



Iowa Department of Human Services

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INFORMATIONAL LETTER NO.1392

DATE: June 9, 2014

TO: Iowa Medicaid Home and Community Based Waiver Providers, Intermediate Care Facilities for persons with Intellectual Disabilities (ICF/ID) and Targeted Case Managers

FROM: Iowa Department of Human Services, Iowa Medicaid Enterprise (IME)

RE: Supports Intensity Scale® Assessments

EFFECTIVE: Immediately

Changes are coming for members ages 16 and older who receive services through the Intellectual Disability Waiver and ICF/IDs. These members will have a new type of assessment, the Supports Intensity Scale® (SIS). The SIS® is a core standardized assessment tool used to evaluate the support needs of a person with an Intellectual and/or Developmental Disability through a positive interview process.

Unlike other assessment tools, the SIS® is strengths-based, focusing on the supports a person needs and not the deficits a person has. The SIS® covers 84 different categories of support needs. The assessment is completed with the individual as well as at least two people who know the individual well. The others involved could be a family member, the case manager, or a provider who has been working with the member. The goal is to have a reliable assessment that can provide the foundation for service planning. SIS® assessment results are usually valid for three years unless there are significant changes in the member's condition or circumstances. Currently, at least 34 other states use the SIS® for individual planning.

The Mental Health and Disability Redesign Workgroup recommended implementing standard assessment instruments, specifically recommending the SIS®. Through Senate File 446, the 2013 Health and Human Services Appropriations bill directed the Department of Human Services (DHS) to contract with an independent entity to perform the SIS®. Telligen, Inc. was selected as the vendor to implement core standardized assessments as well as other assessments in the interim years between SIS® assessments.

Implementation of the SIS® to assess Iowa's persons with intellectual disabilities will begin on August 1, 2014. Not all members will have a SIS® assessment the first year. All persons new to ID Waiver and ICF/ID services, as well as one-third of the present ID Waiver and ICF/ID population will be randomly selected for the full SIS® assessment. Another one-third of the present members will be randomly selected in the second year. By year three all current members will receive a SIS® assessment. Persons selected to have an assessment

will be contacted to schedule the interview. Their case managers will also be contacted by Telligen staff.

The remaining two-thirds of the members currently receiving ID Waiver and ICF/ID services will receive a different assessment called a Level of Care Continued Stay Review (LOC-CSR). This is anticipated to be a telephonic review conducted by Telligen with the member's case manager or facility representative.

Telligen is currently working with representative case managers and facility staff members to design the best processes for completing the SIS® face-to-face assessments and the telephonic LOC-CSRs. Learning sessions with case managers, facility staff and other interested stakeholders are planned for June 16, – July 3, 2014, and again August 4 – 15, 2014. Topics for the learning sessions will include the scheduling and interviewing processes; participation by providers, case managers and representatives and use of the SIS® in service planning.

More information on the implementation of the SIS® is available on the [Core Standardized Assessment](#)¹ webpage. Questions can be submitted to DHSCoreStandardizedAssessments@dhs.state.ia.us.

¹ <http://dhs.iowa.gov/ime/about/initiatives/BIPP/CSA>