Virginia DBHDS
SIS-A 2nd Edition Advisory Group

Meeting 1

Details

Date: September 7, 2023

Time: 2:30 pm

Facilitators: Jami Petner-Arrey, Colleen Kidney, Jodi Franck

Advisory Group Attendance: Lisa Turner, Maureen Kidney, Amanda Morrill, Nicole DeStefano, Angela Adkins, Ann Flippin, Catherine Wilson, Jason Perkins, Jessica Swanson, Kristy Hall, Lisa Turner, Lucy Cantrell, Ken Haines, Shantel Ball, Stephen Pawlowski, Sue Shire, Jackie McKean

Members of the public also attended this meeting.

Agenda

1. Get to Know Each Other
2. Current Support Level/Rate Tier Model
3. Project Overview
4. Next Steps

Meeting Minutes

1. Get to Know Each Other

a. Introduction from Maureen Kennedy, SIS Quality Manager DBHDS-shared excitement about this project. Ken Haines-Regional Support Manager DBHDS explained his role in the project as well.

b. Recording for other members that can review if needed

c. Organizational and Project Staff Intorductions:
   o HSRI was founded in 1976, the Human Services Research Institute (HSRI) is a national non-profit improving the availability and quality of supports for vulnerable populations, including children and adults with disabilities. We believe that all people and their families have the right to live, love, work, play and pursue their life aspirations in their community. Staff from HSRI introduced themselves: Jami Petner-Arrey, Colleen Kidney, Jodi Franck.

- HMA–Burns has worked with states on the redesign of health care delivery and payment systems since 2006. Stephen Pawlowski introduced himself.
- DMAS and DBHDS staff introduced themselves Maureen Kennedy, Ken Haines, Jason Perkins, and Amanda Morrill.
- Introductions from Advisory Group Members

d. Advisory group will meet monthly from September 2023 through April 2024 for 90 minutes to 2 hours per meeting

e. Comments in Mentimeter were recorded so that we can review and be sure to answer.

f. The project team will collect questions in the chat and then we will provide answers at the next meeting.

g. People can also send questions to the SIS email

2. Current Support Level/Rate Tier Model

a. HSRI conducted a poll and all but one respondents were somewhat or very familiar with the current support level/rate tier model.

b. In 2013, HSRI and our partners, HMA-Burns, were contracted to work with VA DBHDS to develop support levels and rate tiers for people using waiver services on all three waivers

c. We developed a support level model that relies on results from the Supports Intensity Scale® (SIS®), supplemental questions, and a document review verification process to assign each person to a support level

d. Why Support Levels/Rate Tiers

- To make sure that rates are matched to people's needs
- To allow for fair and equitable rates across the state
- To have more meaningful information about support needs for person centered planning
- Support levels and rate tiers match what is in the person's plan (documented medical, behavioral, and other supports)
- Also offers data for analysis

e. Getting a Support Level

- Each person over 16 takes a SIS-A assessment, and some children under 16 take a SIS-C assessment

- SIS-A measures support needed for home living, community living, lifelong learning, employment, health and safety, social activities, and protection and advocacy
- SIS-C measures support needed for home living, community & neighborhood, school participation, school learning, health & safety, social activities, and advocacy
- SIS scores are used to assign everyone who takes a SIS assessment a support level

f. What is Changing?

- The SIS-A is changing, the changes are called the SIS-A 2nd Edition
- There are changes to demographic section
- There are 6 new medical questions and adjustments to others
- There is 1 new behavioral question
- The scoring is different
- Some sections and subsections have been renamed
- Some of the question shave been reworded or changed
- The SIS-C is not changing at this time
- The SIS-A 2nd Edition will not be implemented until this project is complete
- Instead of switching to the SIS-A 2nd Edition right away, DBHDS is using advance questions
- The advance questions are the new questions in the medical and behavioral sections if the SIS-A 2nd Edition that have been added to the SIS-A assessment
- The advance questions will allow DBHDS to collect data on how people answer the advance questions before DBHDS changes to the SIS-A 2nd Edition

g. Getting a Support Level

- Supplemental Questions (SQs)
- SQs ask about severe medical and safety risks, and risks of self-injury
- SQs are used to indicate that someone may have extraordinary needs that are verified later
- Document Review Verification is a process to confirm what is reported in the SIS assessment including extraordinary medical/behavioral needs from supplemental questions

