

The Supports Intensity Scale (SIS) Project

FAQ's

What is the Supports Intensity Scale (SIS)?

The SIS was developed over a 5 year period under the auspices of American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (formerly AAMR). It is a nationally recognized, standardized tool for individuals ages 16-72 with intellectual and developmental disabilities. It measures the supports a person needs to participate in 57 specific activities by rating:

- type of support (monitoring to full physical assistance)
- how frequently the support is needed (none to hourly)
- daily support time (no time to more than 4 hours per day)

The SIS also measures support needs for 29 exceptional medical and behavioral areas. More detailed information is available at <http://www.siswebsite.org>.

How is it completed?

A trained interviewer completes the SIS in a face-to face interview format with at least 2 respondents who know the person well. The person being assessed may also participate as appropriate. The interviewer consolidates the information provided during the interview into the standardized form for scoring.

Is it reliable?

It was normed nationally on 1306 adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. When administered by trained interviewers, the SIS has a .87 inter-rater reliability coefficient. Since release in 2004, 15 US states, 4 Canadian provinces and 16 countries overseas have adopted the use of the SIS as part of their service planning and/or funding allocation process. Studies by Human Services Research Institute (HSRI) have validated its reliability as a planning tool for individualized programs.

What has NH done to date?

2004 – A small pilot study in 4 regions when the SIS was newly released.

2008 – Completion of the SIS for a representative sample of individuals with significant support needs. SIS results were consistent with the characteristics of the study group.

2010 - Completion of large pilot study, 400 individuals randomly chosen state-wide, in order to streamline the interview process, build state baseline and produce data for HSRI to evaluate and build funding bands.

2010 – Completion of the SIS was incorporated into the state regulations governing services to individuals on the Acquired Brain Disorder waiver

2011 – The SIS is currently being completed on all individuals, state-wide who are on the Projected Service Needs List

How will the SIS affect my or my loved one's program and funding?

Because of the amount and strength of the information generated by a SIS Interview, the SIS is an excellent planning tool for teams to utilize during annual planning meetings and for transition planning. The results of the SIS Interview will not change any current services unless the team decides to make changes. In addition to use as a planning tool, BDS will be utilizing the SIS as a portion of what is used to determine individual funding. Using the SIS, in addition to all records and information provided about each individual will allow BDS to make more accurate and fair budget determinations.

Why do we need to complete a SIS when our regional area agency and BDS already have so much information about me / my loved one?

The SIS is a standardized assessment tool that will provide teams with excellent service planning tools. It will provide BDS with important information about each individual to be combined with other factors to help fairly and accurately determine individual budgets. Completion of the SIS will soon be required for all individuals receiving or requesting services through any Area Agency.

What's next?

CSNI will collaborate with BDS to complete the SIS for all individuals state-wide who are receiving or waiting to receive services through any regional Area Agency. It is projected that the SIS will be completed on each individual every 5 years or when there is a significant change in the person's living situation or health/ behavioral status.