Case managers
- Care coordinators
- Family members
- Guardians
- Agency administrators
- Agency supervisors
- Teachers and school personnel
- State staff
- Other service providers
- Clinicians
- Psychiatrists
- Physicians
- Speech-language pathologists
- Other professionals involved in the individual's care

Not every person will participate in every meeting. The team should determine who needs to be involved based on the individual's needs and the purpose of each meeting.

Why should agency administrators or supervisors be involved?

Support from agency leadership is important to the success and sustainability of CBC services.

Administrators and supervisors can help ensure that:

- Staff have the time and resources needed to participate
- Training can be implemented
- Recommendations are supported by the agency
- Behavioral strategies can be incorporated into regular practice
- Skills developed through CBC consultation remain within the agency after CBC services end

Meetings and Communication

How often does the team meet?

There is no standard meeting schedule for every CBC case. Each team will establish a schedule based on the individual's needs and the stage of consultation.

Meetings may occur more frequently during the assessment and initial implementation phases and may become less frequent as the team gains confidence and the individual makes progress.

What is expected of team members?

Team members are encouraged to:

- Attend scheduled meetings whenever possible
- Participate in training and coaching
- Implement agreed-upon strategies consistently
- Communicate changes or concerns promptly
- Provide honest feedback
- Ask questions when clarification is needed
- Share information that may affect the individual's progress
- Work together toward common goals

Successful outcomes require collaboration, consistency, and open communication.

Assessment and Behavior Support

What is a “multi-component plan”?

The development of a behavior support plan is a collaborative process between the CBC consultant and the support team.

The process may include:

1. Assessment of complex behaviors
2. Identification of factors contributing to the behaviors
3. Development of individualized behavior support strategies
4. Development of a training plan for staff and caregivers
5. Implementation of recommended strategies
6. Ongoing evaluation of progress
7. Modification of strategies based on the information collected

CBC consultants may also work with other environments that are part of the individual's life, such as home, school, work, residential settings, and other partner agencies.

Coordination across environments can be an important part of improving the individual's overall quality of life.

What new skills will the team learn?

Each CBC case is different. Consultants are matched with agencies and individuals based on the needs of the case and the consultant's areas of expertise.

Training and coaching may include:

- Understanding the function of behavior
- Preventing and responding to challenging behaviors
- Implementing behavior support strategies
- Teaching replacement skills
- Collecting and interpreting behavioral data
- Environmental and antecedent strategies
- Communication strategies
- Reinforcement strategies
- Other behavioral support techniques appropriate to the individual

The CBC may provide training to individual staff members, the entire support team, or larger groups within an agency when appropriate.

Do CBC recommendations replace the individual's existing care or support plans?

No. CBC recommendations are intended to complement existing plans and services.

The CBC consultant does not assume responsibility for the individual's overall care coordination, medical treatment, case management, or provider oversight. Recommendations should be incorporated into existing plans and coordinated with the appropriate members of the individual's support team.

Data Collection and Documentation

How is CBC documentation different?

CBC consultants may request additional information or behavioral data to better understand the individual's behavior and determine whether interventions are effective.

Information may include:

- Interviews
- Direct observation
- Critical incident reports
- Behavioral data
- Existing clinical documentation
- Progress notes
- Other relevant information

CBC consultants will strive to use information and data that agencies already collect whenever possible.

Data is used to:

- Understand the function and patterns of behavior
- Develop individualized behavior support strategies
- Monitor progress
- Determine whether interventions are effective
- Identify when changes to the plan may be needed
- Support transition and discharge planning

Are there additional staffing requirements for CBC services?

CBC does not provide direct staffing or direct care.

The intent of CBC consultation is to increase the knowledge, confidence, and skills of existing staff so they are better able to support the individual.

Agencies should make appropriate staff available to participate in training, coaching, meetings, and implementation of recommended strategies.

Crisis Response

Does the CBC provide crisis or emergency services?

No. CBC is a consultation and capacity-building service and is not an emergency or crisis response program.

If a behavioral crisis occurs, follow your agency's designated crisis procedures and contact emergency services when appropriate.

The support team should communicate significant behavioral changes, hospitalizations, police involvement, or other critical incidents to the CBC consultant as soon as reasonably possible.

