

1/7/2022

Virginia Inter-rater Reliability (IRR) Study: DMAS Study Officially Launched on January 3 | Register for Upcoming Webinars | Review Supports & Reminders

Monday, January 3 marked the official launch of the **Inter-rater reliability (IRR) study** through the Virginia Department of Medical Assistance (**DMAS**) and contractor, **Maximus**. As shared in previous communications, this IRR study was mandated by the General Assembly as a review of Virginia's LTSS screening process with several key goals in mind, including:

- Validation of the children's criteria used with the UAI instrument to determine eligibility for Medicaid Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS)
- Design and implementation of an inter-rater reliability test for the pre-admission screening process

Continue reading below for insights into some upcoming **learning opportunities**, frequently asked questions (**FAQs**), available **resources** and **Help Desk support** pertaining to the IRR study.

VIRGINIA IRR - PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION >>> PROGRESS TRACKER



REGISTER: IRR Overview Webinars | Jan 26 - 27

Would you like to learn more about this important new study? Be sure to join the program team at Maximus for one of these hour-long **overview sessions**, as they walk through the key aspects of the IRR study. There will also be a few minutes set aside to answer attendee questions. Click the link below and select the date/time that work best with your schedule.

- [Inter-rater Reliability \(IRR\) Overview | 9:30 a.m. ET Wed, 1/26/2021](#)
- [Inter-rater Reliability \(IRR\) Overview | 2:00 p.m. ET Thu, 1/27/2021](#)

FAST FACTS: Understanding the IRR Study Process

In the coming months we'll continue to share some frequently asked questions about the IRR study and your role in the process. Below are **four fast facts** focused on how this new initiative will work.

1. **How will the study be conducted?** Individuals will be randomly selected across regions, to include both adults and children.
2. **How will rescreens be selected?** Rescreens will be randomly chosen from a statistically significant sample of conducted screens and analyzed based on assessment type (child vs. adult), region, and screening entity (NF, hospitals and CBTs).
3. **Who will perform the secondary screening?** All screeners working with the IRR study will have taken and passed the VA LTSS modules.
4. **How will the rescreening process work?** Maximus will conduct face-to-face screenings for the Baseline IRR Study using two techniques:
 - **Screen/Rescreen**—Entails repeating a subset of required questions within a short time frame after the initial screen. This will begin in January 2022
 - **Observational IRR** will include silently observing a live screen with the initial screener. This is expected to begin mid-year 2022.

TOOLKIT: Screener Resources

Ensuring that you have access to all the necessary tools and supports is critical to help ensure the successful implementation and the findings that will be gathered as a result of the IRR study. Check out a few helpful guides below that have been developed with Virginia's Screeners in mind.

[Tool: Screener Leave-Behind | Download](#)

This handy printout (2 copies per page) provides the persons you assess with some brief information about the IRR study and lets them know that a follow up screening may potentially be scheduled, as well as offering options for them to learn more.

[Guide: Virginia IRR Study Overview | Download](#)

A one-page overview including the purpose, processes and planned goals for the study.

[Guide: Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\) | Download](#)

This resource guide covers the questions most often fielded about the IRR study and its related processes. This will continue to be updated as we move through the year.

CONTACT: IRR Study Support

Have questions about the IRR study and can't find the answer in the resources listed above? **Contact the Help Desk team** for more information:

Email: VAIRR@maximus.com

Phone: 833.73. VA IRR (833.738.2477)

About Maximus

Maximus is nationally recognized for its work with states across the country to manage complex programs and ensure that individuals receive the appropriate care and supports necessary to improve their quality of life. Enduring commitment to process innovation and service excellence has led the company to a role as the industry's leading provider of high-quality, conflict free assessment services for persons with intellectual, behavioral health, and developmental disabilities, as well as older adults and individuals with physical disabilities and complex medical conditions. Learn more about Maximus services and capabilities at: <https://maximus.com/clinical-services>

1/25/2022

Virginia Inter-rater Reliability (IRR) Study: Take Screener Survey | Register for Upcoming Jan 26 - 27 Webinars | Review Available Resources

We are now a few weeks past the recent 1/3/22 launch of the **Inter-rater reliability (IRR) study** by the Virginia Department of Medical Assistance (DMAS) and state partner, **Maximus**. A sincere note of thanks for your continued support and assistance during this successful launch process and as we look ahead toward the future of this impactful study. As shared in recent communications, this IRR study was mandated by the General Assembly for:

- Validation of the children's criteria used with the UAI instrument to determine eligibility for Medicaid Long Term Services and Supports (**LTSS**)
- Design and implementation of an inter-rater reliability test for the pre-admission screening process

Continue reading below for opportunities to learn more, including details on a new **survey** developed to learn more about your processes, registration details for **IRR Overview Webinars** taking place on **January 26-27**, as well as some insightful **FAQs**, handy **resources and support** options.