- o Records and documents are reviewed by a committee that confirms whether the person has extraordinary needs
- o People who have extraordinary needs are assigned to the highest support levels

h. Getting a Rate Tier

- o Support levels are matched to rate tiers
- o 7 support levels, 4 reimbursement tiers
    1. Support Level 1=Tier 1
    2. Support Level 2 = Tier 2
    3. Support Level 3 and 4 = Tier 3
    4. Support Level 5,6, and 7 = Tier 4
- o People may find out what their support level is from their support coordinator
- o People engage in their person-centered planning process
- o People can choose the services that they would like in their plan. If they select tiered services, their providers will be paid the tier that matches with her support level
- o Providers can apply for a customized rate for people whose needs outweigh the resources available within the rate structure, if the person meets certain eligibility requirements

3. Project Overview

a. Consult People

- o Convene an advisory group
- o The advisory group wl meet about 8 times, monthly through early next year

b. Interview key informants

- o Host 3 virtual engagement sessions with:
    1. People using services and their families
    2. Support coordinators
    3. Providers
- o HSRI asked which additional people we should be hearing from and attendees offered the following:
    1. Providers - residential, day, etc.
    2. Direct care staff (DSP)
    3. "https://www.vnppinc.org/

4. CSB association https://vacsb.org/"
5. Day Support - so that they can describe what it would take to support some difficult individuals.
6. Families

- o HSRI asked what kind of information people would want us to share and attendees offered the following:
  1. How will the changes benefit the individual and provider?
  2. How things can be impacted by the changes.
  3. Purpose.....why? How will it affect services and level of support provided to individual in variety of settings
  4. What is important to and for the person, that's supported.
- o HSRI asked what attendees would want to know from these different groups or people and attended offered the following:
  1. Do you think all of the current SIS questions need to be adjusted or removed?
  2. Does the current SIS scoring accurately represent the individual? If not, do you feel the scoring needs to change?
  3. Do the changes make the process simpler?
  4. How do SIS evaluators make sure they're capturing the data as accurately as possible?

c. Analyze Changes to the Support Levels/Rate Tiers

- o Review supplemental questions and verification process
- o Analyze the new SIS scoring and the advance questions and propose any needed changes to the support levels
- o Analyze the rate tiers and propose any needed changes to the rate tiers
- o Test out the proposed changes with a record review

d. Recommend Changes to Support Level/Rate Tiers

- o Propose final recommendations
- o Develop a transition plan
- o Develop a communication plan to help support the implementation

e. Timeline for Project:

- o Quarter 1- April-June 2023: Begin Contract Work, Background research
- o Quarter 2-July-September 2023: Establish Advisory Group, Key Informant Interviews, 1st Engagement Sessions, Begin data analysis

- o Quarter 3-October-December 2023: Continue Advisory Group meetings, 2nd Engagement Sessions, Complete data analysis
- o Quarter 4-January-April 2024: Continue Advisory Group meetings, 3rd Engagement Sessions, Test proposed changes, Recommend final changes, Complete implementation & communication plan

4. **What's Next:**

   a. Advisory group members willb e invited to the next meeting which will include updates on the progress that we've made on the project and will discuss outreach

   b. People who are listening in and have used thier e-mails will also be added to the next meeting invite (optional, of course).

   c. Advisory group members and the community are enouraged to use the project form if the would like to included on an invite to listen in to DBHDS's Advisory Group or have a question or feedback they'd like to share about the current Support Level/Rate Tier Model. https://forms.gle/HiaK9SLx4Mja2RsBA is the link to the form to complete. People who need help related to joining the meetings can contact Jodi Franck jfranck@hsri.org

   d. People who need help from DBHDS can e-mail SIS@dbhds.virginia.gov

   e. HSRI offered an opportunity for attendees to ask questions and received the following questions:

      - o Do the changes make the process simpler? The SIS takes forever to get through
      - o Can we pursue interpretation for the engagement in Spanish or ASL?
      - o Can we provide resources in plain language?

