

MSC E-VISORY

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State of New York Office for People With Developmental Disabilities
Max Chmura, Acting Commissioner
Distributed by: Division of Policy and Enterprise Solutions
Suzanne Zafonte Sennett, 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.** Past issues of the MSC E-Visory can be accessed via the following link: http://www.omr.state.ny.us/wt/publications/wt_publications_mscevisories_index.jsp

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In This Issue:

National Core Indicators Consumer Survey

As a result of participating in the National Core Indicators (NCI) project for the fourth year, OPWDD will be interviewing approximately 3,000 individuals statewide using a Consumer Survey to learn more about system-wide performance on various indicators, and individual satisfaction with services and supports. Information included in this e-visory is to inform Medicaid Service Coordination providers of survey activities that their service coordinators are being asked to assist with. Service coordinators will be providing OPWDD with contact and demographic information regarding some individuals on their caseload.

Beginning November 2010, some service coordinators will receive a Pre-Survey and Background Information form to complete on behalf of one of the individuals they serve. Not all service coordinators will be asked to participate because the sample size is only 3,000 and only 2,000 will require the assistance of the service coordinator. In fact, only a small percentage of service coordinators will receive this request from OPWDD. Even if a service coordinator is asked to participate, it is likely they will only be responding on behalf of one or two people. Thus the workload related to this project is very small for service coordinators and providers.

Attached to this e-visory is a document that answers frequently asked questions about NCI 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 NCI is about should they be contacted for assistance.

Information on Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for 2011

The Social Security Administration has officially announced that there will be no Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for 2011. Attached is the Social Security News Release, the 2011 Social Security Changes Fact Sheet and a list of Frequently asked Questions and Answers.

Training Information

Parent Perspectives: Working with Families of Children Who are Deaf-Blind: This webinar will help families & professionals create effective partnerships in their schools & communities with mutual respect.

Tuesday November 16, 2010 3:00-5:00 pm

Registration is required; please see the attached flyer.

New York Parent Network (NYPN) e-news

Please see the attached newsletter, NYPN e-news, regarding training information and additional resources. This newsletter is from the New York Parent Network – Supporting Families of People who are Deaf-Blind or Visually & Hearing Impaired. Additional information can be found at:

www.nypn.net

National Core Indicators

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 NCI going to benefit individuals with developmental disabilities?

One of the key data collection tools that OPWDD will utilize is the Consumer Survey. The Consumer Survey asks individuals questions about their satisfaction with home, health, work, staff, service access, relationships, safety, and community inclusion. Based on the input provided by people with developmental disabilities, OPWDD will assess how well the developmental disability service delivery system is meeting individual needs. By participating in NCI, OPWDD hopes to forward its mission of "Putting People First" and create a quality management system that is person-centered.

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

Medicaid Service Coordinators will contact the individuals to let them know that they have been selected to participate in a survey conducted by OPWDD and that an interviewer will contact them to schedule a face-to-face interview. Service coordinators also have the very important role of completing the NCI Pre-Survey and Background Information forms, in order to assist the DDSO staff to schedule and perform the interviews. Service coordinators may provide interviewers with ongoing assistance if there are challenges contacting individuals or if there is additional information needed. Service coordinators will NOT be doing the interviews.

4. What will the MSC receive from the DDSO?

1. Pre-Survey and Background Information Forms
2. The return address of the DDSO NCI Liaison
3. A letter introducing the NCI Project
4. Instructions for completing the Pre-Survey and Background Information
5. A listing of agency codes.

5. What do service coordinators do once they receive the Pre-Survey and Background Information?

Service coordinators should first read through the instructions and look over the documents they received from the DDSO to ensure their packet is complete. Then the service coordinators can begin answering the questions in the Pre-Survey and Background Information forms. Most questions request contact information or demographic information about the individual being served. To the extent possible, the forms will be filled in already (i.e., “pre-populated”) with basic information from TABS. It is important that this information be reviewed for accuracy. Corrections should be made on the forms if the pre-populated information is wrong. Many service coordinators will be able to answer the questions based on their knowledge of the person and information contained in the MSC record. **Service Coordinators should review and answer every question in only the Pre-Survey and Background Information sections of the surveys. Do not leave blanks.** As previously stated, not all service coordinators will be asked to participate in this project, and it is anticipated this activity will take one hour or less to complete.

6. What if there is a question that I don't understand or if I'm not sure what to do?

First ask your supervisor for some direction. He or she might be able to help you find the information you need to complete the questions. You can also contact your DDSO NCI Liaison for assistance or clarification. For some questions you may have to contact other staff who provide services to the individual. For example, to complete questions about employment and wages, you may have to contact the person's job coach.