ENGAGE: Share Your Feedback in Screener Survey

The IRR Study team would like to hear from you. A new survey has been developed to bring more insight into your existing screening processes. [Click here to share your feedback.](#)

LEARN MORE: Attend IRR Overview Webinars Wednesday, Jan 26 - Thursday, Jan 27

If you've yet to do so, be sure to register to join the Maximus Training Team for one of two insightful webinars, which will take attendees through the key aspects of the IRR study. The end of each hour-long session will be set aside to field any additional questions. Click the link below and select the date/time that work best with your schedule.

[Inter-rater Reliability \(IRR\) Overview | 9:30 a.m. ET Wed, 1/26/2021](#)

[Inter-rater Reliability \(IRR\) Overview | 2:00 p.m. ET Thu, 1/27/2021](#)

FAQs: Existing Screens and the Re-Screening Process

In the weeks leading up to the recent launch, the Program Team developed a comprehensive list of frequently asked questions (FAQs) that screeners and other state stakeholders might have about general processes related to the IRR Study. Read on to review some specific details related to the existing screens and the re-screening process or [click here to download a complete list of FAQs.](#)

Q: If an IRR re-screening is conducted, is the original screener present?

A: No, the IRR re-screening is conducted by Maximus staff alone in the initial part of the study. Observational IRR will include silently observing a live screen with the initial screener present. That portion of the study is not expected to begin until mid-year 2022.

Q: How will Maximus know if answers are the same or different from the original screening?

A: The Maximus IRR re-screener will not know the original LTSS screening results. The initial screening is not to be shared with the Maximus IRR

screeener. The data from the original screening will be compared electronically after completion of the IRR rescreen.

Q: Will the results of the IRR re-screen by Maximus be provided to the original screener?

A: No. The focus is on systemic, big picture screening trends to demonstrate the degree of consistency and reliability of LTSS screenings for children and adults, not on individual screenings.

Q: When the study is complete and the report is published, will specific screeners be identified as performing well or not well?

A: No individual screeners will be identified. The report will address LTSS screening observations by region and statewide.

RESOURCES: Reference Materials for the Screener

Ensuring that you have access to all the necessary tools and supports is critical to help ensure the successful implementation and the findings that will be gathered as a result of the IRR study. Check out a few helpful guides below that have been developed with Virginia's Screeners in mind.

[Tool: Screener Leave-Behind | Download](#)

This handy printout (2 copies per page) provides the persons you assess with some brief information about the IRR study and lets them know that a follow up screening may potentially be scheduled, as well as offering options for them to learn more.

[Guide: Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\) | Download - Updated 1/14](#)

This resource guide covers the questions most often fielded about the IRR study and its related processes. This will continue to be updated as we move through the year.

[Guide: Virginia IRR Study Overview | Download](#)

A one-page overview including the purpose, processes and planned goals for the study.

CONTACT: IRR Study Support

Have questions about the IRR study? **Contact the Help Desk team** for more information:

Email: VAIRR@maximus.com

Phone: 833.73. VA IRR (833.738.2477)

2/14/2022

Virginia Inter-rater Reliability (IRR) Study: Review Recording of Recent DMAS Webinar | Take Screener Survey

REVIEW: Recording of Recent DMAS Webinar Now Available

A recording of the recent webinar with DMAS/Maximus reviewing the Inter-rater Reliability Study being conducted by Maximus is available.

[Click here](#) to review.

SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK: Take the Screener Survey

Maximus is also collecting Screener input on the assessment process through a survey. Your anonymous answers will be used to help make recommendations to DMAS in the final study. The survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete. [Click here](#) to make your voice heard.

CONTACT: IRR Study Support

Have questions about the IRR study? Contact the **IRR Study Help Desk team** for more information:

- Email: VAIRR@maximus.com
- Phone: 833.73 VA IRR (833.738.2477)

Thank you so much for your support working with Maximus screeners to provide contact information and supporting documentation used during the original screening.

4/12/2022

Virginia Inter-rater Reliability (IRR) Study: Take the IRR Study - Screener Survey + Review Support Resources

Work continues in the first phase of the **Virginia Department of Medical Assistance (DMAS) Inter-rater reliability (IRR) study** with clinical services company, Maximus. As shared earlier in 2022, this study was mandated by the General Assembly.

