



**COMPUTERIZED  
ASSESSMENT**  
— AND —  
REFERRAL SYSTEM

User Manual for CARS-5  
Windows Edition



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# 1. Introduction

The Computerized Assessment and Referral System (CARS) is a computer-guided interview for comprehensive mental health and psychosocial assessment. CARS is the result of a collaboration between the [Division on Addiction](#) and the [Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility \(FAAR\)](#).

CARS has three main components:

1. The *assessment*, which consists of modules administered for each psychiatric disorder or psychosocial domain.
2. The *report generator*, which provides personalized information about mental health disorders for which a client qualifies or is at risk, condensed into a reader-friendly format.
3. The *referral generator*, which compiles resources dependent on the client's identified disorders, problems, and location.

*Note: Users must enter referral information to use this feature.*

## Why CARS is the Right Choice

- CARS is easy to use. Both clinicians and non-clinicians can use CARS to administer assessments with minimal time and effort.
- CARS provides immediate personalized output to facilitate effective treatment planning for individual clients.
- CARS improves intake and data collection processes for program staff, making it easier and more efficient to collect, maintain, and share information about clients.
- CARS improves assessment accuracy. CARS adapts questions from the [World Mental Health Composite International Diagnostic Interview \(WMH-CIDI\)](#), one of the most comprehensive and thorough instruments available for diagnosing psychiatric disorders.

## Assessment Options

CARS assessments are administered by a *user*, a staff member who uses the tool to interview a *client*. The user reads questions to the client, and enters the client's responses to the questions.

CARS offers five assessment options. All options generate personalized diagnostic reports:

1. **CARS:** (also referred to as "Full CARS") This option includes a comprehensive mental health screener that evaluates for 20 mental disorders and related problems, followed by in-depth modules that enable more thorough assessment and evaluation when necessary. CARS also includes a module assessing DUI and factors related to DUI recidivism, a module assessing suicidality, and a screener for personality disorders. Staff can choose which modules to enable, and whether each module conducts a



past-12-month or full lifetime evaluation. CARS is administered by a user to a client, and takes between 25 minutes and three hours to administer, depending on client responses and which modules are enabled.

2. **CARS Screener:** This option includes the same comprehensive mental health screener as the CARS option, but excludes in-depth modules. The CARS Screener enables staff to screen clients for potential disorders and identify mental health areas that warrant additional attention. The CARS Screener is administered by a user to a client, and takes between 25 and 50 minutes depending on client responses.
3. **Self-Administered CARS Screener:** This option contains identical content to the CARS Screener, but has been modified for client self-administration. The Self-Administered CARS Screener takes between 25 and 50 minutes for clients to complete on their own.
4. **Spanish CARS Screener:** This option is a direct Spanish translation of the CARS Screener option.
5. **Spanish Self-Administered CARS Screener:** This option is a direct Spanish translation of the Self-Administered CARS Screener option.

## Progressing through the Assessment

**CARS:** Full CARS sessions begin with the CARS Screener. After the CARS Screener, the client may enter one or more of the 16 in-depth modules that further assess mental health and substance use:

- |   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 1. Alcohol Use Disorder                       | 8. Intermittent Explosive Disorder |
| 2. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder   | 9. Mania                           |
| 3. Conduct Disorder                           | 10. Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder  |
| 4. Driving Under the Influence (DUI) behavior | 11. Panic Disorder                 |
| 5. Depression                                 | 12. Personality Disorders          |
| 6. Gambling Disorder                          | 13. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder |
| 7. Generalized Anxiety Disorder               | 14. Social Anxiety Disorder        |
|   | 15. Substance Use                  |
|   | 16. Suicidality                    |

CARS directs clients into in-depth modules only if they report symptoms for a certain disorder in the CARS Screener (i.e., if they *qualify* for an in-depth module). For example, if (1) a client's answers to the CARS Screener indicate that they experienced symptoms of Alcohol Use Disorder and (2) the Alcohol Use Disorder module has been enabled for the current user, CARS will direct the client into the Alcohol Use Disorder in-depth module following the CARS Screener. See [Adding and Modifying Users](#) for information on enabling modules.

If a client qualifies for an in-depth module that is not enabled for the current user, CARS will not enter that module. However, the final diagnostic report will note that the client qualified for the in-depth module and would have entered the module had it been enabled.



Most in-depth modules offer a past-12-month or lifetime assessment timeframe. The user must select one of these timeframes for each enabled in-depth module. In most cases, the past-12-month timeframe of an in-depth module assesses for symptoms of a disorder exhibited only within the most recent 12 months, and produces past-12-month diagnoses. The lifetime timeframe of an in-depth module assesses for symptoms of a disorder exhibited in the client's entire lifetime (including within the most recent 12 months), and can produce both lifetime and past-12-month diagnoses. See [Adding and Modifying Users](#) for information on changing module timeframes.

*Note: If a client reports in the CARS Screener that they experienced symptoms for a disorder in their lifetime but NOT within the past 12 months, the client may not enter the corresponding in-depth module if the in-depth module is set to the past-12-month timeframe. This is because the past-12-month timeframe assesses only for symptoms experienced in the previous 12 months. If the lifetime timeframe of the in-depth module is selected, the client will screen into the module if they report symptoms at any point in their lifetime, including the previous 12 months.*

Within each module, questions are displayed based on answers to previous questions. For example, if a client endorses very few symptoms in the Generalized Anxiety Disorder in-depth module, they will complete the module quickly. However, if a client endorses many initial symptoms, more questions will be asked about the onset, progression, and symptom patterns experienced. To save time, CARS asks fewer questions if the client has a low likelihood of qualifying for a condition.

CARS sessions end with the Interviewer Observation module. See [Ending a Session](#) for more information on the Interviewer Observation module.

**CARS Screener and Self-Administered CARS Screener (English and Spanish):** Both the CARS Screener and the Self-Administered CARS Screener include the CARS Screener without additional in-depth modules. When using these options, the user will not continue into any in-depth modules after the CARS Screener.

The CARS Screener (English and Spanish) also includes an Interviewer Observation module following the client assessment (see [Ending a Session](#)). The Self-Administered CARS Screener does not include the Interviewer Observation module.



## 2. Getting Started

### Choosing a Configuration

CARS users may choose from two different CARS configurations, a single-computer configuration (the default option) or a network configuration using two or more computers.

#### Single-computer configuration (default)

- **Who it is for:** Smaller organizations/programs and individual users that will use CARS on a single computer, or computers that are not connected to a shared network should choose this option.  
*Note: In a single-computer configuration, users cannot access user accounts, client data or reports stored on other computers.*
- **What it entails:** Downloading and running the CARS executable file on each computer used to administer CARS.
- **Steps before installation:** None. Download the tool and follow the installation guide.

#### Network configuration

- **Who it is for:** Large organizations/programs that will use CARS on more than one computer should consider this option.
- **What it entails:** Installing the CARS program on a server that can be accessed from multiple computers.
- **Steps before installation:** Select a computer to act as the main networked computer. This computer must be turned on and running CARS at all times, and must be accessible through the network by all other onsite computers running CARS.

### Installing CARS

**Important:** CARS-5 and later versions are not backward compatible with CARS 1.05 and older versions. **You will not be able to restore data from CARS 1.05 (or earlier) to CARS-5.** If you are updating to CARS-5 from CARS 1.05 (or earlier), generate and save all reports you wish to keep before installing CARS-5.

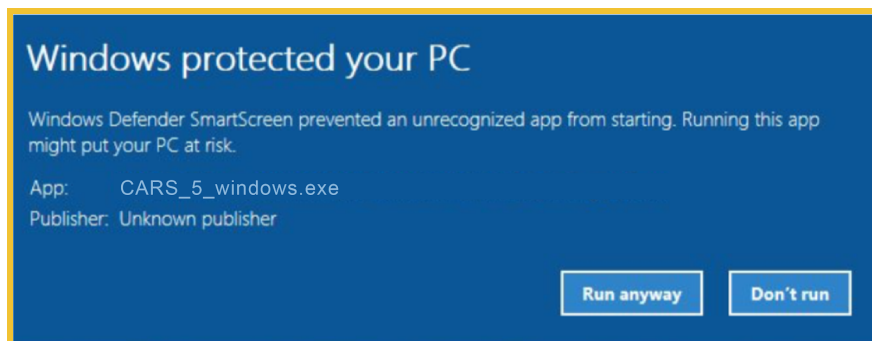
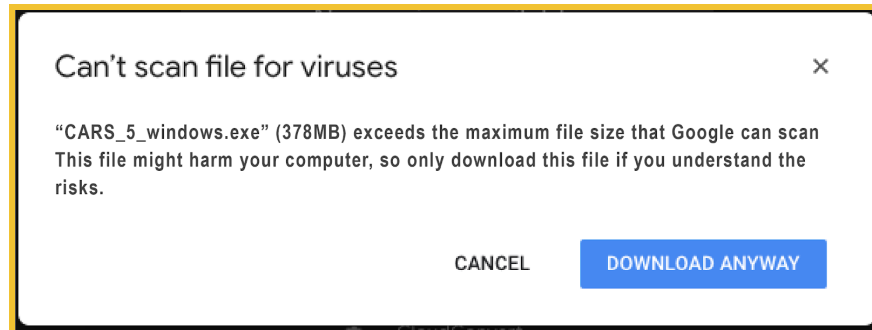
To install the latest version of CARS:

1. If you have not done so, [register for an account](#) on the CARS website. After registering, a notification email will be sent to the address provided when creating the account.
2. [Log in](#) to your website account.



