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MEMORANDUM

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

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

DATE: October 17, 2008

SUBJECT: New Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale and changes to acceptance
of the Scales of Independent Behavior-Revised

This memorandum is an advisory to inform you and your psychology staff of upcoming changes regarding two test instruments that may be used for eligibility determination purposes. Please share this information with all relevant staff at your DDSO or agency.

A revised and updated version of the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-4th Edition (WAIS-IV) was released in mid-August. Professional standards for Psychology 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 OMRDD eligibility guidelines. Previous editions of the Wechsler Intelligence Scale remain applicable when reviewed in historic documentation verifying past IQ scores.

We are sensitive to the realities and economics of transitioning to a new version of a test, and have established a grace period to allow time for agencies to purchase the instrument and for clinicians to become familiar with test administration and scoring.



As of September 1, 2009, OMRDD will expect that if a Wechsler adult intelligence scale is utilized in new evaluations for eligibility determination purposes, the WAIS-IV will be the version used with individuals in the appropriate age range. The other standardized comprehensive measures of intelligence listed in the OMRDD Advisory Guidelines continue to remain acceptable as both new and historic measures.

The principles governing the assessment of intelligence are equally applicable to the assessment of adaptive behavior. The OMRDD practice has been to request the use of assessment instruments whose norms have been published no more than 10 years prior to the date of assessment. The Scales of Independent Behavior-Revised (SIB-R), which included updated norms, expanded age ranges and new item content, was published in 1996. In August 2008, the publishers of the SIB-R stated that there are no current plans to update the existing norms, which are now almost 13 years old. Given the length of time since the issuance of the SIB-R norms, results of the SIB-R should be interpreted with caution.

It is noted, however, that the Motor Skills Domain of the SIB-R provides a unique opportunity to assess motor skills throughout the lifespan. Therefore, when a disorder affecting motor functioning appears to be a primary or influential secondary disabling condition, the SIB-R Motor Skills domain may be used as an adjunctive assessment in combination with another acceptable comprehensive adaptive behavior scale such as the Adaptive Behavior Assessment System (ABAS, ABAS-II) or the Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scale - Second Edition (VABS-II).

As of January 1, 2009, results from the SIB-R except as noted above regarding the Motor Skills domain will no longer be accepted as a valid current measure of an individual's overall adaptive functioning. Previous assessments using the SIB-R will remain applicable when reviewed in historic documentation verifying past adaptive deficits.

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.

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