VIRGINIA IRR - PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION >>> PROGRESS TRACKER



SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK: Take the Screener Survey

Maximus is also collecting Screener input on the assessment process through a survey. Your anonymous answers will be used to help make recommendations to DMAS in the final study. The survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete. [Click here to take the survey.](#)

Tool: Screener Leave-Behind | [Download](#)

This handy printout (2 copies per page) provides the persons you assess with some brief information about the IRR study and lets them know that a follow up screening may potentially be scheduled, as well as offering options for them to learn more.

Guide: Virginia IRR Study Overview | [Download](#)

A one-page overview including the purpose, processes and planned goals for the study.

Guide: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) | [Download](#)

This resource guide covers the questions most often fielded about the IRR study and its related processes. This will continue to be updated as we move through the year.

Recording: DMAS Webinar | [Listen](#)

A recording of a recent webinar with DMAS/Maximus reviewing the Inter-rater Reliability Study being conducted by Maximus is available.

CONTACT: IRR Study Help Desk

Have questions about the IRR study? Contact the IRR Study Help Desk team for more information:

Email: VAIRR@maximus.com
Phone: 833.73 VA IRR (833.738.2477)

5/31/2022

Virginia Inter-rater Reliability (IRR) Study: Maximus to begin Observational IRR

New Observational IRR Screenings to Begin July 2022

Starting in **July 2022**, Maximus will begin conducting **Observational IRR screenings**. What is an Observational IRR screening? An Observational IRR Screening is a LTSS screening that is done with an IRR screener from Maximus observing the completion of the LTSS screening. It is very important that you participate in the Observational IRR process which is a part of the overall IRR Screening study that Maximus is conducting for DMAS. A very small percentage of overall LTSS screenings will be selected for Observational Screenings. Should one of your LTSS Screenings be selected, a Maximus Screener will contact you to coordinate a time to complete the Observational screening with you. Please note that this Observational screening will not in any way impact the LTSS Screening determination, nor will there be any evaluation of the LTSS screener.

SHARE YOUR FEEDBACK: Take the Screener Survey

Maximus is still collecting Screener input on the [Screener Survey](#). Your anonymous answers will be used to help make recommendations to DMAS in the final study. The survey should take less than 10 minutes to complete.

CONTACT: IRR Study Support

Have questions about the IRR study? Contact the IRR Study Help Desk team for more information:

Email: VAIRR@maximus.com

Phone: 833.73 VA IRR (833.738.2477)

7/29/2022

Virginia Inter-rater Reliability Study: Observational IRR Screenings Now Being Conducted & Meet Clinical Program Supervisor, Lakel Gurley-Upshaw

Observational IRR Screenings Have Now Begun

Maximus, in partnership with the Virginia Department of Medical Assistance (DMAS), launched the conducting of **Observational IRR screenings** earlier this month. These are LTSS screenings performed with an IRR Screener from Maximus observing the completion of the individual LTSS screening.

How many LTSS screenings will be selected? Only a small percentage of overall LTSS Screenings will be selected for Observational Screenings. Should one of your LTSS screenings be selected, a Maximus Screener will contact you to coordinate a time to complete the Observational screening with you. It is very

important that you participate in any requests for the Observational IRR process, which is a part of the overall IRR Screening study that Maximus is conducting for DMAS.

Will this affect the LTSS screening determination? No. No Observational screening will not in any way impact the LTSS Screening determination, nor will there be any evaluation of the LTSS screener.

REMINDER - PLEASE SHARE THE LEAVE BEHIND DOCUMENT AFTER EACH SCREENING TO ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION IN THE STUDY.

You can find the link for that document here:

<https://maximusclinicalservices.com/sites/default/files/pasrr/documents/VA-IRR-Original-Screener-Leave-Behind-122021.pdf>

Meet the Team: Lakel Gurley-Upshaw, Clinical Program Supervisor

Responsibilities: Completing screenings in the eastern region of VA.

Background: Lakel lives in Newport News, VA. She loves meeting so many different people, hearing their stories, and seeing the impact waiver services has on in their quality of life.

Fun Fact: In her free time, she loves to travel and is currently working on writing a book.

SUPPORT: IRR Study Help Desk

Have questions about the IRR study? Contact the IRR Study Help Desk team for more information:

Email: VAIRR@maximus.com

Phone: 833.73 VA IRR (833.738.2477)