

Payment Reform Overview

Vermont Department of Disabilities, Aging, and
Independent Living

Developmental Disabilities Services Division

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Goals of Payment Reform

DDSD payment reform started in January 2018, paused during the beginning of the pandemic, and restarted in the fall 2020.

Goals of payment reform:

- Transparent: easily described and understood
- Effective: create a payment model that supports people getting appropriate services to meet their needs
- Equitable: resources made available in a similar way across the state
- Accountable: State can identify what services were delivered to people and relate that to payment for services
- Sustainable: Pay providers reasonable rates for delivering services

Important Features of Payment Reform

Independent
Assessment
of Need

How are
needs
assessed?

Resource
Allocation

How do
assessed
needs
translate into
funding?

Payment
Model

How does the
state pay for
services?

Service Planning
and Delivery

How is the
service plan
developed,
implemented,
and monitored?

Accountability

How does state
track what was
provided and
ensure needs are
met? (encounter
data)

Independent Assessment of Need

Vermont is using the Supports Intensity Scale- Adult assessment (SIS-A)

- Current assessment tool is “home grown”, it is not standardized, does not lend itself to an objective, reliable way of measuring what people need, does not have a consistent way of being administered or translating information gathered into an individualized plan.
- CMS requires that we use an independently administered assessment tool to address conflict of interest in case management (the people who assess need can't also deliver the services).
- DDSD chose a standardized tool because it offers an independent assessment of a person's support needs in a reliable, validated format, which will help reduce conflict of interest in services and provide an equitable approach to matching people to the services that fit their individual needs.

Independent Assessment of Need continued...

Public Consulting Group (PCG) has been contracted to conduct assessments

- PCG assessors undergo extensive training to become certified to administer the SIS A.
- The four assessors all live in VT, have experience working with the DS population, have college or Master's level degrees, and many have worked for one of our Designated or Specialized Service Agencies.
- Assessors do not work for the agency providing services, which will help reduce conflict of interest in service delivery.
- Assessments started in the summer of 2021. Current results will not impact anyone's current budget or services, assessments completed as part of the initial sample will only be used to help create a payment model.
- This is a big change and we're getting a lot of feedback about improvements that have happened over the past year, areas that can still be improved, and the impact on providers.
- We just finished an engagement series with providers to help answer questions and ask for feedback, next we will schedule engagement sessions for individuals and families.
- Engagement sessions were offered at the roll out of the SIS A last summer and we think it's important to continue to offer them.

Resource Allocation Payment Model and Service Planning and Delivery

- SIS A scores might be used to inform the creation of the Individual Support Agreements for consumers and a budget for services.
- DDSD would also like to propose a payment model that does not tie a SIS A score to a budget, so assessment results are used for person-centered service planning.
- Goal is to have equal access to similar resources for people with similar needs across the state, the use of a standardized tool will help with this.
 - Having one provider conduct assessments statewide using a standard process will improve consistency and equity of resources.
 - In the future, DDSD hopes to offer free trainings around Person-Centered Planning with the SIS A.
- **We will seek input from stakeholders when we have draft payment models. We need to finish the current sample before we can begin drafting the model and then ask for feedback.**

Accountability

- Starting on July 1, 2021, service providers began entering information about the services they provide into the Medicaid Management Information System
 - This allows the state to see what services were delivered, if they match up to the assessed need, what's stated in the person's individualized plan, and the costs associated.
 - The data entered into the system is referred to as 'encounter data', because it captures the details of the encounters that happen in our system. It's like a receipt for the service provided.
 - Having access to this data makes service delivery and budget payments transparent and holds the providers and the State more accountable for the use of resources.
 - Encounter data might be used to help create a future payment model, along with the SIS A information, but this hasn't been determined yet and DAIL will seek input.

Resources

DDSD Payment Reform Information:

- [Payment Reform Information on DDSD website](#)

SIS-A Information:

- [General SIS A Information on the DDSD website](#)
- [Plain Language Document about the SIS A](#)
- [Videos about the SIS A](#)
- [SIS A information from AAIDD, the creators of the tool](#)

Questions?

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