



FactSheet:

Employment and Day Services for Individuals with Complex Needs

DHS Office of Intellectual Disability

Supporting individuals with complex needs in Intellectual Disability (ID) Waiver supported employment services or day programs requires some specific considerations. For instance, of medical, communication, physical health, mental health and / or behavioral challenges. This FactSheet can help to start conversations about these considerations. These conversations may include planning for higher than average staffing ratios and levels of support, nursing services, therapies throughout the day or the use of durable medical equipment.

Supports Coordinators, circles of support and provider staff working closely together will be very important. Transition age youth will also need to include their transition team / IEP team in the planning. Learn more about this on the FactSheet: Transition to Adult Life.

Creating unique combinations of services and activities may be right for some individuals. Refer to the FactSheet: Employment Services and Day Activities for definitions and details about options.

Other FactSheet topics include Supports Coordination, Individual Support Plans (ISP) and Intellectual Disability Waivers. All can be found on the Allegheny County Department of Human Services website. If you do not have access to the internet call 412-253-1251.

How can I be sure that my specific needs are going to be met ?

Work with your Supports Coordinator (SC) to be sure your Individual Support Plan (ISP) is current and reflects your abilities, as well as supports needed to ensure success. Communicate with your SC and others that support you about your current and future employment and / or day activity goals. Your SC will assist in working with potential and chosen providers. If you feel a request is being unduly denied there are options for an appeal. More details about this can be found in the FactSheet: Appeal Options.

Must any provider I choose accommodate my needs?

According to the PA Department of Human Services Office of Developmental Programs (PA DHS ODP) * providers of ID waiver services must be "willing and qualified". As defined in the ODP ISP Manual this is a provider "who meets applicable qualification criteria and agrees to provide services to an individual as stated in his or her ISP. Waiver providers must meet qualification criteria included in the approved Consolidated and Person Family Directed Support Waivers." It is ultimately the decision of the provider if they are capable of meeting a persons need. Once they have made the decision, the provider is making a commitment that your needs, outlined in your ISP, will be met.

How do I choose a provider?

Information on choosing a provider can be found on the OID FactSheet: ID Waiver Services, Providers and Delivery. Asking questions is important. In addition to those for potential providers listed at www.dpw.state.pa.us/fordisabilityservices/intellectualdisabilitiesservices/howtochooseanintellectualdisabilitiesprovider/index.htm consider some specific to your needs.

If a concern for you, following are some additional points you will want to clarify with potential providers. Information provided offers general answers to these common questions.

I have a current therapy (examples: speech, physical or occupational). Can that be delivered in my day facility?

Often, they can be. There are specific requirements for each type of therapy including allowable locations and target skills intended to be learned in that environment (i.e. outcomes). There also needs to be a determination as to whether or not the therapy is intended to be short term or on-going. Teams must work together to assure that all of this information is addressed in detail in the ISP. Your SC will share information with the team regarding their approval and authorization.

Can my assessed need for 1:1 staffing or higher be accommodated?

When considering potential providers it would need to be determined if they can provide the level of support you need, Providers are not required to provide 1:1 or higher staffing.

Is there nursing staff available on site?

Providers are not required to have nursing supports on site. Should you have an assessed need for nursing, these details would be discussed with the team assisting you with choosing a provider. When contacting potential providers, determine whether or not they can provide the level of support you require.

I need support during travel to and from my employment or day activity. Who can travel with me? Do you have staff that will travel with me?

If travel is part of the service provision offered by the provider, they are responsible to provide transportation. Likewise, they are responsible to have trained staff available to support individual needs during travel. If your transportation is through a private contractor, there may be opportunities for medical supports to ride along. However, please note that typically behavioral supports are not allowed. You will want to discuss particular needs and/or concerns with any potential provider prior to choosing them.

What education will staff receive regarding my needs, including the use of my medical equipment and how to support me if I have a medical or behavioral health crisis?

It is the expectation of ODP that providers understand the individual needs of those they serve through training on all aspects of the ISP . Providers are also expected to receive specific training in regards to responding to medical and/or behavioral crisis.

Has the provider successfully supported others with similar needs to mine ?

You will want to discuss this with any potential provider as each agency has different experiences. You may also choose to tour the site to see how the setting may or may not be what you have in mind.

What supports may be available for my provider to assist them in providing my services?

Providers may choose to get support to meet individual needs in a variety of ways. For instance, they may want to make a referral to their HCQU**. Many agencies also have internal committees that look at quality of care. You will want to ask about supports available to staff of any provider you are considering.

*to learn more about ODP, including documents regarding *Services for Individuals with Complex Intellectual, Medical & Behavioral Needs* go to www.odpconsulting.net/resources/state-center-topic-info-for-families/services-for-individuals-with-complex-intellectual-medical-and-behavioral-needs/

**There are 8 Health Care Quality Units (HCQU) in Pennsylvania that were set up by the ODP. APS Healthcare operates our Southwestern Pa HCQU. Primary activities include providing healthcare trainings to all stakeholders, providing clinical healthcare expertise to caregiving teams supporting individuals with complex physical and behavioral healthcare issues, and disseminating information. For more information visit the website at www.hcqu.apshealthcare.com or call 1-888-321-5861.

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For more information regarding OID, including additional FactSheets visit <http://alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/Programs-Services/Disabilities/Intellectual-Disability.aspx>