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M E M O R A N D U M

**TO: DDSO Directors
DDSO Chief Psychologists
DDSO Eligibility Coordinators
Executive Directors**

**FROM: Dr. Jill Pettinger, Assistant Commissioner
OMRDD
Bureau of Behavioral and Clinical Solutions**

DATE: April 26, 2010

SUBJECT: The Use of Revised/Updated Testing Instruments

This memorandum is an advisory to inform you and your Psychology staff of a uniform expectation regarding the use of revised/updated versions of test instruments that may be utilized in assessments that are reviewed for eligibility determination purposes. Please share this information with all relevant staff at your DDSO or agency.

Revised and updated versions of nationally formed and standardized tests of development, intelligence and cognition, adaptive behavior, and of developmental disorder-specific scales are released periodically to keep pace with changes in contemporary knowledge bases, education, culture, and age-related functioning. The professional ethical standards for Psychology and psychological testing include the expectation that psychologists will use the most recent/updated version of any test chosen for inclusion in an assessment battery. As you are aware, these standards are also reflected in the OMRDD eligibility guidelines. While the results of previous editions of these scales remain applicable when reviewed in historical documentation verifying past assessment results, it is expected that psychologists and specialty assessment professionals will utilize the most recent version(s) of the relevant testing instruments.

As new/updated versions of intelligence tests and adaptive behavior scales have been released in the past, it has been our practice to notify those who provide such assessments, and to establish a grace period to allow time for agencies to purchase the updated instrument and for clinicians to become familiar with test administration and scoring. We are sensitive to the realities and economics of transitioning to a new version of a test. Our general practice up to this point has been to allow a grace period of up to 12 months after the publication date of the newest version of a test. The expectation has been that within that 12 months, practitioners and agencies will have had an opportunity to acquire and learn to use the new version of the test, its materials, and the principles of its interpretation.

Multiple tests, instruments, and scales are being revised/updated and published at this point in time. Rather than releasing a new memo each time the new version of a test is published, we have decided to create this advisory, which will apply to such instruments in general. OMRDD will expect that if an instrument that measures development, intelligence or specific cognitive skills, adaptive behavior, or the presence of symptoms or behavior consistent with a pervasive developmental disorder, is utilized in new evaluations for eligibility determination purposes, the newest version will be used with individuals in the appropriate age range, taking into account language preference and competence. Results from the older version of an instrument, administered after the 12-month post-publication grace period, will no longer be accepted as a valid **current** measure of an individual's functioning. Please note that the release of an updated version of a test *in and of itself* should not be interpreted to mean that a previously valid assessment should be re-done, or that an eligibility finding based on review of historical results from prior contemporaneously valid instruments should be questioned. [The standardized comprehensive measures listed in the OMRDD Advisory Guidelines continue to remain acceptable as both new and historical measures.]

Thank you for your cooperation. As always, feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns. I can be reached at (518) 474-3558.

cc: Gary Lind
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OMRDD Provider Association Members