3. Go to the [Download CARS](#) page, select **Access CARS for Windows OS**, then select **Download CARS for Windows**.

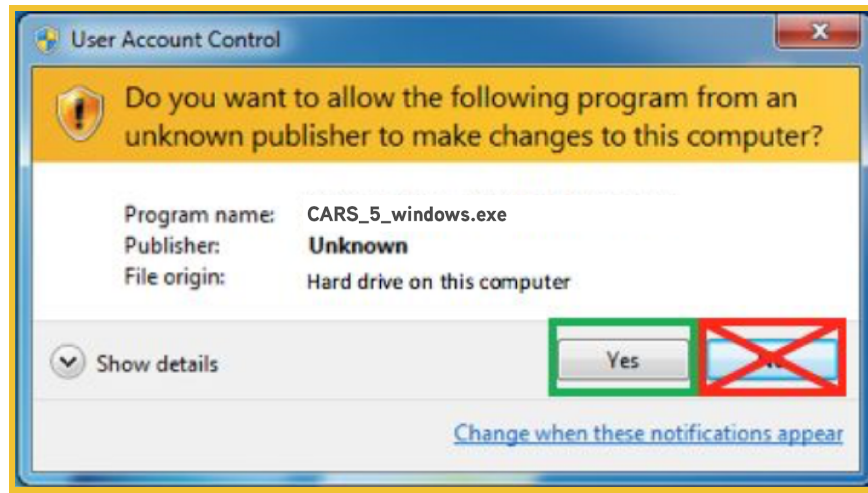
*Note: You may be prompted with one of the following dialogue boxes. If this occurs, select **Yes**, **Download Anyway**, or **Run Anyway**. If prompted with “Running this app might put your PC at risk”, select **More Info**, then select **Run Anyway**. CARS is completely safe to download and use. These messages appear because CARS is not from an identified developer.*



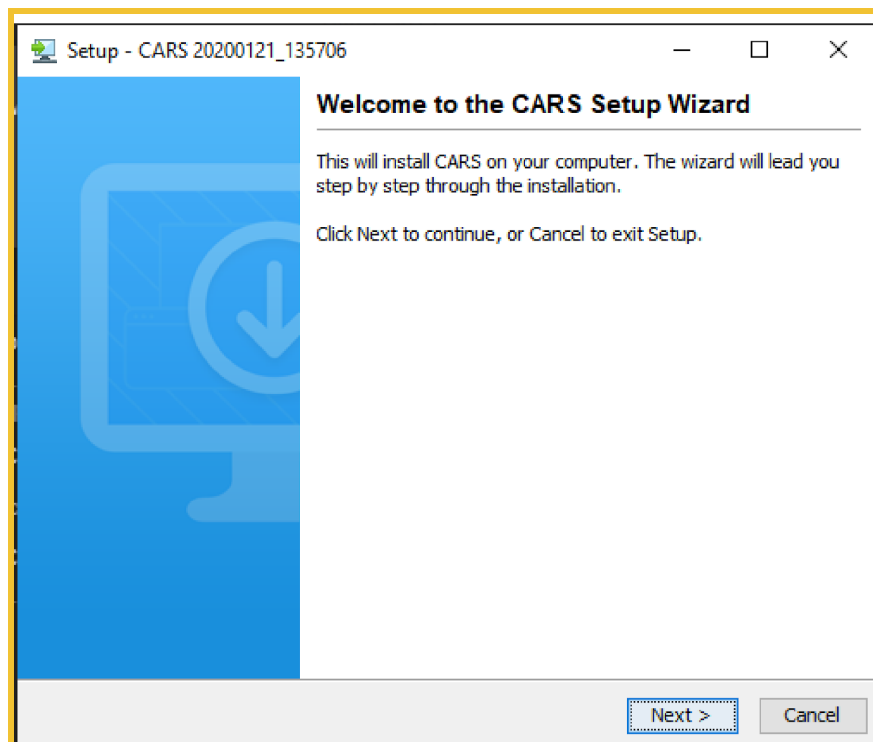
4. Locate the CARS installation file. Right click on the icon and select **Open**.



5. The following security message may appear. Select **Yes**.



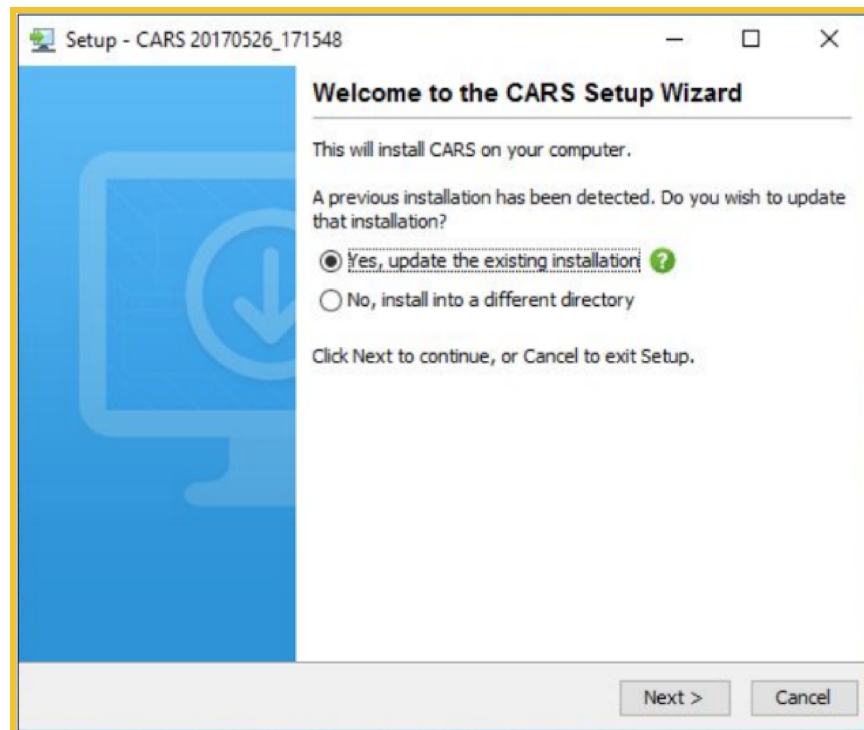
6. The CARS Installer will begin preparing the installation. Once the installation is prepared, select **Next**.





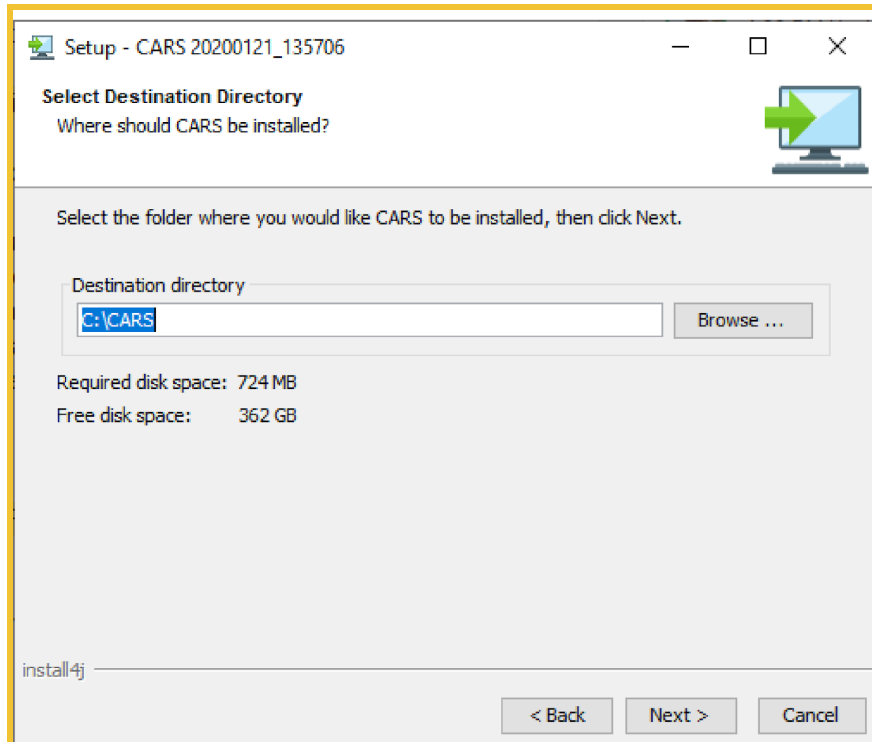


7. If there is a previous installation of CARS on your computer, the following window will appear. To replace the previous installation with the new installation (recommended), select **Yes, update the existing installation**. If you wish to keep both installations, select **No, install into a different directory**. If you choose **No**, you must install the new installation in a different folder than your previous installation. Select **Next**.



