

MSC E-VISORY

Issue # 10-10

April 7, 2010

State of New York Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities
Diana Jones Ritter, Commissioner
Distributed by: Division of Policy and Enterprise Solutions
Gary Lind, Deputy Commissioner

The MSC E-Visory is an electronic advisory distributed to MSC Supervisors. Each issue provides pertinent and timely information about programs and services available to individuals receiving MSC. Announcements about MSC training, conferences and meetings appear regularly. **MSC Supervisors: Please forward this issue to all MSC Service Coordinators and others as appropriate.**

The MSC E-Visory is sent out from OMRDD via an e-mail distribution list. To update or add a name of an MSC Supervisor, contact msc.e.visory@omr.state.ny.us. Please type "MSC E-Visory LIST Change" in the SUBJECT line and include in the body of the email the following information: e-mail address, name, title, and agency name. Please indicate ADD or REMOVE from the MSC E-Visory distribution list.

In this issue:

National Core Indicators Adult Family Survey

What is the purpose of this E-Visory?

The purpose of this E-Visory is to inform Medicaid Service Coordination providers of the National Core Indicators (NCI) project Adult Family Survey (AFS) activities and the role of the service coordinator in this initiative. The AFS is a questionnaire developed by the Human Services Research Institute (HSRI), which measures family outcomes related to the provision developmental disabilities services. As part of the NCI project, this survey is one method OMRDD is using to assess system performance. For the past three years, OMRDD has been administering the Consumer Survey to individuals receiving OMRDD services and the AFS is now being added to gather information from the family perspective. As a result of this initiative, OMRDD hopes to improve services and supports for individuals with developmental disabilities and their family members.

This document answers questions about the AFS that service coordinators might have. Even though only a small percentage of service coordinators will be impacted, please share this with all service coordinators so they will understand what the AFS is about should they be contacted by families.

Adult Family Survey: Frequently Asked Questions from Service Coordinators

1. What are the National Core Indicators?

The National Core Indicators (NCI) project is a collaboration among participating National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disability Services (NASDDDS) member state agencies and the Human Services Research Institute (HSRI). The aim of the initiative is to develop nationally recognized performance and outcome indicators that will enable developmental disabilities policy makers to benchmark the performance of their state against the performance of other states. NCI also enables each participating state developmental disabilities agency to track system performance and outcomes from year to year on a consistent basis.

As a result of participating in the project, states have created performance monitoring systems, identified common performance indicators, worked out comparable data collection strategies, and shared results. Many of the state agencies use NCI as a key component within their quality management systems. This multi-state collaborative effort to improve performance is unprecedented.

2. How is NYS participation in the AFS going to benefit individuals with developmental disabilities?

One of the data collection tools that OMRDD is utilizing this year is the Adult Family Survey (AFS). The survey asks family members questions pertaining to information and planning, access and delivery of supports, choices and control, community connections, satisfaction, and service outcomes. Based on the input provided by families, OMRDD will assess how well its service delivery system is meeting family and individual needs. By administering the AFS, OMRDD hopes to forward its mission of "Putting People First" and promote a quality management system that is person centered.

3. What is the role of the Medicaid Service Coordinator (MSC)?

The role of the service coordinator in the administration of the AFS is minimal, but important. OMRDD is taking care of mailing the surveys to family members. The service coordinator will only be involved if an individual or family member contacts him or her with questions about the survey. If you are contacted, please encourage the individual to participate and explain the purpose of the AFS.

4. What is the process and how are families selected to receive a survey?

Approximately 1,200 families have been randomly selected from the OMRDD TABS (Tracking and Billing System) to participate in the AFS. These are family members or Family Care Providers who have an adult (age 18 or older) with a developmental disability living in their home. The AFS will be mailed from OMRDD to families during the first week of April. Families are asked to return the survey in a postage-paid return envelope to OMRDD by **April 22, 2010**. The return address is:

State of New York
Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities
Division of Policy & Enterprise Solutions
44 Holland Avenue, 4th Floor
Albany, NY 12229-0001

5. Will I know which families of individuals on my caseload will receive a survey?

No. As a result of the large number of surveys being mailed, it is challenging to develop a list of selected families for each MSC provider. If someone on your caseload lives at home with their family or participates in family care, and was asked to participate in the Consumer Survey this year, then there is a good chance that the individual's family or family care provider will be selected to respond to the AFS.

6. What should I tell families about the survey?

If someone contacts you about the AFS, you should answer his or her questions about the survey process and the purpose of the survey. Please encourage participation. Explain to the family that OMRDD wants to know about their experiences receiving supports and services. This questionnaire will help OMRDD improve services and supports for people with developmental disabilities and their families. Their participation would be greatly appreciated and should only take 15 minutes of their time. Their answers to the survey will remain confidential and will have no impact on the services that they currently receive. OMRDD has paid for the postage and there is no expense to the individual or family to participate.

7. What if the family being interviewed wants me help them answer questions?

As a best practice, service coordinators are not permitted to respond to the actual items in the AFS because there are questions about service coordination and families may not respond honestly if the service coordinator is present when they are completing the questionnaire. It may create a bias and skew the survey results. If you are asked to help complete the survey, assist the family to find someone else he or she trusts to help them participate. OMRDD also has an information line that the family can call to get assistance if there are questions in the survey that they do not understand. Families may call the OMRDD Information Line at: 1-866-946-9733 for voice or 1866-933-4889 for TTY for assistance.

8. What if the family I support doesn't want to participate?

Family members have the right to refuse to participate in the AFS. It is completely voluntary and there will be no negative consequences for not participating.

9. How can I learn more about the National Core Indicators?

If service coordinators are interested in learning more about NCI, please check out the website at <http://www.hsri.org/nci/>. There are reports and additional documents describing the project and the AFS.

Thank you for your assistance with this important initiative.