7. What should I tell the person I support and/or their advocate about the survey?

When you speak with them about the survey process, you should tell them that they will be contacted by someone from OPWDD who is conducting interviews for a Consumer Survey. OPWDD wants to ask them questions about their experiences receiving supports and services. This interview will help OPWDD improve services and supports for people with developmental disabilities. Their participation would be greatly appreciated and should only take one hour of their time. Their answers to the survey will remain confidential and will not change the services that they currently receive.

8. What if the individual being interviewed wants me to participate in the interview?

As a best practice, service coordinators are not present during the interviews because there are questions about service coordination and individuals may not respond honestly if the service coordinator is present. It may create a bias and skew the survey results. If you are asked to be present, assist the person to find someone else he or she trusts to help them participate.

9. What if the individual I support doesn't want to participate?

The individual has the right to refuse to participate in the Consumer Survey. It is completely voluntary and there will be no negative consequences for not participating.

10. What if the advocate/guardian doesn't want the person to participate?

Again, participation is voluntary. If the advocate/guardian has the authority to represent the best interests of the individual, then it is their right to not participate.

11. Should I keep a copy of the Pre-Survey and Background Information?

It is not necessary for service coordinators to keep a copy.

12. What if I don't think the person has the ability to be directly interviewed?

The Consumer Survey is for everyone with a developmental disability, no matter what their ability level is. The first section of the interview is for individuals who can answer the questions by themselves. If an individual is not capable of answering the questions by him or herself, then the questions are skipped. In the second part of the interview, individuals are able to answer the questions with help from another person. A person who knows the individual really well must participate in this section of the interview. This method will help OPWDD use the Consumer Survey to represent everyone receiving services, regardless of ability level.

13. Who will be answering the questions on behalf of the individual if they are unable or unwilling to respond for themselves?

As noted in the answer to (Q.12) above, Section II of the Consumer Survey allows for a proxy (i.e., a representative) to answer questions on the individual's behalf. This person should be someone who knows the individual really well, including knowledge of their daily schedule. The proxy could be a family member, circle of support member, guardian, advocate, friend, or direct support professional.

14. How will the interviewers accommodate the individual's personal preferences for meeting time, place, etc?

The DDSO interviewers will contact the individuals or their advocate/guardian to set up the interviews. Based on each person's preferences and schedule, the interviewer will set up a meeting time and place where the individual feels most comfortable. This may be in the person's home, community, or day program.

15. How will the individual's information remain confidential?

Each individual selected to be part of the interviews is assigned a unique identifying number called the "Survey Code". Each person will be identified by the survey code and no one else besides OPWDD staff working closely with the NCI project will know who the person is. HSRI will not be able to trace the answers to the Consumer Survey back to the individual who completed the questions.

16. Who do I send the completed Pre-Survey and Background Information to?

When you have finished filling out the Pre-Survey and Background Information, and have informed the individual that OPWDD will be contacting him or her to schedule and interview, please send the completed documents back to your DDSO NCI Liaison.

17. When is this information due back to the DDSO?

The completed Pre-Survey and Background Information must be returned to the DDSO Liaisons within the designated time frame you are given. Service coordinators must help us meet this deadline so the interviewers and others involved in the project can meet their deadlines and schedule the interviews they must complete.

18. Who is completing the Pre-Survey and Background Information for the other people targeted for inclusion in the NCI sample?

The OPWDD Division of Quality Management (DQM) staff will be conducting surveys for individuals who live in certified IRAs, ICFs, and CRs as part of routine certification activities. DQM staff will take the responsibility for completing the information on the Pre-Survey and Background Information sections of the Consumer Survey forms. While the service coordinator will not have a primary role for completing forms for these selected participants, you may hear of the selection of an individual you support or be contacted to clarify information.

19. 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.



News Release

SOCIAL SECURITY

Under the Law No Social Security COLA for 2011

Monthly Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits for more than 58 million Americans will not automatically increase in 2011, the Social Security Administration announced today.

The Social Security Act provides for an automatic increase in Social Security and SSI benefits if there is an increase in the Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) from the third quarter of the last year a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) was determined to the third quarter of the current year. As determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, there is no increase in the CPI-W from the third quarter of 2008, the last year a COLA was determined, to the third quarter of 2010, therefore, under existing law, there can be no COLA in 2011.