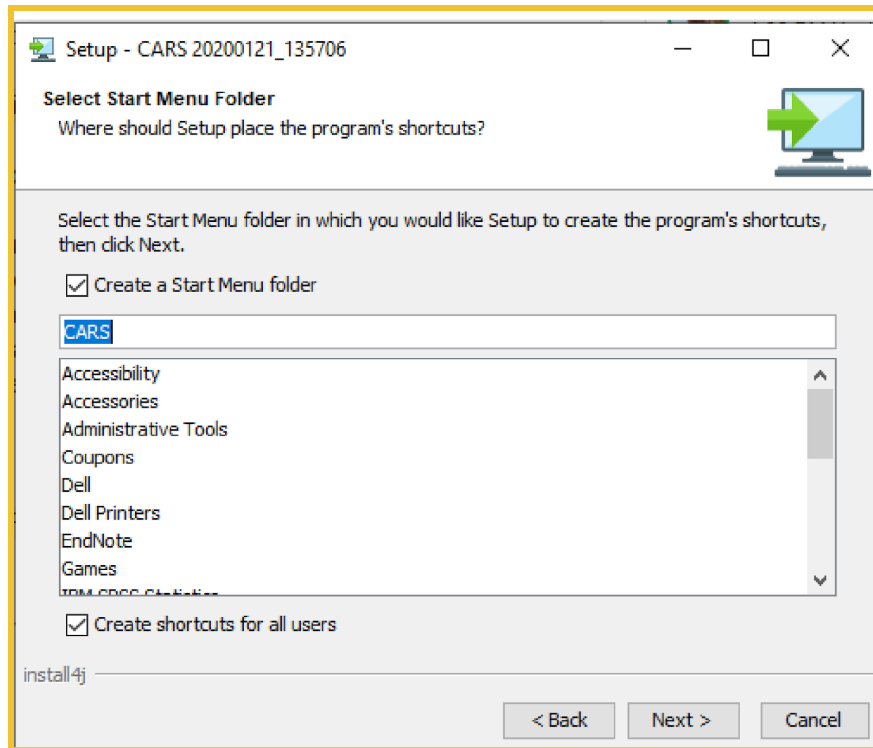


8. CARS will be installed in the C:\CARS folder by default. To save CARS in the default folder, select **Next**. To save CARS to a different directory, select **Browse...**, then choose the location to install CARS and select **OK**.





9. Select the folder in the Start Menu to install the CARS shortcut.

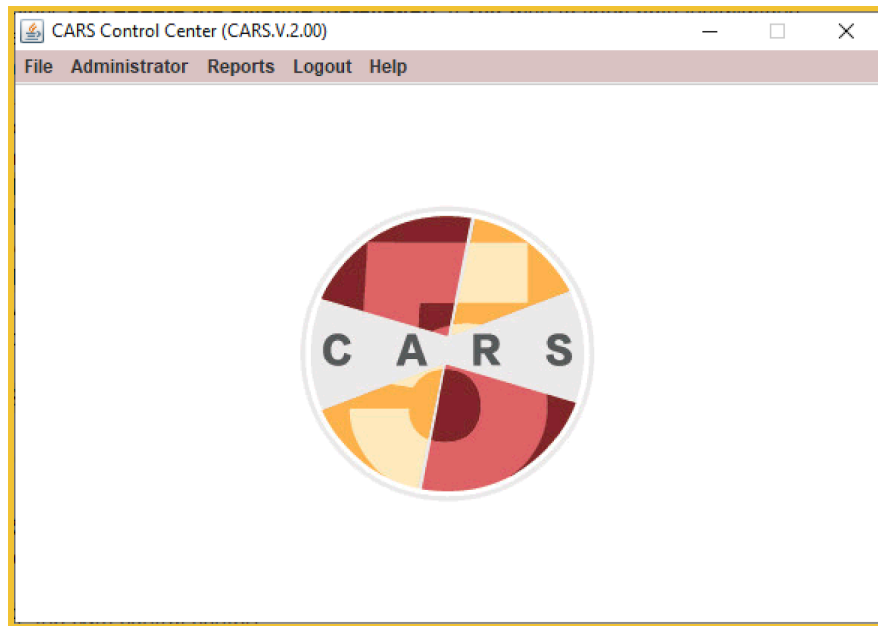


10. When the installer has completed, select **Finish**.
11. If installing a network configuration, see [Appendix A](#) for how to complete installation.
12. To open CARS, open the folder where it is stored and double-click the icon.



## The CARS Control Center

The CARS control center appears after opening CARS. All CARS functions are launched from the control center.



There are five tabs in the control center toolbar:

- **File:** This tab contains options to start a CARS session (see [Starting a Session](#)) or exit.
- **Administrator:** This tab contains the administrator functions (see [Administrator Functions](#)).
- **Reports:** This tab contains options for generating different reports (see [Reports](#)).
- **Logout:** Selecting this option logs the user out of the active account.
- **Help:** Selecting this option launches the User Manual from the desktop.

*Note: This User Manual comes with your current version of CARS and is available offline. You can also download the most recent version of the [CARS User Manual](#) from the CARS website.*



## Setting Up CARS

**Important:** If you are new to CARS or a returning user updating from CARS 1.05 or earlier to CARS-5, you must complete CARS setup to use the tool.

If you are updating from CARS-5 or later and want to restore data from your previous installation, **do not complete CARS setup after installation**. Instead see [Restoring Data](#) for how to load your existing data into your new installation (if you have already completed CARS setup, re-install the update).

CARS setup consists of site registration (for CARS to collect basic information about your organization), validating your email address, setting the administrator password, and adding users. You also have the option to add referral data.

*Note: For single-computer configurations, setup must be completed for each computer running CARS. For network configurations, setup only needs to be completed on the main networked computer.*

To set up CARS:

1. In the CARS control center, select **Administrator > Site Registration**.
2. Enter the default administrator credentials:
  - username: admin
  - password: carsadmin
3. Fill in each field in site registration as they are relevant to your site.  
*Note: If you cannot provide a valid zip code, enter "99999" in the zip code field.*
4. Select **Validate Email Address**. An email containing a validation code will be sent to the address entered in the **Admin Email** field.  
*Note: If you do not see the email in your inbox, check your spam folder or try a different email address. If you are still not receiving an email, your home network may not be allowing the validation email to send. Try connecting to a different network or using a mobile hotspot, then send the validation code again.*
5. Enter the validation code, then select **Validate Email Address**. A window will appear confirming email validation. Select **OK**.
6. Select **Register**.
7. A new window will prompt you to add users, referral data, then restart CARS. Select **OK**.
8. Back in the CARS control center, select **Administrator > Add/Modify User**.
9. Under "Current Users", "admin" is highlighted. Select **Modify User**.



10. In the text field next to **Password**, replace “carsadmin” with our own new administrator password. All CARS passwords must:

- be at least 6 characters and at most 20 characters long.
- contain at least one digit from 0 to 9.
- contain at least one lowercase letter and one uppercase letter.
- contain at least one of the following symbols: ! @ # \$ % ^ & \* ( )

*Note: Remember your administrator password. If you forget your administrator password, see [Password Recovery](#). Make sure your email address remains active for password recovery.*

11. Select **Update User**.

12. To create a new user account, select **Add User**.

**Important:** User accounts are different from the administrator account. User accounts are for conducting assessments, so at least one user account is required to use CARS.

13. Enter a username and password for your first CARS user account. The password must follow the same guidelines as the admin password, listed above. You also may set the account’s modules at this time by selecting **Set/Change User’s CARS Modules**, or choose modules later.

14. Select **Add User**. You will see your new user added to the “Current Users” list.

15. To add another user, modify an existing user, or delete a user, select the corresponding button. When finished adding users, select **Exit**.

16. You will be prompted with the option to add referral data. To add referral data now, select **Add referral data** and see [Adding and Modifying Referrals](#). Otherwise, select **Finish Installation** to restart the program.

*Note: If you choose to add referrals at this time, restart CARS after you have finished.*



## CARS Updates

**Important:** CARS-5 and later versions are not backward compatible with CARS 1.05 and older versions. **You will not be able to restore data from CARS 1.05 (or earlier) to CARS-5.** If you are updating to CARS-5 from CARS 1.05 (or earlier), generate and save all reports you wish to keep before installing CARS-5.

We encourage users to update when we release new versions of CARS. When updates are available, the CARS development team will send an email to the address you provided when registering on the CARS website. To update, see [Installing CARS](#).

Each time you update, CARS replaces the version currently installed on your computer with the latest version. CARS also creates a backup file of your data from your current installation. Backups are stored in the “Documents” folder on your computer. See [Restoring Data](#) for information on restoring backup data.



## 3. Administrator Functions

The administrator is a special CARS account for administrative functions. These functions are:

- Site registration (see [Setting Up CARS](#))
- Adding and modifying users
- Transferring data
- Backing up and restoring user data
- Creating referrals

There is one administrator per CARS installation (i.e., one administrator per computer in a single-computer configuration, or one administrator for all computers in a network configuration). When attempting to use administrator functions, you will be directed to log in as administrator.

*Note: In a network configuration, administrator functions should be accessed from the main networked computer.*

**Important:** The administrator cannot conduct assessments or be assigned modules. Sign into a different user account to administer a CARS session.

