Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ) on Transition from Expiring to New CSAT GPRA Tool

CSAT FAQ on transition to new GPRA Tool

TIMELINE FOR THE NEW GPRA TOOL

1. **Please provide any SAMHSA recommendations on how to transition an agency to the new GPRA Tool.**

Grantees will continue to use the current expiring GPRA Tool until January 20, 2023, and then enter in all data collected using the expiring tool into SPARS by February 15, 2023 (this includes those who are currently using the batch upload process). No interviews using the expiring GPRA Tool should occur after January 20, 2023.

On January 21, 2023, all CSAT grantees should begin collecting data using the new GPRA Tool. Grantees should hold onto data collected using the new tool (e.g., keep paper copies in a secure location; securely save data collected in local systems) until January 30, 2023, when SPARS becomes available for data entry using the new GPRA Tool. Interviews from January 21, 2023, and forward will only be accepted into SPARS using the new tool.

A new CSV-based batch upload method will be available to all CSAT grantees starting on February 16, 2023, to use with the new GPRA Tool. This new method offers a simpler more accessible way for grantees to upload multiple GPRA records at once into SPARS. This may be helpful for grantees who have large amounts of GPRA data or who collect GPRA information in local databases. It's a good time to consider this option and its potential to save time with data entry. Related information, training, and resources will be released in December and January 2023. CSAT recommends grantees view the following resources to aid in transition:

New CSAT GPRA Tool (paper version)

- English version of CSAT GPRA Tool: https://spars.samhsa.gov/content/new-1212023-csat-gpra-client-outcome-measures-tool
- Spanish version of CSAT GPRA Tool: https://spars.samhsa.gov/content/new-1212023-csat-gpra-client-outcome-measures-tool-spanish

Crosswalk

- CSAT GPRA Crosswalk - Expiring Tool (1/20/2023) to New Tool (as of 1/21/2023): https://spars.samhsa.gov/content/csat-gpra-crosswalk-expiring-tool-1202023-new-tool-1212023

Codebook

- CSAT GPRA Client Outcome Measures Codebook: https://spars.samhsa.gov/content/new-1212023-csat-gpra-client-outcome-measures-codebook

Batch Upload

- CSAT GPRA Client Outcome Measures CSV (comma separated values) template: https://spars.samhsa.gov/content/csat-gpra-csv-upload-template

- CSAT GPRA Client Outcome Measures Services Document XML Schema: https://spars.samhsa.gov/content/csat-gpra-client-outcome-measures-services-document-xml-schema

Guides and Information Sheets

- CSAT Question by Question Guide: https://spars.samhsa.gov/content/new-1212023-csat-gpra-client-outcome-measures-qxq-guide

- CSAT Quick Reference Guide: https://spars.samhsa.gov/content/csat-quick-reference-guide

- CSAT GPRA Client Outcome Measures Tool: Section H Information Sheet: https://spars.samhsa.gov/content/new-1212023-csat-gpra-client-outcome-measures-tool-section-h-information-sheet

Trainings (SPARS login account required)

- SPARS Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) Client Outcome Measures for Discretionary Programs Tool Training from October 2022: https://spars-lc.samhsa.gov/course/view.php?id=234

- CSAT GPRA Client Outcome Measures for Discretionary Programs Tool: Section H. Program-Specific Questions Training Slides – January 2023: https://spars-lc.samhsa.gov/course/view.php?id=239

2. Are grantees able to use the new GPRA Tool prior to January 21, 2023?

Grantees should not use the new GPRA Tool prior to January 21, 2023. All grantees should continue to use the expiring GPRA Tool for data collection through January 20, 2023

3. We are currently completing follow-up interviews with clients who completed an intake using the old GPRA Tool. Which version of the GPRA Tool should we use going forward?

Grantees should continue to use the expiring GPRA Tool to collect all client-level data (baseline/intake, follow-up, and discharge) through January 20, 2023. On January 21, 2023, all CSAT grantees should use the new GPRA Tool to collect baseline/intake, follow-up, and discharge data.

4. Regarding the transition to the new GPRA Tool, will withholding the data (from 1/21/23 - 1/30/23) affect our coverage rate?

Intakes will be incorporated into the rate calculation once they are submitted in SPARS.