Other changes that would normally take effect based on changes in the national average wage index also will not take effect in January 2011. Since there is no COLA, the statute also prohibits a change in the maximum amount of earnings subject to the Social Security tax as well as the retirement earnings test exempt amounts. These amounts will remain unchanged in 2011. The [attached fact sheet](#) provides more information on 2011 Social Security and SSI changes.

Information about Medicare changes for 2011, when available, will be found at www.Medicare.gov. The Department of Health and Human Services has not yet announced if there will be any Medicare premium changes for 2011. Should there be an increase in the Medicare Part B premium, the law contains a “hold harmless” provision that protects more than 70 percent of Social Security beneficiaries from paying a higher Part B premium, in order to avoid reducing their net Social Security benefit. Those not protected include higher income beneficiaries subject to an income-adjusted Part B premium and beneficiaries newly entitled to Part B in 2011. In addition, almost 20 percent of beneficiaries have their Medicare Part B premiums paid by state medical assistance programs and thus will see no change in their Social Security benefit. The state will be required to pay any Medicare Part B premium increase.

For additional information about the 2011 COLA, go to www.socialsecurity.gov/cola.

For additional information about changes in the national average wage index, go to www.socialsecurity.gov/OACT/COLA/AWI.html.

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Fact Sheet

SOCIAL SECURITY

2011 SOCIAL SECURITY CHANGES

o **Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA):**

Monthly Social Security and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits will not automatically increase in 2011 as there is no increase in the Consumer Price Index (CPI-W) from the third quarter of 2008, the last year a COLA was determined, to the third quarter of 2010. Other important 2011 Social Security information is as follows:

	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>
o <u>Maximum Taxable Earnings:</u>		
Social Security (OASDI only)	\$106,800	\$106,800*
Medicare (HI only)	No Limit	
o <u>Quarter of Coverage:</u>		
	\$1,120	\$1,120**
o <u>Primary Insurance Amount Bend Points:</u>		
First dollar amount	\$761	\$753
Second dollar amount	\$4,586	\$4,542
o <u>Retirement Earnings Test Exempt Amounts:</u>		
Under full retirement age	\$14,160/yr. (\$1,180/mo.)	\$14,160/yr.* (\$1,180/mo.)

NOTE: One dollar in benefits will be withheld for every \$2 in earnings above the limit.

The year an individual reaches full retirement age	\$37,680/yr. (\$3,140/mo.)	\$37,680/yr.* (\$3,140/mo.)
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NOTE: Applies only to earnings for months prior to attaining full retirement age. One dollar in benefits will be withheld for every \$3 in earnings above the limit.

There is no limit on earnings beginning the month an individual attains full retirement age.

o **Social Security Disability Thresholds:**

Substantial Gainful Activity (SGA)

Non-Blind	\$1,000/mo.	\$1,000/mo.**
Blind	\$1,640/mo.	\$1,640/mo.*
<u>Trial Work Period</u> (TWP)	\$ 720/mo.	\$ 720/mo.**

o **SSI Federal Payment Standard:**

Individual	\$674/mo.	\$674/mo.*
Couple	\$1,011/mo.	\$1,011/mo.*

o **SSI Student Exclusion:**

Monthly limit	\$1,640	\$1,640*
Annual limit	\$6,600	\$6,600*

* By law, these amounts will be unchanged in 2011 because there is no COLA.

**By law, these amounts will be unchanged in 2011 because there was a decrease in the national average wage index for 2009.



COPCS A Community of Practice, Creativity & Support

Thirteen federally funded state deafblind projects working in collaboration to promote relevant evidenced based practices in deafblind education.

COPCS Monthly iLinc Webinar Series

WEBINAR #7:

Parent Perspectives: Working with Families of Children Who are Deaf-Blind

DATE: Tuesday, November 16, 2010

3:00 – 5:00pm Eastern Time

PRESENTER: Clara Berg
Family Specialist
New York Deaf-Blind Collaborative

OUTCOMES: This webinar will provide families and professionals the tools to create effective partnerships thru the different transition periods in the educational life of the student.

- Help families to engage in positive interaction with the school and community and participate as equal partners.
- Help professionals in supporting the emotional well-being of family members, while respecting their values and culture

REGISTRATION REQUIRED:

See “Guidelines for Participants” below for registration and participation tips.

This webinar series is also supported, in part, by the National Consortium on Deaf-Blindness.