### Adding and Modifying Users

The administrator should create user accounts for each staff member using CARS, and select which in-depth modules and timeframes to include in CARS assessments for each user account.

*Note: Unless your site has a reason for doing otherwise, we recommend enabling the same modules in all user accounts to understand of the prevalence of disorders in your local population. Enabling an in-depth module does not mean that all clients will enter that module. Clients will only enter the module if they screen positive for the disorder in the CARS Screener.*

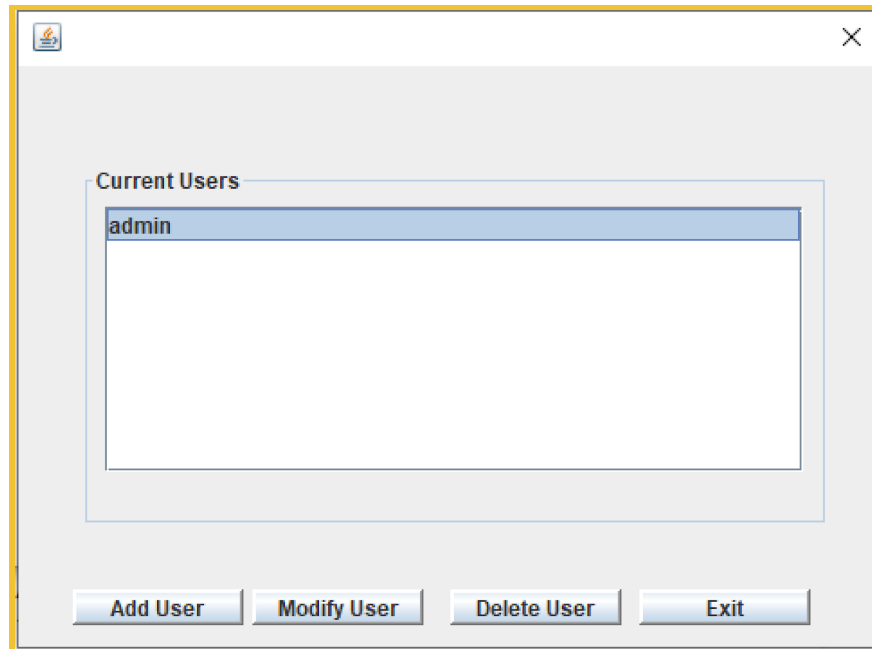
To add a new user account:

1. In the CARS control center, select **Administrator > Add/Modify User**.
2. If you are not already logged in as the administrator, enter the administrator username and password.

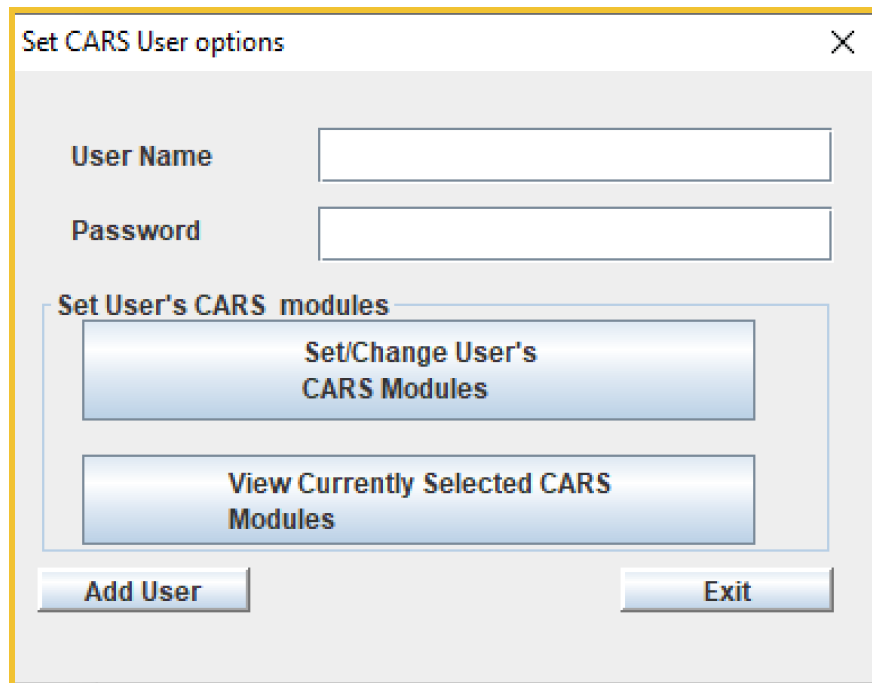




3. Select **Add User**.



4. Enter a username and password for the new user, then select **Add User**.



5. Restart CARS.



After adding users, the CARS administrator can change the login credentials and enabled modules of all user accounts.

To change the username and/or password for a user account:

1. In the CARS control center, select **Administrator > Add/Modify User**.
2. If you are not already logged in as the administrator, enter the administrator username and password.
3. Select an existing user, then select **Modify User**.
4. Enter a new username and/or password in the corresponding text box.  
*Note: The administrator username is “admin” by default and cannot be changed.*
5. Select **Update User**.

To change module access for a user account:

1. In the CARS control center, select **Administrator > Add/Modify User**.
2. If you are not already logged in as the administrator, enter the administrator username and password.
3. Select an existing user, then select **Modify User**.
4. Select **Set/Change User’s Current Modules**.
5. Select the desired modules from the list, and either a 12-month or lifetime module timeframe for each module. Scroll down to see all module options.  
*Note: The CARS Screener is preselected because it is required.*  
*Note: Some modules only allow a lifetime timeframe. The Depression and Mania modules must be enabled together.*

Module Name	Selection	Module Timeframe
Screening	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 12 Month <input type="radio"/> Lifetime
Alcohol Use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 12 Month <input type="radio"/> Lifetime
Drug Use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 12 Month <input type="radio"/> Lifetime
DUI Behavior	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 12 Month <input type="radio"/> Lifetime
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 12 Month <input checked="" type="radio"/> Lifetime
General Anxiety Disorder	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/> 12 Month <input type="radio"/> Lifetime
Personality Disorders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/> 12 Month <input type="radio"/> Lifetime

**Update**



6. Select **Update**.
7. Select **Update User**.

The administrator can also view currently enabled modules for a user account. To view enabled modules:

1. In the CARS control center, select **Administrator > Add/Modify User**.
2. If you are not already logged in as the administrator, enter the administrator username and password.
3. Select an existing user, then select **Modify User**.
4. Select **View Currently Selected CARS Modules**.

## Backing Up Data

CARS saves responses to questions in a database on your computer. We encourage administrators to back up their data regularly to ensure data is not lost when updating CARS.

*Note: After you install a new version of CARS and replace your previous installation, CARS will automatically back up data from your previous installation and place the file in your computer's "Documents" folder.*

To back up your data:

1. In the CARS control center, select **Administrator > Backup User Data**.
2. If you are not already logged in as the administrator, enter the administrator username and password.
3. Select **Yes**.
4. A notification will appear once the backup is complete.

Backup data files follow the format shown in the following example:

`carsBackupData_20170111120825.cars`

Each backup file is assigned a unique name with the date (e.g., "20170111" in the previous example) and time (e.g., "120825" in the previous example) of backup. Backup files are encrypted until restored in CARS.



## Restoring Data

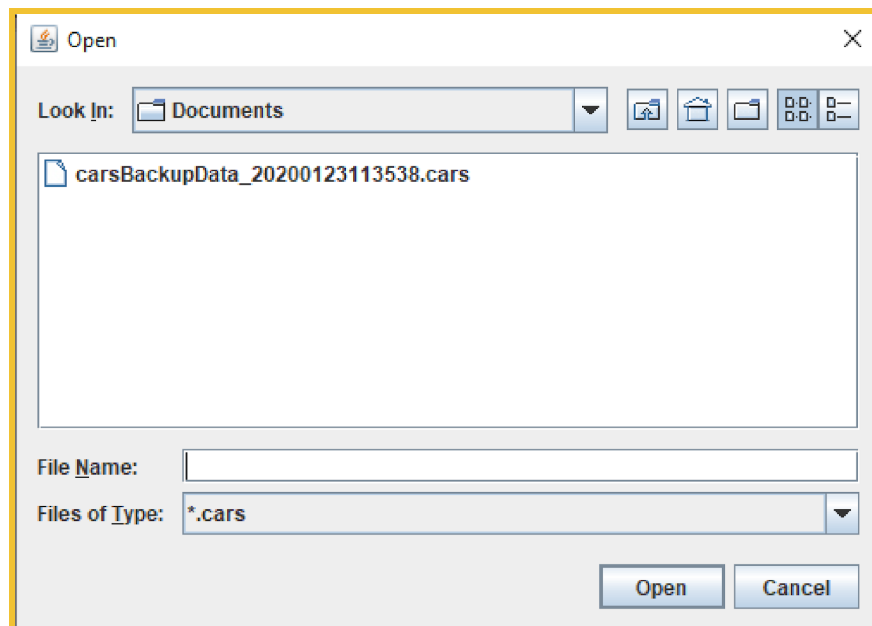
**Important:** CARS-5 and later versions are not backward compatible with CARS 1.05 and older versions. **You will not be able to restore data from CARS 1.05 (or earlier) to CARS-5.** If you are updating to CARS-5 from CARS 1.05 (or earlier), generate and save all reports you wish to keep before installing CARS-5.