While there will be a lag in these numbers being reflected in the Coverage Rate calculation, SAMHSA is aware and allowing for this during this transition period. Starting on January 30, 2023, as grantees start submitting their new tool data, the Coverage Rate will update to include data as it is entered.

5. Is it required to use paper copies from January 21, 2023, to January 30, 2023?

Grantees must use the paper tool from January 21, 2023, to January 30, 2023, as opposed to entering directly into SPARS. The paper copy can be used in any form (e.g., printed out, programmed into electronic data collection software), as long as the data are saved securely. The new GPRA Tool will not be able to be completed or entered in SPARS until January 30, 2023.

6. When is the last day we can enter data into SPARS for the expiring GPRA Tool?

For interview dates of January 20, 2023, and prior, grantees will have until February 15, 2023, to enter any outstanding data collected with the expiring GPRA Tool into SPARS. This includes manual data entry and those who are currently using the XML-based batch upload process.

7. Will we be able to enter new GPRA Tool data on January 21, 2023, or do we wait until January 30, 2023?

Grantees should begin collecting data using the new GPRA Tool beginning on January 21, 2023. Grantees will not be able to enter any new GPRA data into SPARS until January 30, 2023, when the system updates. Please note, the CSAT area of SPARS will be unavailable to users the weekend of January 28 and 29, 2023, while the system changes for the new tool are implemented. Data from the expiring GPRA Tool can be uploaded into SPARS after the new tool goes live. However, only interviews which occurred on or before January 20, 2023, will be accepted into SPARS.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

8. Where can I access the new GPRA Tool?

The new GPRA Tool (English and Spanish versions) is available on the SPARS website.

9. Will national outcome measures change to be in line with the new tool?

Several national outcome measures will be modified as a result of the new tool. CSAT will provide additional guidance regarding how the national outcome measures will be calculated based on revisions to the tool.

10. For new and approved CSAT grantees, will SPARS be able to create new award grants for data entry, regarding the transition from the expiring tool to the new GPRA Tool?

The SPARS team is in the process of loading the newly awarded grants in SPARS. Project Directors will receive information from the SPARS Help Desk once the grant and the Project Director's user account have been set up in SPARS. Please contact the SPARS Help Desk with any questions.

11. We made several recommendations surrounding the demographics language, particularly related to gender identity and sexual orientation, that were not incorporated into the new tool. Why?

CSAT made a number of modifications to the tool as a result of recommendations received. CSAT welcomes ongoing feedback the tool and will use this feedback to help inform future updates of the GPRA Tool.

12. Does the new GPRA Tool have federal OMB approval?

Yes, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has approved the new GPRA Tool. The OMB number is 0930-0208.

13. Why was Section F, Violence and Trauma, removed from the new GPRA Tool? Is the new GPRA Tool trauma-informed?

CSAT revised the new GPRA Tool questions so they are trauma-informed and address concerns about the collection of sensitive data. Questions that were deemed insensitive or traumatizing were removed. Many of the questions that collect data of a sensitive nature were revised and moved to Section H: Program-Specific Questions. This move limits the number of clients that are required to answer these questions to clients in programs where the collection of this information is relevant.

14. Which questions in the new GPRA were reworded to avoid stigmatization?

Based on public comments on the expiring tool, questions E2, E3, and E4 were removed as they were viewed as being self-incriminating and potentially stigmatizing. Also, questions involving child custody were moved to Section H to ensure that only individuals that are in programs designed to specifically target those issues were asked those questions.

15. Were any Trans-identifying individuals involved in the question modifications made to Section A. Demographics?

The GPRA tool revisions underwent an extensive review process including a total of 90 days of public comment. CSAT made a number of modifications to the tool as a result of recommendations received. CSAT welcomes ongoing feedback the tool and will use this feedback to help inform future updates of the GPRA Tool.

NEW GPRA TOOL QUESTIONS

16. Does the new GPRA Tool still ask for the designation of primary, secondary, and tertiary behavioral diagnoses?

 No. The new tool's Section B asks the client about substance use disorder and mental health diagnoses. Primary, secondary, and tertiary specifications are no longer included.