Time-Limited Services and Transition

How long do CBC services last?

CBC is intended to be a time-limited service.

While every case is unique, CBC services are generally expected to last approximately **9 to 12 months**. The actual length of services depends on the individual's needs, progress toward goals, participation of the support team, and readiness for transition.

How do we know when CBC services should be closed?

Transition planning begins at the start of CBC services.

The CBC consultant and support team will identify goals and indicators of progress and will regularly evaluate whether continued consultation is needed.

CBC services may be considered for closure when:

- Behavioral goals have been substantially addressed
- The support team has demonstrated the ability to implement recommended strategies
- Staff have received necessary training and coaching
- The team can maintain progress without ongoing CBC involvement
- The individual's needs can be appropriately managed through existing supports

As services conclude, the consultant will review progress, reinforce recommendations, provide final training or coaching when appropriate, and help the team develop a plan for maintaining progress after CBC involvement ends.

Will the CBC consultant remain available after the case closes?

CBC is not a permanent or ongoing service. The support team should be prepared to continue implementing strategies independently after closure.

If new concerns arise after discharge, the team should utilize its existing support resources and may consult with the CBC Program regarding whether a new referral or additional assistance is appropriate.

Benefits Beyond the Individual Case

Are there agency-wide benefits to CBC, such as training?

Yes. When appropriate, CBC consultants may provide agency-wide training or other technical assistance.

Training topics may include behavioral intervention skills, understanding challenging behaviors, implementation of behavior support strategies, data collection, and other areas within the consultant's expertise.

The goal is to use CBC consultation as an opportunity to strengthen the agency's overall capacity, not only to support the individual currently receiving CBC services, but also to increase staff knowledge and skills that may benefit other individuals served by the agency.

Why is building agency capacity important?

CBC is designed to create lasting improvements that extend beyond a single case.

By training and coaching staff, involving agency leadership, and helping teams develop practical behavioral support skills, CBC seeks to strengthen the agency's ability to support individuals with complex behavioral needs in the future.

Family and Support Team Participation

What role do families, guardians, and other support team members play?

Families, guardians, providers, and other support team members are essential partners in the CBC process.

Team members are encouraged to:

- Share information about the individual's history, strengths, preferences, and needs

- Be open and honest about concerns and challenges
- Participate in meetings and training whenever possible
- Practice recommended strategies consistently
- Communicate changes in circumstances or behavior
- Ask questions and seek clarification
- Provide feedback about what is and is not working
- Celebrate progress, including small successes

Meaningful behavior change takes time, patience, and consistency. Everyone's participation contributes to the individual's success.

What if the team disagrees with a CBC recommendation?

Open discussion and feedback are encouraged. CBC recommendations are intended to be developed collaboratively with the support team.

If a team member has concerns about a recommendation, those concerns should be communicated to the CBC consultant so they can be discussed and, when appropriate, the recommendation can be modified.

The CBC consultant's role is to provide specialized behavioral consultation and support, not to replace the decision-making responsibilities of the individual's existing providers, guardians, care coordinators, or other authorized team members.

What Can You Expect From the CBC?

The CBC team is committed to:

- Listening to the individual and support team
- Learning about the individual's strengths, preferences, and needs
- Providing individualized and practical recommendations
- Offering training, coaching, and technical assistance
- Communicating openly with the support team
- Monitoring progress and adjusting recommendations when appropriate
- Supporting the team in developing long-term skills and capacity
- Preparing the team for a successful transition from CBC services

The goal of CBC is not simply to address a challenging behavior. The goal is to help the individual achieve a better quality of life while ensuring that the people supporting them have the knowledge, skills, and confidence necessary to provide effective and sustainable support.

The most successful CBC cases are built on collaboration, open communication, consistency, and a shared commitment to improving the individual's quality of life.

Together, we can create positive, meaningful, and sustainable change.

Contacting the CBC

How can I contact the CBC Program if we have questions about CBC services?

If you would like to speak with the CBC Program Manager, you may contact:

Eric Talbert, CBC Program Manager

Email: eric.talbert@alaska.gov

Phone: 907-269-3626