Restore data immediately after opening a new CARS installation. This data includes prior registration, user, and session data.

To restore your data:

1. In the CARS control center, select **Administrator > Restore User Data**.
2. Select **Yes**.
3. You will see a directory listing of all of the files that contain the file extension “.cars”. Choose the most recent backup file and select **Open**.

*Note: If you have already inputted user data to CARS, you cannot restore previous backup data. In this case, CARS will display the message “User Data exists”.*



4. A notification will appear when backup data has been restored. Select **OK**.
5. Restart CARS.



## Adding and Modifying Referrals

By default, the CARS referral database is empty. To generate referrals in CARS reports, the administrator must add referrals to the database. CARS matches clients' zip codes to referral data and gives available treatment referrals within a 50-mile range. To add a referral location:

1. In the CARS control center, select **Administrator > Add Referral Data**.
2. If you are not already logged in as the administrator, enter the administrator username and password.
3. Select **Add new Referral**.
4. Enter the information in the relevant fields, then select **Add**.

After adding referrals, the administrator can also look up and modify referrals. To look up and modify a referral:

1. In the CARS control center, select **Administrator > Add Referral Data**.
2. If you are not already logged in as the administrator, enter the administrator username and password.
3. Select **LookUp/Modify Referral**.
4. You can look up a referral by facility name, state, zip code, and telephone number.
5. To modify a referral, right click on the referral site you wish to edit and select **Display/Modify referral**.

Facility Name	State	Zip Code	Telephone Number	Mental Health	Substance
St Francis House	MA	02116	(617)542-4211	Yes	Yes
Commonwealth Psychology Associates	MA			No	No
Aggressive Street Outreach	MA			Yes	Yes

6. Input your changes.



## ■ Transferring Data

Through the [CARS Data Partnership](#), the Division on Addiction hopes to collaborate with CARS users to advance our understanding of mental health. CARS users have the opportunity at any time to opt-in to the Data Partnership program.

This option provides a secure, de-identified way to send data to the Division on Addiction. Only use this feature after entering a data sharing agreement with the Division. Otherwise, ignore this option.

To transfer your data to the Division on Addiction:

1. In the CARS control center, select **Administrator > Transfer CARS Tool Data**.
2. Select **Yes**.



## 4. Conducting Assessments

After the CARS administrator completes site registration and adds at least one (non-administrator) user account, CARS users are ready to administer assessments.

*Note: Users are encouraged to practice administering CARS either by themselves or with a peer to build familiarity with the tool. To differentiate between practice sessions and client sessions, enter a test ID (e.g., Test-1, Test-2, Test-3) in the Client ID text field.*

### Starting a Session

To begin a new session:

1. In the CARS control center, select **File > New CARS Session**.
2. If you are not already logged in as a user, enter a username and password.  
*Note: In order to start a new session, the administrator must be logged out. To log out of the administrator account, select **Logout** in the CARS control center.*
3. Enter the client's home zip code. If the client cannot or does not wish to provide a valid zip code, enter "99999".  
*Note: The client zip code helps CARS decide the order of referral locations shown in the client diagnostic report. Without a zip code, CARS will not be able to provide geographically targeted referrals.*
4. Select the appropriate assessment option and enter a Client ID. See [Assessment Options](#) for more information.
5. Select **Continue** to start the assessment.



A session begins when the CARS assessment window appears onscreen. The module timeframe is indicated at the top of the window, and the current session ID is shown at the bottom. The CARS assessment window contains the question display, the sidebar, and the toolbar.

Computerized Assessment & Referral System (CARS) Module Version: Lifetime

File Answer View Help

SC0\_1 - SC0\_3

SC0\_1. Please enter the client's full name

First Name  Middle Initial  Last Name

Help History Notes RB

CARS V2

Current Session ID: 1

Next

## Question Display

The question display is the main feature of the CARS assessment window. There are several types of question displays throughout the interview, some with only one question and some with multiple questions in a grid format.

All questions are labeled with a letter-number combination (e.g., AU24), followed by question text. When administering CARS to a client, read the question text out loud and mark responses accordingly. Advance to the next question by selecting **Next**.

**Important:** While you can view previous answers, CARS does not allow users to change previous answers because of the complexity of the skip logic in the assessment.

Some questions include text in parentheses. This text can be repeated if necessary, but is not required to be read.





Some questions also include blue text above the question prompt. These are interviewer instructions. Some interviewer instructions provide extra information to help proceed with the interview, and should not be read to the client. Other interviewer instructions give extra prompts to ask a client if they are having difficulty answering a question. Read these prompts aloud to clients if necessary.

There are three answer types in the CARS assessment:

- Radio buttons: Round buttons that limit the user to one answer option for a question.
- Checkboxes: Square buttons that allow the user to select all answer options for a question. Select all options the client endorses.
- Text boxes: Rectangles that require entering text or numbers as a response. Click inside the box and enter text or a numeric value.

Some questions combine different answer types. The most common of these is a text box combined with radio buttons. Answer all sections of these questions before proceeding.

D15a\_1. For the next questions, please think of a time within the past 12 months when you had an episode of being sad or discouraged or uninterested lasting two weeks or longer and you also had the largest number of these other problems such as changes in sleep, appetite, energy, the ability to concentrate and remember, feelings of low self-worth, and other difficulties. How long did that worst episode last?

☐ Days ☐ Weeks ☐ Months ☐ Years

Some question displays show multiple questions in a grid format. Treat each row as an individual question. You must complete all questions within a grid to advance.

		If Yes Did you experience this in the past 12 months?
SC18c. Did your heart pound or race?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
SC18d. Were you short of breath?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
SC18e. Did you have nausea or discomfort in your stomach?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
SC18f. Did you feel dizzy or faint?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No
SC18g. Did you sweat?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
SC18h. Did you tremble or shake?	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No



Some grids display multipart questions. Answer these grids row-by-row from left to right. Some columns are disabled initially, but may become active depending on answers in other columns. All active questions must be answered to advance.

		<b>If Yes</b> <b>Did you experience this in the past 12 months?</b>
SC19a. Have you ever in your life had attacks of anger when all of a sudden you lost control and broke or smashed something worth more than a few dollars?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No

## ■ Sidebar

The sidebar is located on the right side of the CARS assessment window and contains the **History**, **Notes**, and **Respondent Booklet** tabs.

The **History** tab is the default tab displayed in the sidebar. It contains a log of all questions previously answered in the current session. View an answer to a question by selecting a question label or by hovering the cursor over a question label.

In the **Notes** tab, users can add notes about a particular question during the interview. Notes might include information about a client's response or behavior. Notes can be generated in a report following a session.

The **Respondent Booklet (RB)** tab displays graphics, lists and other aids to assist clients in answering questions. This tab opens automatically when a question warrants additional information. CARS users may also select this tab if prompted by interviewer instructions.

## ■ Toolbar

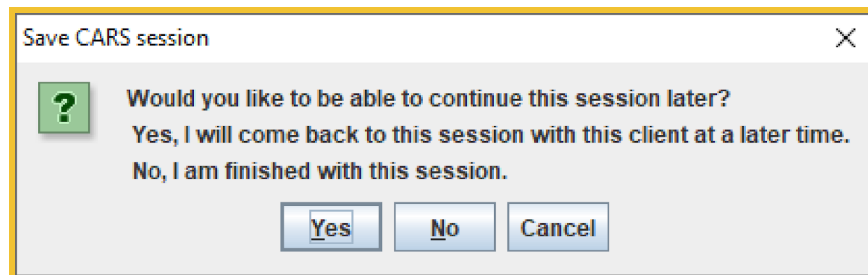
The CARS assessment window also contains a toolbar with four tabs: **File**, **Answer**, **View**, and **Help**.

The **File** tab contains two options: **Lock** and **Exit**.

**Lock** allows users to pause the assessment and prevent unauthorized access to client information. Enter your username and password to return to the assessment.



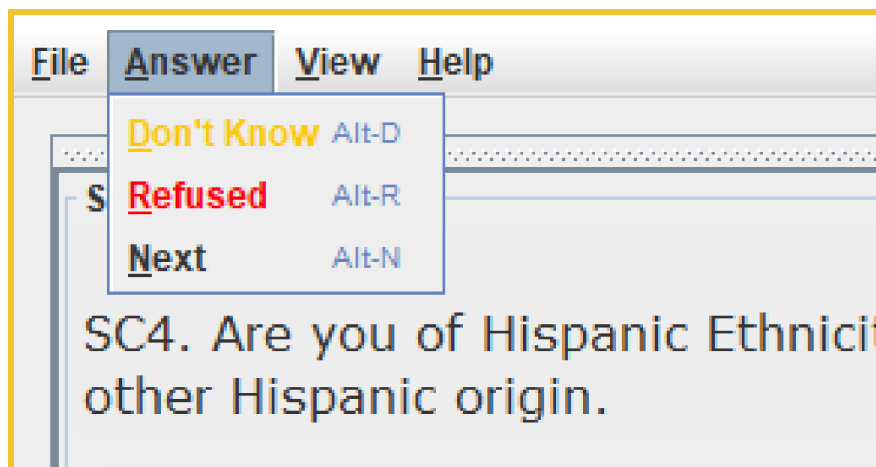
**Exit** closes the assessment. After selecting **File > Exit**, a message appears asking to save the session. Saved sessions can be completed at a later time. To save the session, select **Yes**. If you do not wish to save the session (e.g., you won't be able to complete the session at a later time), select **No**. See [Continuing a Saved Session](#) for more information.