17. If a client doesn't know the answer to a question, is it skipped?

If "Not Applicable" or "Don't Know" are not options on the question being asked, the interviewer can skip the question and write, "Missing" on the paper version. The person entering in the data into SPARS will enter "Missing." The "Not Applicable" and "Don't Know" options haven't been removed from every question. If "Not Applicable" or "Don't Know" are answer options, they should be used instead of skipping the question.

18. Has the average time to complete the survey changed?

The average estimation of time to complete the GPRA Tool is 36 minutes. This remains unchanged from the expiring version of the tool.

19. In Section B. Substance Use and Planned Services, was Fentanyl added into the "Substances used" category?

Yes, Fentanyl is included in Section B, Question 1.

20. Offender Reentry Program grantees were previously advised to ask "within the past 90 days" for the Section B drug use questions. Is that still the case or should these grantees use "within the past 30 days?"

Offender Reentry Programs should continue to reference 90 days for Section B, Question 1 of the new GPRA Tool.

21. Should lowercase or sentence case answers be read to clients, like the old tool?

 Grantees should read lowercase or sentence case answers to clients. If answers are all capitalized, the answers should not be read, and the question should be asked as an open-ended question. The new GPRA Tool includes interviewer directions for exceptions to this rule.

22. Will Section A in the new tool be different for SBIRT grantees compared to other grantees?

Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) grantees will follow the directions in Section A. Record Management and Demographics as written on the GPRA Tool. SBIRT-specific questions were moved to Section H. Program-Specific Questions (H6). For more information on Section H. Program-Specific Questions please review the Section H Information Sheet.

23. Are there any significant SBIRT changes?

The most significant change for Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) grantees is that many of the SBIRT-specific questions were moved to Section H. Program-Specific Questions in the new GPRA Tool (H6). For more information on Section H. Program-Specific Questions please review the Section H Information Sheet.

24. Regarding the GPRA tool, will AUDIT/DAST screening scores still apply to each treatment modality? Utilizing this current example: a score of 8-15 on the AUDIT applies to the Brief Intervention treatment modality, a score of 16-19 applies to Brief Treatment, and a score of 20-40 applies to Referral to Treatment.

The screening tools used to identify client scores have moved from Section A in the old tool to Section H6 in the new tool. The scores will still determine which modality a client falls under. For example, screening is identified under planned services, the grantee will conduct the screening and document the score in Section H6 question 3 to determine if the client screened positive or negative. Depending on the client's score, the grantee will also note if BI, BT, or RT are included in the planned services.

25. Why was Planned Services moved from Section A to Section B?

Section A was revised to improve overall tool usability and logic flow. Section A is now limited to Record Management and Demographics. CSAT welcomes ongoing feedback the tool and will use this feedback to help inform future updates of the GPRA Tool.

26. Why is insurance information collected?

Insurance information is asked to gather insight on the clients' access to healthcare.

BATCH UPLOADING

27. Can we obtain a new schema for the batch upload process now or is that going to be part of the materials that are distributed later?

A new XML schema has been released. The CSV-based batch upload will simply have a template file, no XML schema will be involved. It is recommended that grantees consider moving to the CSV-based batch upload process.

28. Regarding the existing XML-based batch upload system, will there be a new caller ID for IT staff to utilize to upload GPRA data?

Not necessarily. If grantees choose to continue to upload data for a continuing grant using the existing XML-based batch upload method, a new caller ID is not needed. If grantees have a new grant number and choose to upload using the XML-based method, they will need to reach out to the SPARS Help Desk to obtain a new caller ID for the new grant. All CSAT grantees also now have the option of using the new and simpler CSV-based batch upload method, which does not require a special account or caller ID.

29. If a grant is using the automated batch upload process now, will it end on January 20, 2023, and not be available until after January 30, 2023?

Grantees using the XML-based method to upload expiring tool data can continue to do so through February 15, 2023. Updates to the existing XML-based batch upload to support the new version of the CSAT GPRA tool will be available on February 16, 2023. The new batch upload process using comma-separated values (CSV), or spreadsheet templates will be available on February 16, 2023.

30. Will the SPARS uploads have an option to be automated?

The CSV-based batch upload feature will require logging into SPARS, selecting your file, and uploading it. In a future update to the batch upload system, we may provide a public API (application programmer's interface) to allow more automated uploads, but it may not be available for the February 16, 2023 release.