Virginia Support Levels/Tiers Advisory Group

September 2023

Housekeeping

Some of the people in this meeting are advisory group members who will participate in the discussion. Everyone else is welcome to type questions in the chat or send your questions to SIS@dbhds.virginia.gov.

Everyone's participation is voluntary. You do not need to participate in any discussion, polls, or chats.

This meeting is hosted by HSRI and may not reflect the views of Virginia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services (DBHDS).

This meeting is being recorded, as a tool for advisory group members to watch later if they had to miss today.

Please mute yourself when you are not talking.

Please allow all advisory group members the opportunity to speak up!

Working Collaboratively

- Be solution-focused and provide supportive and constructive feedback. Let's keep focused on the end goal of updating the support levels/rate tiers

- Respect and listen, don't blame

- Assume good intentions

- When sharing verbally, try to keep response brief and wait, so that others have time to speak. If you want to share more, you can always type in the chat, add comments to the form, e-mail, or request a separate meeting to discuss

- This is an interactive meeting! We encourage you to participate!

Agenda

Get to Know Each Other!

Current Support Level/Rate Tier Model

Project Overview

Next Steps

Get to Know Each Other!

Meet Our Team!

Jami Petner-Arrey
jpetnerarrey@hsri.org

Policy Associate

**Colleen Kidney**
ckidney@hsri.org

Research Associate

Jodi Franck
jfranck@hsri.org

Research Analyst

**Human Services Research Institute**

HSRI

Founded in 1976, the Human Services Research Institute (HSRI) is a national non-profit improving the availability and quality of supports for vulnerable populations, including children and adults with disabilities.

We believe that all people and their families have the right to live, love, work, play and pursue their life aspirations in their community.

BURNS & ASSOCIATES

A DIVISION OF HEALTH MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATES
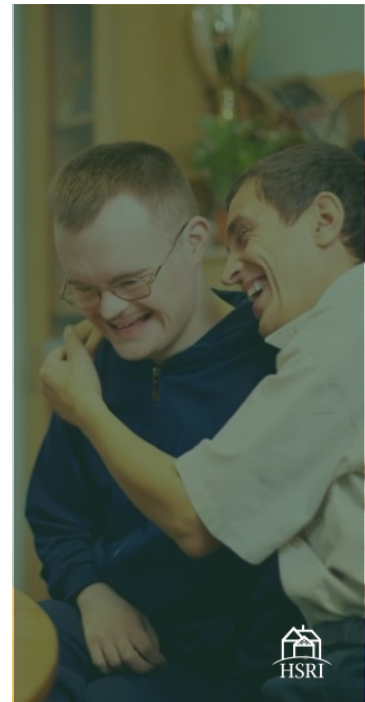
Since 2006 HMA–Burns has worked with states on the redesign of health care delivery and payment systems.

HMA–Burns offers customized, innovative approaches to the financing and delivery of healthcare and human services.
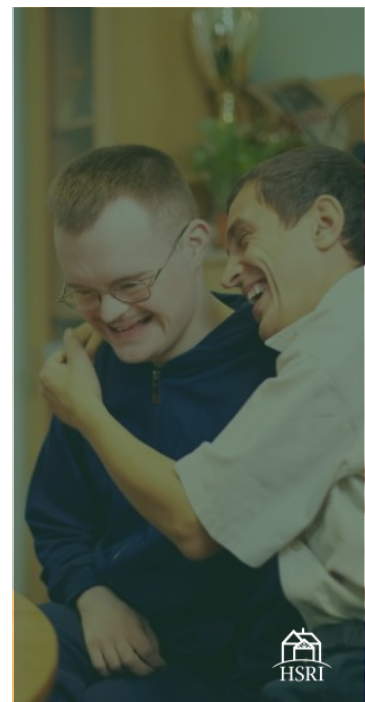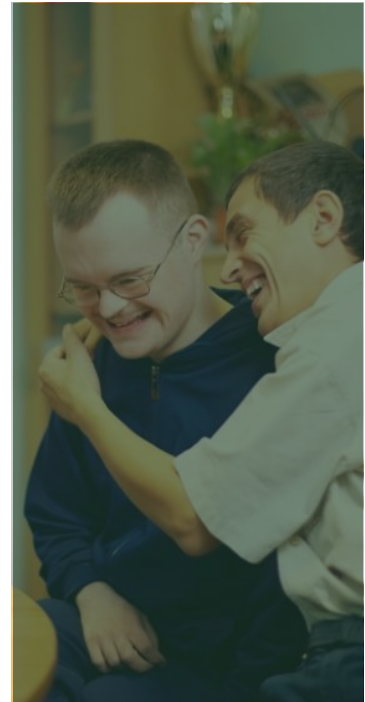
Virginia Department of Behavioral Health & Developmental Services