The **Answer** tab contains additional answer options to specific interview questions. Select **Don't Know** if the client does not know an answer to a question. Select **Refused** if the client refuses to answer a question. Both of these options have keyboard shortcuts as well. These answer options should be used sparingly. When possible, use prompts to encourage a client to answer the question to the best of their ability.

*Note: Some questions, including most text-response questions, do not accept "Don't Know" or "Refused" as a response.*

To answer a question in a grid or multipart question with **Don't Know** or **Refused**, select a row or section by clicking it, then select **Answer > Don't Know** or **Answer > Refused**, or use the corresponding keyboard shortcut.





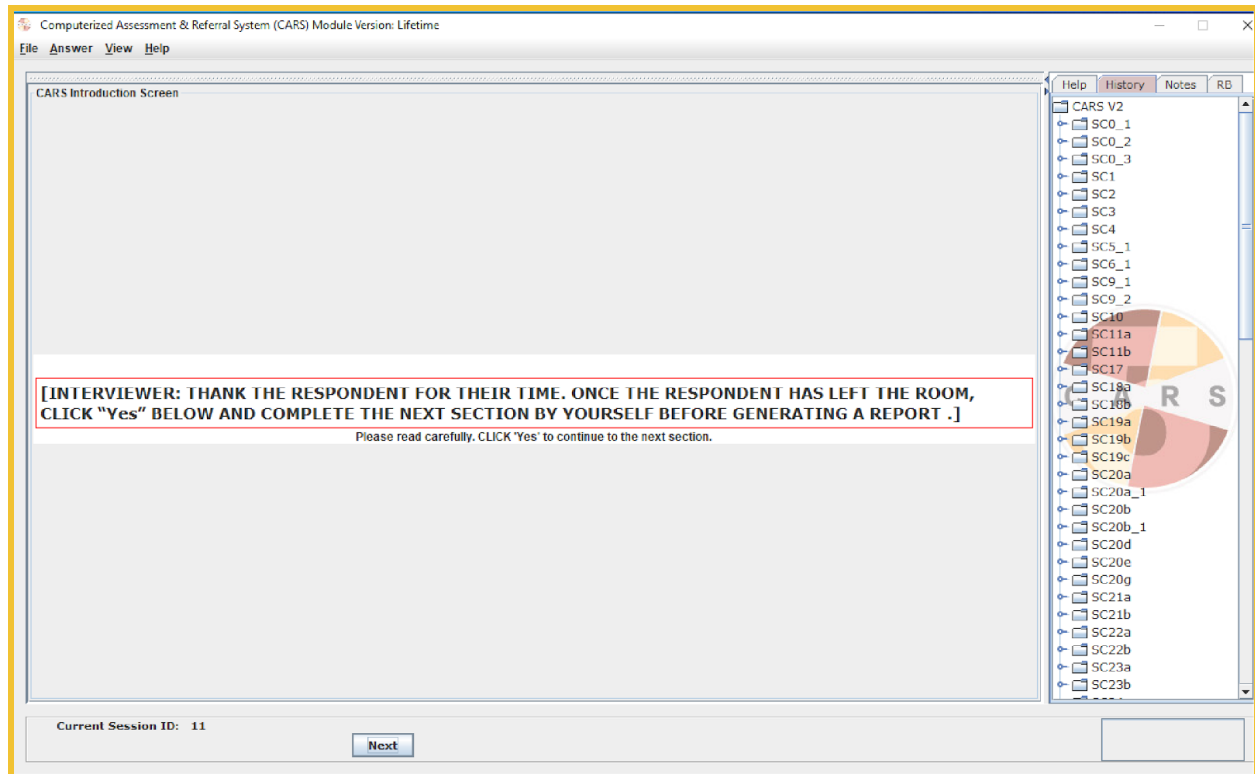
If a question appears inside a grid, select the corresponding row in the grid before choosing **Don't Know** or **Refused**. If a question consists of multiple parts, select the target section before choosing **Don't Know** or **Refused**. Visual cues will appear to indicate that **Don't Know** (yellow highlight) or **Refused** (red highlight) has been selected.

The **View** tab allows the user to toggle between options in the sidebar (see [Sidebar](#)).

The **Help** tab launches the User Manual from the desktop.

## Ending a Session

**CARS and CARS Screener (English and Spanish):** After completing the interview, you will be shown the following screen:



Select **Next**, dismiss the client, then select **Next** again to proceed to the Interviewer Observation (IO) module. This brief module asks the user about the interview experience, including client conduct and functioning. Responses and notes from this module can be generated in an Observation Raw Data report.

*Note: This information will not be shared with the client in their report.*



After completing the Interviewer Observation module, you have the option to generate a diagnostic report. Select **Yes** to generate a report. Otherwise, select **No**. You will return to the CARS control center after choosing either option.

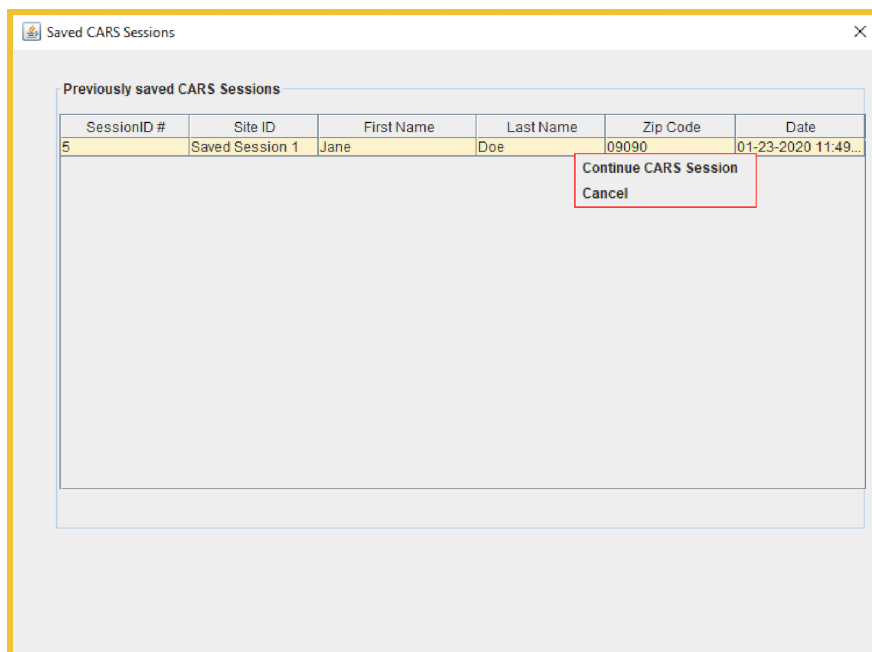
**Self-Administered CARS Screener (English and Spanish):** After completing the self-administered interview, the client will be instructed to tell a staff member. The client can also generate a diagnostic report by selecting **Next**, then selecting **Yes**.

**Important:** After a session with the Self-Administered CARS Screener, a staff member must restart CARS and log in to continue use. This security feature prevents clients from accessing confidential information after completing their assessment.

## Continuing a Saved Session

To continue a saved session:

1. In the CARS control center, select **File > Previous CARS Session**.
2. Right click on the session you would like to continue, then select **Continue CARS Session**.



3. The previous session will load the question it was on when saved.



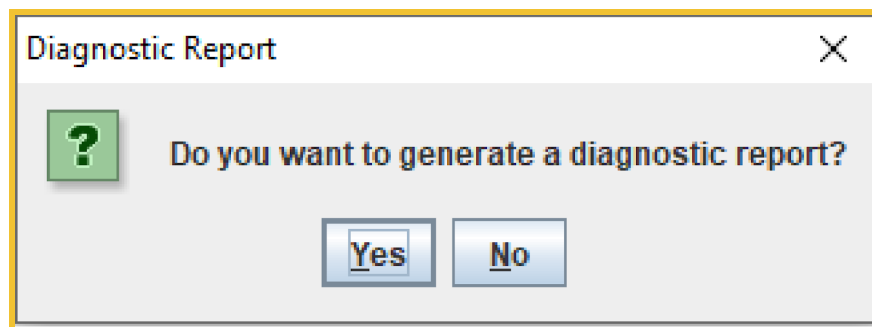
## 5. Reports

CARS generates user-friendly individualized reports in PDF format based on client responses to the assessment. Reports are designed to be shared with clients. When sharing a report with a client, review the entire document with them, ensure they understand all parts, and leave time for questions.

