

The 5 S's Tool: Questions to Consider:

The "5 S's" is a communication tool developed by the University of Maryland child psychiatric access project, the Behavioral Health Integration in Pediatric Primary Care (BHIPP) Project, as a framework to facilitate communication between the primary care provider and consulting psychiatrist during their brief telephone consultation call, in order to maximize communication and facilitate joint problem solving.¹

When calling the consult, in addition to providing the information in the Checklist, consider addressing these 5 dimensions (Safety, Specific Behaviors, Setting, Scary Things, Screening and Services):

Safety

- Do you have concerns about the patient safety?
- Do you feel comfortable treating this patient in your practice?
- Do you think this patient might be suicidal, homicidal, or at risk?
- Are you aware of the patient having any safety issues in the past?

Specific Behaviors

- What behaviors are causing the most problems?
- What is the patient doing that makes you think he has ___ (e.g. anxiety, ADHD, depression)?
- What thoughts/behaviors are most concerning to the child/family?

Setting

- Where and when are the problematic behaviors happening?
- How is the patient doing academically?
- How does the patient do with peers?
- How is the family managing the behavior?

Scary Things

- Has anything hard or scary happened to the patient or family?

Screening/Services

- Has the patient had any screening or assessments?
- Has the patient received therapy, medication, psychiatric hospitalization? Are you in touch with current behavioral health providers?
- What have you already tried?

¹ Harrison, J., Wasserman, K., Steinberg, J., Platt, R., Coble, K., & Bower, K. (2016). The Five S's: A Communication Tool for Child Psychiatric Access Projects. *Current problems in pediatric and adolescent health care, 46*(12), 411–419. doi:10.1016/j.cppeds.2016.11.006