

Supports Intensity Scale – Adult Version™ - What Comes Next?

Vermont Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living
Developmental Disabilities Services Division and Public Consulting Group

Fall 2022

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Project Team



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Program and Quality Manager

- Denver, CO
- 18+ years with HCBS programs
- Managed case management activities statewide for more than 60,000 people, including SIS assessments



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Project Manager

- Raleigh, NC
- 13+ years in public sector
- 10+ years monitoring and managing process and procedures for Medicaid State Agencies

Independent Assessment of Need

Vermont is using the Supports Intensity Scale - Adult assessment (SIS-A)

- CMS requires that we use an independently administered assessment tool to address conflict of interest in case management (the people who assess need can't also deliver the services).
- DAIL chose a standardized tool because it offers an independent assessment of a person's support needs in a reliable, validated format, which will help reduce conflict of interest in services and provide an equitable approach to matching people to the services that fit their individual needs.
- Everyone who receives Home and Community Based Services will need to have a SIS-A assessment when we come into compliance with conflict of interest rules.
 - We now know that the timeframe CMS will give us to make these changes is 3 years.



What Comes Next?

What Comes Next?

- Since the sample is now complete, we have started planning for when we start regular assessments for everyone receiving Home and Community Based Services.
- Everyone receiving Home and Community Based Services will complete a SIS-A assessment once every three years, or more often if needed due to a change in their life that results in needing new or different services.
- Requirements under CMS:
 - Everyone must have an independently administered assessment to receive Home and Community Based Services once we make changes to our system to address conflict of interest in case management.
 - We have three years to come into compliance with the conflict-of-interest rules.
- Because we have three years to address conflict of interest, we are proposing that we start the three-year cycle of getting everyone in Home and Community Based Services a SIS-A assessment so we are in line with the timeframe for any changes we will see under conflict of interest.



Next Three Years

- The sampling phase is done.
- All individuals that have HCBS services should have their first SIS-A assessment over the next three years.
- Each provider has been given a monthly and yearly number of individuals that must have an assessment so everyone who receives services can get on a three-year cycle
- Providers and individuals can decide who will have an assessment each month
- Providers will send a secure, online referral to PCG for each individual, each month
- Referrals should be sent to PCG at least 30 days before the month the SIS-A will occur
 - E.g., Assessments that will occur in December 2022 should be sent by November 1st, 2022
 - Exceptions for first 2 months
- DAIL and PCG will meet with stakeholders every 3-4 months to provide updates, talk about what's coming up, and answer questions



Referral Process

- DAIL has given providers a total list of individuals with monthly and yearly number of individuals that must have an assessment.
- If you completed a SIS-A assessment during the sample period, you will be referred to PCG by your provider to complete another SIS-A in 2024 or 2025.
- Your provider agency will complete the secure, online form for each individual.
- The referral form asks for information about the individual, contacts, and other information to help with scheduling.



Assessment Process

How Are Assessments Scheduled?

- Once PCG receives the referral form from your provider, the PCG Scheduling team will contact the individual, family, guardian or case manager to schedule the assessment at a time convenient to the individual, family, or guardian. The telephone number that PCG will call from is **1-623-277-5999**.
- PCG will leave a message if no one answers
- To call PCG back to schedule your SIS-A, use this number: 1-833-930-3543
- In addition to the Individual, there must be **at least 2 respondents** that has known the individual for at least 3 months to participate in the assessment
- The respondent team receives a confirmation e-mail of the assessment date and time along with additional information about the SIS-A
 - Assessments can occur:
 - Online using Microsoft Teams or Zoom
 - At the individual's home
 - At the agency
 - Another location preferred by the individual



What Happens at the Assessment?

- The PCG Assessors introduce the SIS-A assessment
 - Process
 - Purpose
 - SIS-A Booklet
 - Guide to Rating
- The PCG Assessors conduct the assessment
 - Introduce each section
 - Let respondents know which item is being scored, the focus of the item, and primary considerations of the item
- Assessments take approximately 2 hours



What Happens After the Assessment?

- The PCG Assessor will enter all assessment information into the online system
- Once the assessment is final, the PCG team will send the final report to all respondents and agency staff if PCG has the correct email address. This final report will come from Lori Williams, PCG.



Will My Services or Budget Change?

DAIL is drafting a possible payment model that might connect a SIS-A to a budget. This would mean that people would need to take assessments before we know how their results will be used, which is very stressful and has people concerned.

- No changes would happen until 2025
- We will have an exceptions process if we choose a payment model that is tied to a SIS-A score, so there would be a way to request more funding if it doesn't meet the person's need.
- We will offer a possible payment model that does not tie a SIS-A score to a budget
- People will always have appeal rights anytime they are receiving a Medicaid funded service, these rights are in addition to an exceptions process.



Feedback

Assessment Feedback

SIS Assessment Survey

Thank you for your participation in the Supports Intensity Scale needs assessment. Please take the time to complete this satisfaction survey. Thank you!

1. Please rate your experience with the Supports Intensity Scale Assessment *



2. My agency is *

A dropdown menu with the text "Select your answer" and a downward-pointing chevron icon.

Resources

Resources

- <https://ddsd.vermont.gov/sis-a-needs-assessment-starting-latest-news>
- [Info about DS Needs Assessment changes.pdf \(vermont.gov\)](#)
- American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities <https://www.aaid.org/home>
- Plain Language Document (FAQs) [SIS A Plain Language.pdf \(vermont.gov\)](#)
- SIS-A Sample [SIS A Sample.pdf \(vermont.gov\)](#)



Questions





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