

DBHDS
OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES
COMMUNITY BULLETIN #5
MAY 2010

This is the fifth in a series of question and answer communications from the Office of Developmental Supports (ODS) aimed at keeping MR/ID Waiver and Targeted Case Management providers (CSBs and private providers) and state training centers current regarding the multiple initiatives in which we are all engaged.

Summary of Questions Recently Received from Region V and Training Centers and the ODS Response

- **Question:** *How are the PCP process and the SIS™ being integrated for training centers and waiver providers? There is confusion about how the SIS™ and PCP process are in sync and how they are different.*
- **Response:** The TC staff and Waiver providers have been informed that they should be reviewing all “Important to/Important for” items discovered through the SIS™ and the information provided in the narratives for incorporation into the PC planning process. The SIS™ helps in determining what type, the frequency of, and how much support a person needs. A well-completed SIS™ provides descriptions of supports that are based on the individual’s needs and preferences that teams and providers use in developing their supports.
- **Question:** *Is there a plan to roll out the SIS™ to those receiving non-waiver services? CSBs believe this might be challenging and give families false hope that additional services are on the horizon.*
- **Response:** There is no current plan, nor has there been to use the SIS™ for individuals receiving only non-waiver services. Some CSBs may independently opt to purchase the SIS™ to use for their non-waiver services recipients. We have discussed the need to eventually begin using the SIS™ for individuals who are on the waiting list for services to help determine the levels of support that are required going forward for Virginians with intellectual disability.
- **Question:** *For what will the SIS™ data will be used and how it will benefit providers, CSBs, Central Office, and the training centers? Better messaging needs to occur around this issue.*
- **Response:** The SIS™ is used to inform the person-centered planning process. The SIS™ data may be used by providers and CSBs to determine the need for staff or for allocating staff. The data also gives the state a method for looking at every individual compared to aggregate state data and national norms. This information is intended to be used eventually to help in planning future funding needs.
- **Question:** *Are private providers are required to complete the SIS™? How is their implementation being monitored?*

- **Response:** The SIS™ is a team assessment to which the providers give input during the SIS™ interview. Providers are required to use the SIS™ as their assessment for Waiver individuals. SIS™ Interviewers for the ID Waiver are drawn from the case management staff of the CSBs.
 - ❖ For private and/or CSB operated ICFMR certified facilities. In the PCP ICF/MR training, both 101 and 202, all participants were told the SIS™ was not required.
 - ❖ Some private providers have purchased the SIS™ for their own use, independent of the “Virginia Version.” Since it is independent of the Virginia Version, it is not entered online or part of the data collection process or monitoring.
- **Question:** Has the SIS™ been recognized by Medicaid, CMS surveyors or DMAS auditors?
- **Response:**
 - ❖ For ICFs/MR, the SIS™ does not replace the Comprehensive Functional Assessments. However, in a person-centered environment, it becomes an important part of the assessment process.
 - ❖ The SIS™ was included by name in the March, 2009 submission of the ID Waiver renewal package and was approved by CMS along with the person-centered process developed by ODS and our partners. The current emergency regulations reference the “DBHDS-approved” triennial assessment (meaning the SIS™). The SIS™ will be mentioned by name in the updated, soon-to-be-released ID Waiver Manual, as well as the final regulations, which will take effect next spring.
- **Comment:** *Completion of the SIS™ is time consuming. The interviews take 2-3 hours.*
- **Response:** The time it takes to interview is a function of how familiar the interviewer and the team are with the assessment instrument and the individual. Most interviewers find that, with practice, they are able to significantly reduce their initial interview timeframe. It should also be considered that the SIS™ is only required to be completed every three years for each individual.
- **Question:** *Is there data showing good instrumentation for children with the SIS™? If not, wouldn't the data be useless? Will the Children's SIS™ be for all children or just DD or just ID?*
- **Response:** The Children's SIS™ is a better instrument than many other alternatives because it is standardized. However, there will not be SIS™ scores until it is norm-referenced. At this time, the SIS™ is used only for individuals with ID for whom we have direct responsibility. It can be used for children with other developmental disabilities as well.
- **Comment:** *There is a perception that the SIS™ was rolled out through TACIDD, but was not carried by senior leadership at DBHDS to the CSB executive directors and/or training center directors (i.e., line staff made decisions and there was no sign off or discussion with higher level senior management about the risks, rewards, costs, and benefits).*
- **Response:**