Mission: A life of possibilities for all Virginians.

Vision: Supporting individuals by promoting recovery, self-determination, and wellness in all aspects of life.

Introductions

Please tell us a bit about yourself!

Share your name and your role

Please answer the following questions

What is your go-to TV show/movie/book/media?

In today's Meeting we Will:

Discuss the current support level/tier model for specific DBHDS services and a project that is working to update that model. We will also discuss your role as an advisory group member. Today's meeting is intended to help us get to know each other and set the stage. Future meetings will be used to dig in!

- The Human Services Research Institute (HSRI) and our partner HMA–Burns are supporting DBHDS in this project
- DBHDS wants to collaborate with an advisory group and other people who are interested in this project

In the Advisory Group:

- You will hear about our upcoming plans for this project
- You will have opportunities to provide ideas and feedback about this project and what we recommend
- You can ask questions
- You will review our analysis and recommendations
- You can help us make sure that our plans work for people receiving services, their families, advocates, support coordinators, and providers

We will meet monthly from September 2023 through April 2024 for 90 minutes to 2 hours per meeting

Current Support Level/Rate Tier Model

Support Level/Rate Tier Development

- In 2013, HSRI and our partners, Burns & Associates, were contracted to work with VA DBHDS to develop support levels and rate tiers for people using waiver services on all three waivers

- We developed a support level model that relies on results from the Supports Intensity Scale® (SIS®), supplemental questions, and a document review verification process to assign each person to a support level

- For some services Support Levels are associated with a rate tiers

Why Support Levels/Rate Tiers?

- To make sure that rates are matched to people's needs

- To allow for fair and equitable rates across the state

- To have more meaningful information about support needs for person centered planning

- Support levels and rate tiers match what is in the person's plan (documented medical, behavioral, and other supports)

- Also offers data for analysis

Getting a Support Level

Supports Intensity Scale® (SIS) Adult (SIS-A) or Child (SIS-C)

- Each person over16 takes a SIS-A assessment, and some children under16 take a SIS-C assessment

- SIS-A measures support needed for home living, community living, lifelong learning, employment, health and safety, social activities, and protection and advocacy

- SIS-C measures support needed for home living, community & neighborhood, school participation, school learning, health & safety, social activities, and advocacy

- SIS scores are used to assign everyone who takes a SIS assessment a support level

What's Changing?

- DBHDS is going to continue to use the SIS and DBHDS will have to update the support level/rate tier mode

- The SIS-A is changing, the changes are called the SIS-A 2nd Edition
  - There are changes to demographic section
  - There are 6 new medical questions and adjustments to others
  - There is 1 new behavioral question
  - The scoring is different
  - Some sections and subsections have been renamed
  - Some of the question shave been reworded or changed

- The SIS-C is not changing at this time

- The SIS-A 2nd Edition will not be implemented until this project is complete

What's Changing?