31. When will the new CSV-based batch upload Excel template be available for download and use?

The Excel template for the new CSV-based method is currently available for download (see question 1). Use of the CSV-based method will begin on February 16, 2023. Resources and training materials will be provided. Announcements will be posted to the SPARS homepage and CSAT grantees will be alerted via email.

32. We currently batch upload via XML. How long do we have until we should switch to the new CSV-based method?

CSAT recommends all grantees who currently use the XML-based method transition to using the new CSV-based method for new tool data as soon as possible. CSAT recognizes this process will take time for grantees and third parties. SPARS will support both methods for uploading new tool data for a substantial period.

33. How will outcomes be measured for those who complete a baseline using the expiring tool and a follow-up/discharge using the new tool?

The old and new data will be integrated for data download. The reporting in SPARS will follow the same strategy. Wherever possible, the variables in reports will be aligned for continuous

reporting across the break. Grantees can refer to the Crosswalk available in the Resources section of the SPARS website (see question 1). The crosswalk compares the old and new tools and identifies what changed.

DATA ENTRY

34. I'm new to GPRA data collection. Are there available trainings and resources to help understand data entry in SPARS?

In February, the SPARS team will release a pre-recorded training video about new GPRA Tool data entry. This video will review how to enter, view, and edit GPRA Tool data into SPARS. Announcements will be posted to the SPARS homepage and grantees will be notified via email when this resource becomes available.

35. Will grantees still able to use software like Survey Monkey, REDCap, Qualtrics, and others to collect and enter data?

Grants that use Survey Monkey, REDCap, Qualtrics, or other similar software to support data collection can continue using those software packages. Grantees will need to reconfigure their systems to incorporate the new GPRA Tool and begin using it as of January 21, 2023. SPARS manual data entry for the new tool will be available starting January 30, 2023, and the new CSV-based batch upload method for the new tool will be available starting February 16, 2023.

36. Will grantees continue to enter data into WITS?

WITS is a third-party system not operated by SAMHSA. Grantees should reach out to their WITS contactor for details related to updating the system to be able to collect the new GPRA Tool.

37. Since we are to hold onto data collected using the new GPRA Tool from January 21, 2023, through January 30, 2023, will SAMHSA allow for flexibility with data entry? The current guidance says we must enter data into SPARS within 7 days of data collection.

During this transition period, SAMHSA will allow grantees for extra time to enter new tool data. Data collected using the new tool (starting on January 21, 2023) can be entered in SPARS beginning on January 30, 2023.

38. How do we manage SPARS data entry if the intake GPRA was conducted using the old tool and the follow-up is collected using the new tool?

Grantees will be able to enter follow-up data collected using the new tool into SPARS even if the baseline/intake was conducted using the expiring version. No additional steps are required by the grantee.

39. Will a Codebook and Crosswalk (comparing the old tool vs. the new tool) be provided?

The Crosswalk comparing the expiring tool to the new tool and the new Codebook are currently available on the SPARS website in the Resources area (see question 1).

40. On January 21, 2023, will the SPARS follow-up notification reports be updated?

The timing to conduct GPRA follow-up interviews has not changed. SPARS follow-up notification reports will remain as is.

RESOURCES

41. Will there be a fillable PDF version of the GPRA?

Currently there is not a fillable PDF version of the GPRA.

42. Will there a Section H training?

The Section H training video will be available in January 2023. Grantees can find it in the Training Section of SPARS. Slides with speaker's notes have been posted. CSAT grantees will be notified via SPARS homepage announcements and email when the recording is made available.

43. Will there be a training for grantees who are entirely new to CSAT and using the GPRA Tool?

Additional training for those new to SPARS and the GPRA Tool will be available. In addition, there will be other resource documentation to help grantees complete the GPRA Tool and enter data into SPARS. A New Grantee Checklist will be available on the SPARS website during Winter 2023 in the Resources area. This document will be revised to include updated resources as they are available.

44. Are the materials (e.g., recording, slides, speaker's notes) from the October live webinar sessions available on SPARS?

Grantees can log in and access the recording, slides, and speaker's notes from the October 2022 live GPRA Tool sessions in the Training section of the SPARS website (under CSAT-specific courses).