



Supports Intensity Scale (SIS-A) Fact Sheet Summer 2022

Description of the SIS-A

SIS-A is a valuable person-centered planning tool because it focuses on identifying how supports can help a person achieve their goals. Traditionally, a person's level of intellectual and/or developmental disability has been measured by what someone can or cannot do, which can feel deficit-based rather than strength-based. **The SIS-A is a strength-based, person-centered assessment that** evaluates and measures the practical supports people with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities need to lead productive, independent lives and to successfully engage in everyday activities.

The individual, family, guardian, and others who support the individual are all invited to participate in the SIS-A interview/ assessment, making the SIS-A process inclusive, personalized, and person-centered. SIS-A interviewers have been specially trained and certified in administering the SIS. The interview itself may take up to 2-3 hours to complete and must include, in addition to the individual, at least two people who know the person well in a variety of situations. Additional details about participation will be shared with every individual and family in advance of their assessment. The SIS-A has been used in New Hampshire for service planning for everyone receiving adult services. The assessment itself and the 5-year renewal requirement is unchanged from the standard practice individuals, families, and caretakers are used to.

Benefits of the SIS

- Direct, reliable, and valid measurement of support requirements in specific areas of life activities as well as supports needed to prevent or manage different exceptional medical and/or behavioral needs.
- Provides an opportunity for conversation about (and documentation of) the person's needs, preferences, goals.
- Gathers information about what supports are *important to* the individual and those that are *important for* the individual.
- Supports a consistent method for determining a rate methodology that aligns an individual's assessed need with funding for supports.

SIS-A "Assessment Sample" Overview

Why: The Bureau of Developmental Services (BDS) needs data about the supports people need to develop new reimbursement rates. These new rates are meant to better fund services throughout New Hampshire.

BDS is collecting data with two goals in mind.

- First, BDS plans to ensure that "business as usual" continues for people in the sample. This means that people who are due for a SIS-A renewal will be contacted, but someone who just completed a SIS-A will not be asked to redo their assessment.
- Second, BDS is focused on collecting a representative sample which is important for data analysis. This includes ensuring that the data collected in the sample will be from people across the state with varying levels of need. Approximately 400 assessments need to be completed to fulfill this goal.

Who: People who are currently receiving adult services and are near or overdue for their SIS-A renewal are likely to be a part of this sample. People who are entering the adult service system will not be a part of the assessment sample. Individuals and families who might be participants will be contacted by their area agency or service coordinator.

When: If an individual completes their SIS-A renewal during the sample period, their data may be included in BDS' analysis.

Outcome for Individuals

The SIS-A results from SIS-A assessments completed during the sample period will be used as usual in person-centered planning. If a SIS-A renewal is part of the sample, it will be a valid assessment. Service coordinators, individuals and families will have access to the results to use for service planning (as is standard practice currently). The new rates developed from the sample will not be effective until late 2023. BDS will not ask individuals to complete a SIS-A twice in a time period more frequent than the standard 5-year renewal period unless warranted by a significant change in an individual's needs.