**Important:** CARS does not provide a final diagnostic determination. Further evaluation is necessary to determine whether problems reported are sufficient to qualify as a disorder and to determine the level of problem severity.

### Generating a Report

After completing an assessment, CARS gives the option to generate a diagnostic report. Selecting **Yes** generates a report automatically.



Users can also generate reports from the **Reports** tab in the CARS control center:

- **Generate Previous Diagnostic Report** generates a diagnostic report from a previous session. See [Diagnostic Reports](#) for more information on diagnostic reports.
- **Generate Raw Data Report** generates a list of all questions and responses from a previous session.
- **Generate Psychosocial Raw Data** generates a list of questions and responses relevant to psychosocial risk factors from a previous session.
- **Generate Question Notes** generates a document of interviewer notes from a previous session. See [Sidebar](#) for more information about interviewer notes.
- **Generate Observation Raw Data** generates a list of questions and responses in the Interviewer Observation module of a previous session.
- **Generate Referral Database** generates a list of all treatment referral locations stored in the referral database.



To generate a report from the control center:

1. Select **Reports**, then select the type of report you would like to generate
2. Double click on a previous session from the list, then select **Print**.

## Diagnostic Reports - CARS

Diagnostic reports for the full CARS assessment consist of an Executive Summary, Detailed Diagnostic Report, Risk Assessment, and a Referrals section.

The Executive Summary provides a brief synopsis of all information in the report. The mental health profile table outlines the disorders for which the client met full criteria, met partial (i.e., subclinical) criteria, or screened positive but was not tested in an in-depth module. In the table, “PY” stands for “Past Year” (client showed symptoms within the past 12 months), and “LT” stands for “Lifetime” (client showed symptoms in their lifetime, but not within the past 12 months). If a client shows symptoms in the past 12 months, they will always receive a PY diagnosis, regardless of module version.

Detailed Diagnostic Reports are generated for each disorder for which a client may qualify or be at risk. Each report is composed of an explanation of the disorder and a detailed description of the client’s reported symptoms, length, and severity.

*Note: In CARS-5 Diagnostic Reports for the CARS Screener, and the in-depth modules Alcohol Use Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Depression, Gambling Disorder, Generalized Anxiety Disorder, Mania, Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder, Panic Disorder, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Social Anxiety Disorder, and Substance Use are based on criteria from the DSM-5. Reports for the in-depth modules Conduct Disorder and Intermittent Explosive Disorder are based on DSM-IV criteria. The DUI Behavior module, Suicidality module, and Personality Disorder Screener module are not based on DSM criteria.*

The Biopsychosocial Risk Assessment reports information about biological, psychological, and social experiences that may be relevant to a client’s diagnosis.

The DUI Recidivism Risk report provides a brief summary of risky behaviors that a client may have reported. A speedometer scale highlights the severity of the client’s risk of re-offending, from no risk to very high risk.

Reports may also include a list of referrals for health services tailored for clients. Referrals are sorted by zip code and contingent upon the amount of information provided about local services. To include local referrals in reports, each site must add referral locations (see [Adding and Modifying Referrals](#)).



## ■ Diagnostic Reports - CARS Screener

Diagnostic reports for all CARS Screener versions (including self-administered, and both English and Spanish versions) consist of a Screening Case Summary, a Screening Report, a Risk Report, and a Referrals Section.

The Screening Case Summary provides a brief synopsis of all information in the report. The mental health screening table outlines the disorders for which the client met screening criteria for symptoms in both their lifetime and within the past year.

The Screening Report contains descriptions of each disorder for which a client may qualify or be at risk. Each report is composed of an explanation of the disorder and a detailed description of the client's reported symptoms, length, and severity.

The DUI Recidivism Risk report provides a brief summary of risky behaviors that a client may have reported. A speedometer scale highlights the severity of the client's risk of re-offending, from no risk to very high risk.

Reports may also include a list of referrals for health services tailored for clients. Referrals are sorted by zip code and contingent upon the amount of information provided about local services. To include local referrals in reports, each site must add referral locations (see [Adding and Modifying Referrals](#)).





## 6. Troubleshooting

### Password Recovery

To view the username and password for a user account that is *not* the administrator account, log in to the administrator account to view all user passwords under **Admin > Add/Modify Users**.

To recover the password for the administrator account:

1. Select **Forgot Password** in the login window.
2. Select **Admin Password Recovery**.
3. An email containing a code will be sent to the address provided in site registration. The email may take up to five minutes to send. Enter the code in the box and select **Continue**.
4. You will be shown the administrator password.

*Note: The username for the administrator account is “admin” and cannot be changed.*

### Reporting a Bug

Bugs are issues that cause CARS to operate incorrectly or produce incorrect output. If you believe you’ve found a bug within the program, please visit the [Help Center](#) on the CARS website to report it.

### Other Issues

If you encounter an issue while using CARS that is not a bug, and cannot find a solution in the CARS User Manual, visit the [Help Center](#) on the CARS website.

If you are still unable to find a solution, send a description of your issue to [support@carstrainingcenter.org](mailto:support@carstrainingcenter.org) with as much of the following information as possible:

- Your computer operating system
- Which version of CARS you are running (e.g. CARS-5, CARS 1.05)
- Type of configuration (single-computer or network)
- A screenshot, if applicable
- A list of any other applications running on your computer at the time
- A description of any recent changes to your computer, if applicable

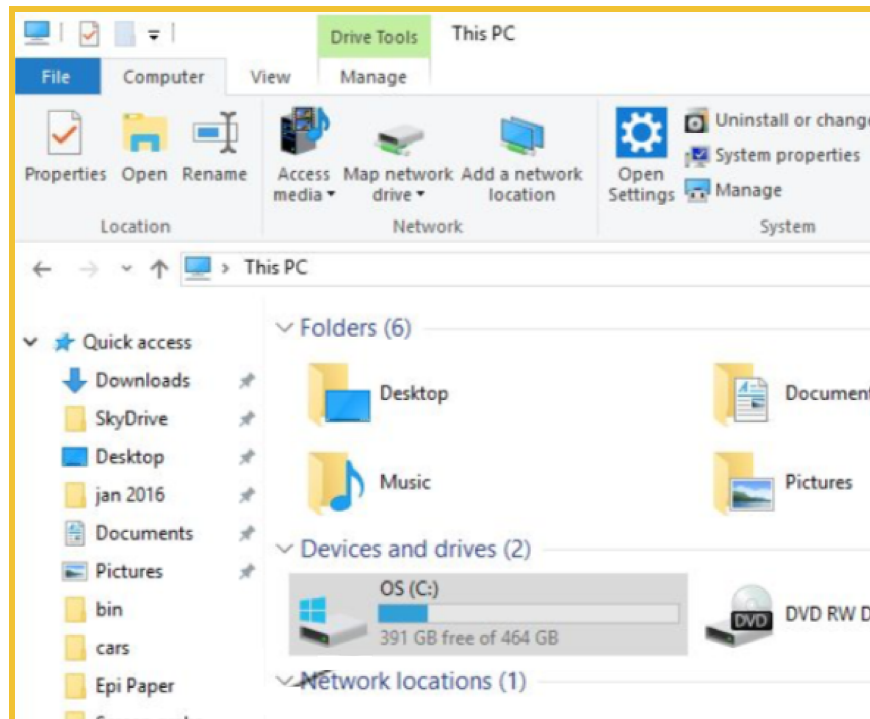
For feedback, suggestions, or other inquiries, contact [info@carstrainingcenter.org](mailto:info@carstrainingcenter.org).



## Appendix A: Preparing a Network Configuration

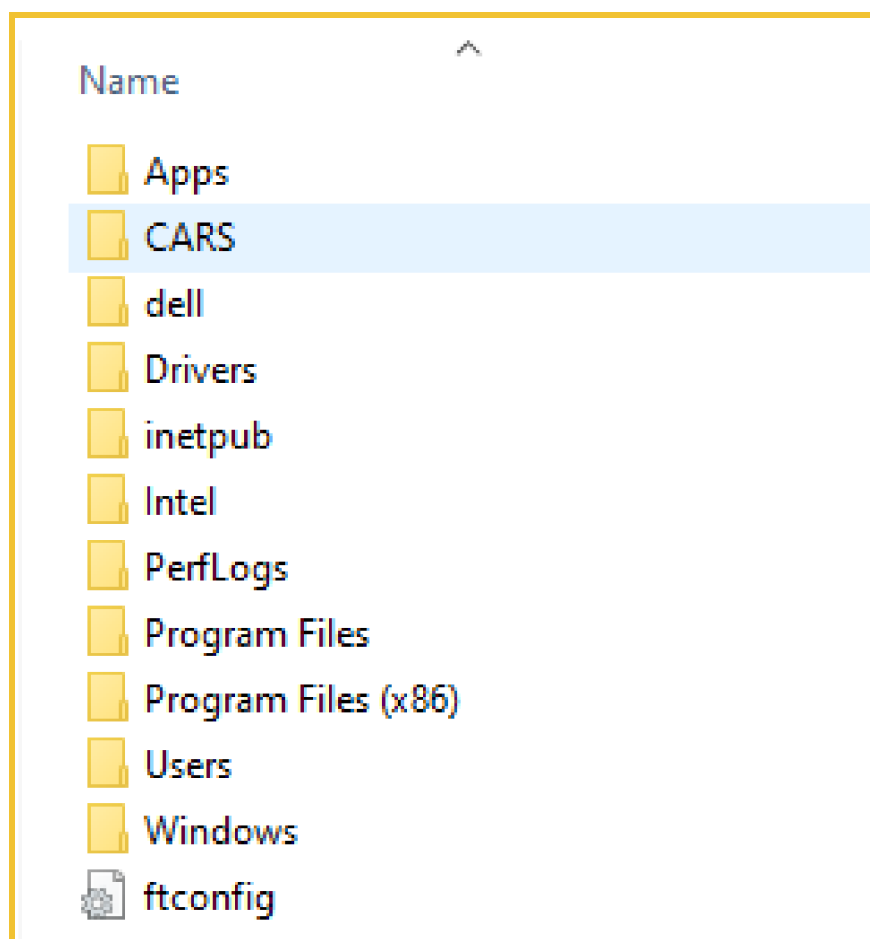
Once you have installed CARS on all desired computers, complete the following steps on each of the computers that is *not* the main networked computer. These steps connect other computers to the main networked computer:

1. Open the **This PC** folder, which should be located on any Windows desktop.
2. Select the **Operating System (OS)** drive that contains the computer's programs.