- Instead of switching to the SIS-A 2nd Edition right away, DBHDS is using advanced questions
- The advanced questions are the new questions in the medical and behavioral sections if the SIS-A 2nd Edition that have been added to the SIS-A assessment
- The advanced questions will allow DBHDS to collect data on how people answer the advanced questions before DBHDS changes to the SIS-A 2nd Edition

Getting a Support Level

Supplemental Questions (SQs)

- SQs ask about severe medical and safety risks and risks of self -injury
- SQs are used to indicate that someone may have extraordinary needs that are verified later

Document Review Verification

- Verification is a process to confirm what is reported in the SIS assessment including extraordinary medical/behavioral needs from supplemental questions
- Records and documents are reviewed by a committee that confirms whether the person has extraordinary needs
- People who have extraordinary needs are assigned to the highest support levels

Getting a Rate Tier

Reimbursement Tier 1	**LEVEL 1**	**Mild Support Needs** Individuals have some need for support, including little to no support need for medical and behavioral challenges. They can manage many aspects of their lives independently or with little assistance.
Reimbursement Tier 2	**LEVEL 2**	**Moderate Support Needs** Individuals have modest or moderate support needs, but little to no need for medical and behavioral supports. They need more support than those in Level 1, but may have minimal needs in some life areas.
Reimbursement Tier 3	**LEVEL 3**	**Mild/Moderate Support Needs with Some Behavioral Support Needs** Individuals have little to moderate support needs as in Levels 1 and 2. They also have an increased, but not significant, support needed due to behavioral challenges.
	LEVEL 4	**Moderate to High Support Needs** Individuals have moderate to high need for support. They may have behavioral support needs that are not significant but range from none to above average.
Reimbursement Tier 4	**LEVEL 5**	**Maximum Support Needs** Individuals have high to maximum personal care and/or medical support needs. They may have behavioral support needs that are not significant but range from none to above average.
	LEVEL 6	**Intensive Medical Support Needs** Individuals have intensive need for medical support but also may have similar support needs to individuals in Level 5. They may have some need for support due to behavior that is not significant.
	LEVEL 7	**Intensive Behavioral Support Needs** Individuals have intensive behavioral challenges, regardless of their support needs to complete daily activities or for medical conditions. These adults typically need significantly enhanced supports due to behavior.
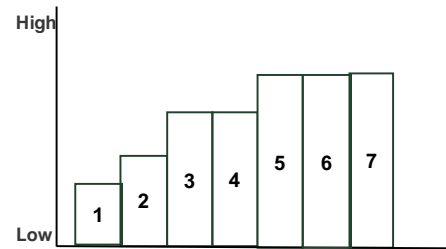
Support levels are matched to rate tiers.

Getting a Rate Tier

The following services have tiered rates:

- Community engagement
- Group day support
- Group home
- Independent living
- Sponsored residential support
- Supported living residential

Getting Services

- People may find out what their support level is from their support coordinator

- People engage in their person-centered planning process

- People can choose the services that they would like in their plan. If they select tiered services, their providers will be paid the tier that matches with her support level

- Providers can apply for a customized rate for people whose needs outweigh the resources available within the rate structure, if the person meets certain eligibility requirements

Project Overview

Consult People

- Convene an advisory group – That's you!
  - We'll meet about 8 times
  - Monthly through early next year
- Interview key informants
- Host 3 virtual engagement sessions with:
  - People using services and their families
  - Support coordinators
  - Providers

Analyze Changes to the Support Levels/Rate Tiers

- Review supplemental questions and verification process
- Analyze the new SIS scoring and the advanced questions
  - Propose any needed changes to the support levels
- Analyze the rate tiers
  - Propose any needed changes to the rate tiers
- Test out the proposed changes with a record review

Recommend Changes to Support Level/Rate Tiers

- Propose final recommendations
- Develop a transition plan
- Develop a communication plan to help support the implementation

Timeline

April-June 2023
- Begin Contract Work
- Background research

July-Sept. 2023
- Establish Advisory Group
- Key Informant Interviews
- 1st Engagement Sessions
- Begin data analysis

Oct.-December
- Continue Advisory Group meetings
- 2nd Engagement Sessions
- Complete data analysis