- ❖ The training center directors and staff of their choosing attended a Webinar on 9-15-2008, before the rollout to review the SIS™, the process, the manpower resources needed, etc. The training center directors also chose who they wanted to be trained as Master Trainers, Administrators and Interviewers for each facility. Each training center director had the opportunity to attend the trainings if he/she chose, to ask questions and/or to voice objections prior to implementation of the training for the Master Trainers and Administrators. In addition, the training center directors were briefed before the SIS™ implementation at the Facility Directors meetings.
- ❖ A presentation was made to the System Leadership Council on June 18, 2008. Regional trainings were held around the state during the formative stages of the SIS™/PCP development prior to the April 2009 roll-out. This included the leadership of the CSB intellectual disability and case management staff. Issues and concerns that were raised along the way have been addressed as they were raised, making this process as collaborative and informed as possible.
- **Question:** *May those trained as master SIS™ trainers go out and train others?*
- **Response:** Master Trainers can only train in Virginia and only through ODS as per our license with AAIDD.
 - ❖ In the training centers the Master Trainers and Administrators train and meet with their interviewers on a monthly basis or as needed to re-train on elements, answer questions and/or to train new interviewers as turnover occurs.
- **Question:** *Do the values and interpretations of different elements of the SIS™ change frequently? When things change, are the changes widely shared? Failure to do so would impact inter-rater reliability.*
- **Response:** Inter-rater reliability is affected by the Interviewer's ability to score the assessment correctly as trained. Everyone was trained in the same manner. Assessments are reviewed by administrators for accuracy and discussed with the interviewer as part of the inter-rater reliability.
- **Question:** *At training centers, what is the purpose of the "extra spreadsheet" that requires information such as meeting date, time, conference room, etc.? It appears to unnecessary and duplicative.*
- **Response:** The training center staff (Master Trainers and Administrators) are responsible for the management of the SIS™ for the entire facility, which requires tracking of the residents, the staffings, and monitoring the responsibilities of the Master Trainers, Administrators and Interviewers. The sheet is an operational management tool, which allows for the following:
 - ❖ tracking of the SIS™ through the various stages
 - ❖ ensuring the SIS™ assessments are accurately completed
 - ❖ ensuring interviewers are available and scheduled
 - ❖ ensuring each person receives a SIS™ on the 1/3 per year schedule
 - ❖ tracking when the Inter-rater reliability (IRR) process

- ❖ monitoring quality and quantity to ensure interviewers are keeping up their skills as interviewers and completing the minimum number of SIS™ assessments per year
- ❖ ensuring that the SIS™ is reviewed by the Master Trainer or the Administrator
- ❖ ensuring that the online portion is completed and monitoring for any operational problems.

In addition it is the tracking tool, for ensuring that discharged individuals are transferred to the appropriate CSB as facilities downsize and individuals relocate. It does not duplicate any of the SIS™ questions or information.

- **Question:** *In training centers, does the SIS™ replace ICAP?*
- **Response:** The SIS™ may replace the ICAP, however in discussion with TC staff, particularly the psychologists, they preferred to keep the ICAP for other purposes (i.e., adaptive behavior scale assessments), or as part of the psychologist's annual reports. This is an individual training center choice and subject to the direction of the Facility Director. As the ICAP is deficit based and not considered to be a person-centered assessment, we will continue to work with TC staff to evaluate its purpose and function in the battery of assessments used.
- **Question:** *Has any data that has been reported been aggregated and put back out to facilities and other providers for their use?*
- **Response:** To date, SIS™ data was collected on each of the residents of SEVTC in May and June of 2009 to be included in the full assessment process relative to determining the range of residential options that could be potentially offered to individual residents at SEVTC during the period when closure of the training center was being discussed and ultimate downsizing was decided. This data was also used in a report generated by the Human Services Resource Institute to compare with a sample of SIS™ scores collected earlier from waiver individuals living in the community.

Information on the SIS™ and the Person Centered Planning Process can be found on the DBHDS web site under the Office of Developmental Services. We have distributed four Bulletins to update the CSB and provider communities on the progress of this initiative and other information relative to its use can be found there. Please visit:

www.dbhds.virginia.gov for further information or call our office at (804) 786-0580.