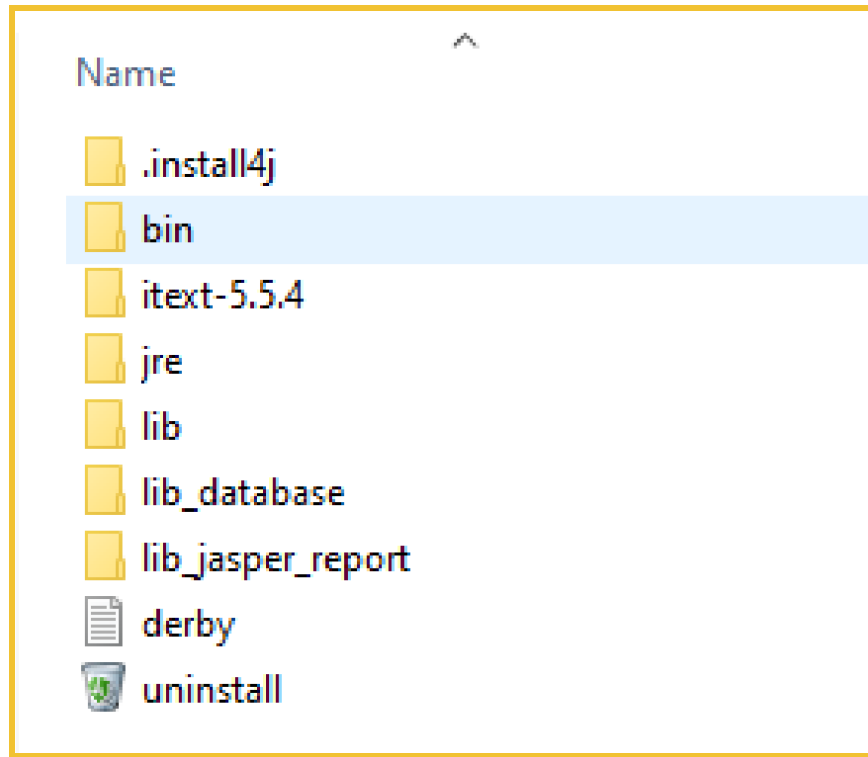


3. Open the **CARS** folder.



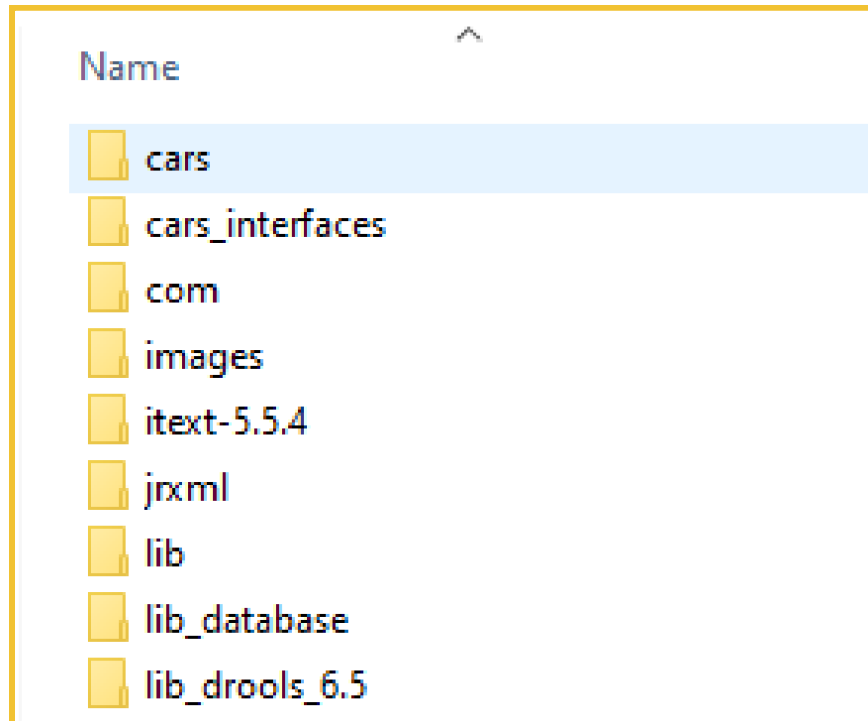


4. Open the **bin** folder.

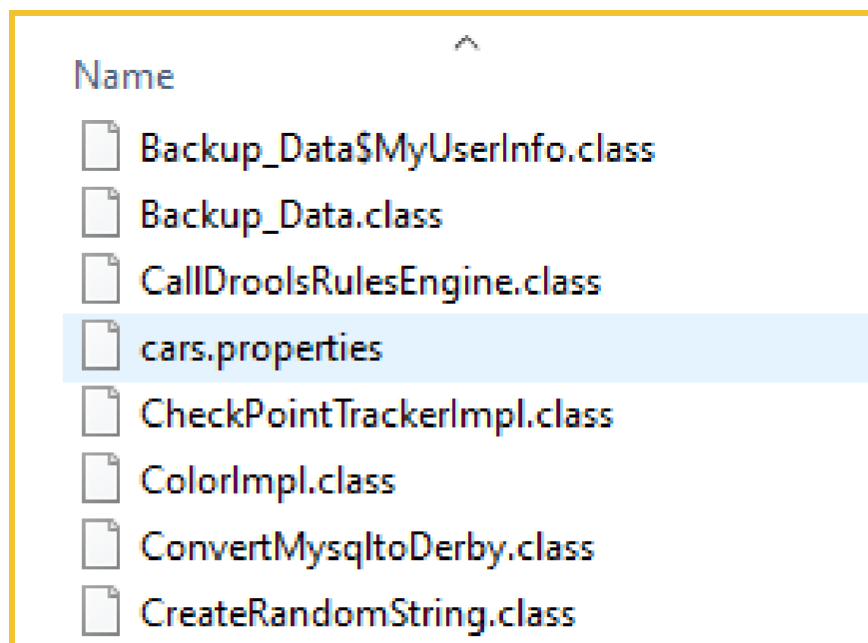




5. In the **bin** folder, find the **cars** folder. Open this folder.



6. In the **cars** folder, find the file **cars.properties** (it may also be titled just **cars**). Open this file in a text editor. The file should look like the image below.





```
cars - Notepad
File Edit Format View Help
#-----standalone Configuration URL -----
databaseURI=jdbc:derby://0.0.0.0:1110/
dbConfiguration=standalone
embedded=yes

#-----network Configuration URL-----
#databaseURI=jdbc:derby://172.16.186.113:1110/
#dbConfiguration=network
#embedded=yes

#-----ASSIGNED SITE IDENTIFICATION-----
siteID=1

#-----DO NOT TOUCH LINE BELOW-----
networkDirectory=C:\\CARS\\bin\\lib_database\\MyDB1
```

7. In the **cars.properties** file, remove the three “#” symbols from the “network configuration URL” section, and place them in the “standalone configuration URL” section, so that the file matches the image below.

```
*cars - Notepad
File Edit Format View Help
#-----standalone Configuration URL -----
#databaseURI=jdbc:derby://0.0.0.0:1110/
#dbConfiguration=standalone
#embedded=yes

#-----network Configuration URL-----
databaseURI=jdbc:derby://172.16.186.113:1110/
dbConfiguration=network
embedded=yes

#-----ASSIGNED SITE IDENTIFICATION-----
siteID=1

#-----DO NOT TOUCH LINE BELOW-----
networkDirectory=C:\\CARS\\bin\\lib_database\\MyDB1
```



8. Still in the **cars.properties** file, replace the IP address highlighted in the image below with the the IP address that is linked to the main networked computer. Replace only the numbers that are highlighted.

```
#-----network Configuration URL-----  
databaseURI=jdbc:derby://172.16.186.113:1110/  
dbConfiguration=network  
embedded=yes
```

9. Save the **cars.properties** file, then close the file.