Jan.-April 2023
- Continue Advisory Group meetings
- 3rd Engagement Sessions
- Test proposed changes
- Recommend final changes
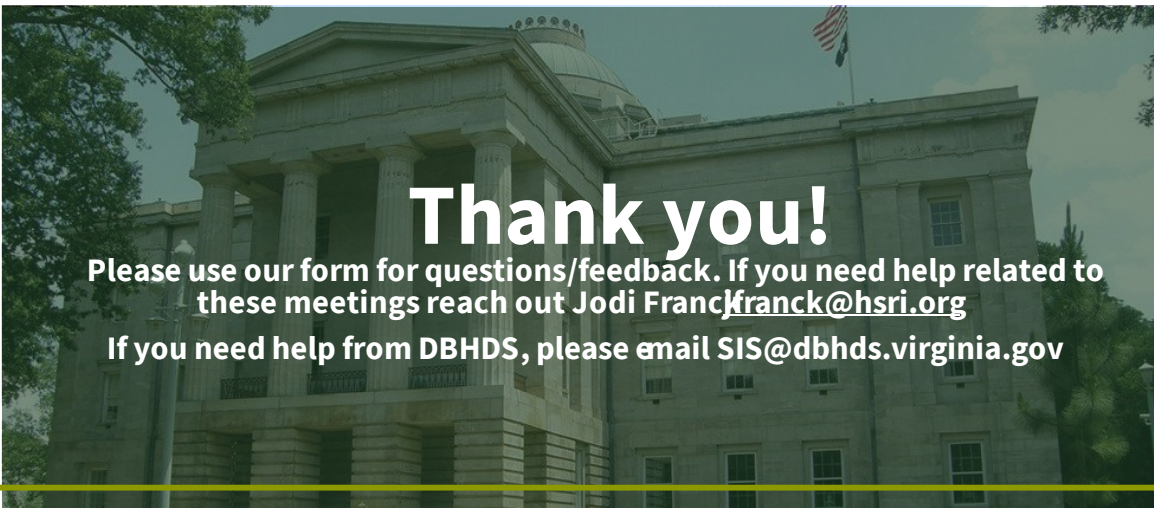- Complete implementation & communication plan

Next Steps

What's Next?

- If you're an advisory group member, look for an invite to the next meeting

- On our next meeting, we'll give updates on the progress that we've made on the project and will discuss outreach

- If you're listening in and have used your e-mail for this meeting, we'll add your e-mail to the next meeting invite (optional, of course)

- If you want to ask a question or share feedback please use the link in chat or scan for the form.

SCAN ME

Questions/Comments

Thank you!

Please use our form for questions/feedback. If you need help related to these meetings reach out Jodi Franck jfranck@hsri.org

If you need help from DBHDS, please email SIS@dbhds.virginia.gov

For the General Public

Since 2015, DBHDS has used the Supports Intensity Scale (SIS)® assessment to determine rates for specific services. The SIS assessment is changing and DBHDS has a new project to update this model. DHBDS wants to hear from people receiving services and other interested people. DBHDS is working with an advisory group to support this project. The public is welcome to listen in on our first advisory group meeting on September 7th, 2023, from 2:30-4:00ET here.

This first meeting will be used to:

- Get to know advisory group members
- Explain how the current funding model works and the changes in the Supports Intensity Scale (SIS) assessment
- Describe the project that we at the Human Services Research Institute (HSRI) are working on with our partners at Burns & Associates for DBHDS
- Discuss the role of advisory group members and how meetings will work

If you would like to be invited to these ongoing meetings complete this form or use the QR code below. You can add your name to the ongoing invite list, ask questions, or provide feedback.

Formal Agenda

<div align="center">

DBHDS SIS-A® 2nd Edition Advisory Group

2:30PM-4:00PM – Thursday September 7, 2023

Online Zoom Meeting (see link below)

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AGENDA

2:30 Welcome and Housekeeping

2:35 Advisory group member introductions

3:00 Advisory group roles and addressing questions

3:15 Overview of the current funding model

3:30 Overview of the project, timeline, and collect feedback

3:50 Next steps, question/feedback form, and survey

4:00 Adjournment