Guidelines for Participants

Test your system PRIOR to the Webinar

Test your system to make sure it is compatible prior to the session by going to the TA and D iLinc website which can be found here. Click on the system test tab found in the horizontal red bar towards the top of the page. Follow the simple instructions on this page. We suggest you do this a few days before the session so you can adjust any computer settings before hand.

https://tadnet.ilinc.com/perl/ilinc/lms/login.pl?template_dir=tadnet

Register for the Session

Register for the session by going to the TA and D iLinc website

https://tadnet.ilinc.com/perl/ilinc/lms/login.pl?template_dir=tadnet

Click on the public sessions tab in the horizontal red bar towards the top of the page. Look at the list of sessions, click on the one you will participate in and follow the directions to register. You will be emailed a link that you will use on the day of the session.

If you choose the audio conference number on the registration site (rather than internet audio) please be aware that you will incur any long distance charges associated with this call from your phone. There is limited capacity on this line so register early. If you have questions about this please email susan.edelman@uvm, dmkelly@umd.edu or samuel.morgan@qc.cuny.edu

If you have not participated in a video conference or webinar before.

Read the guide on the iLinc website support section on Attending a session found in the help section of the iLinc website found here

<http://support.ilinc.com/help/wwhelp/wwhimpl/js/html/wwhelp.htm>

The day of the session

Find your registration email, click the link in the email and follow the directions. Dial into the conference call number if you want to use the conference call audio.

Tips for during the webinar

Mute your microphone if you have one. If you have questions or comments during the presentation, type into the public chat box found on the lower left of your screen.

COPCS Webinar # 7: Parent Perspectives: Working with Families of Children Who are Deaf-Blind

Presenter: Clara Berg, Family Specialist, New York Deaf-Blind Collaborative, and New York Parent Network Founder & Board Member.

Tuesday, November 16, 2010, 3:00-5:00pm Eastern Time

This webinar will help families & professionals create effective partnerships in their schools & communities with mutual respect.

Registration is required; please see the attached flyer.

Parent-to-Parent Training Workshop in Syracuse, NY For Parents of children with deaf-blindness or dual sensory loss.

Cosponsored by New York Deaf-Blind Collaborative, NYDBC & New York Parent Network, NYPN. See attached flyer.

When: November 20th, 2010

Time: 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Where: Exceptional Family Resources

1820 Lemoyne Ave

Syracuse, NY 13208

Contact: Sônia Hartmann (315) 637-6503. soniamh@verizon.net

"A Dad's Perspective"

Presented by Parent to Parent of NYS

Wednesday November 3, 2010 - 6:00pm

Fordham University - Residence Hall, Lincoln Center Campus

155 W. 60th St (off 10th Ave), McMahon 109 - 1st FI, New York, NY.

Food & beverages will be available. Please RSVP, as space will be limited by emailing bxparent2parentnys@verizon.net

or calling Bronx Office - Parent to Parent of NYS at (800) 405-8818.

CQCAPD VOTE Survey

The Commission on Quality of Care and Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities (CQCAPD) is conducting a VOTE Survey that seeks to obtain statewide feedback from voters with disabilities in regard to their voting experience in the November 2010 general elections.

Take survey at: www.cqcapd.state.ny.us/secure/voting.htm

NYDDPC Monthly Update

Disability Related News & Events in New York State

http://ddpcmonthlyupdate.us/archive/2010/november/11_10_CQCAPD_VOTE_Survey.php

Articles of Interest:

[Information on the NYS Individualized Education Program](#)

[Working With Your Child Care Program to Keep Your Child Safe](#)

Your Child's Individualized Educational Program: Your Blueprint for Services

www.familyconnect.org/parentsitesite.asp?SectionID=72&TopicID=346&DocumentID=3957

CVI & CHARGE by David, California Deaf-Blind Services

www.cadbs.org/news/david-cvi-and-charge/

Communication - Dr. Jan van Dijk

Dr. van Dijk is an educator & researcher in the field of deaf-blindness, particularly, assessing & communicating with children with severe disabilities through a child-centered approach. www.drjanvandijk.org

Teaching Your Blind Baby Orientation & Mobility

WonderBaby Article gives suggestions for teaching basic O&M skills and awareness as early as infancy.

www.wonderbaby.org/articles/orientation-and-mobility.html

Cortical Vision Impairments Please join if you are interesting in discussing CVI and issues with that diagnosis. Subscription address: Send an e-mail to Corticalvisionimpairments-subscribe@yahoogroups.com or join online. List owner: Bridget A. Bailey

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Corticalvisionimpairments/>

Perkins Panda Early Literacy

Panda picture books, audiotapes, toy panda, storytelling objects, and activities guidebook provide an interactive early literacy experience.

https://secure2.convio.net/psb/site/Ecommerce?store_id=1101&VIEW_DEFAULT=true&FOLDER=1082&TYPE=&NAME=

Perkins Resources for Family Literacy

http://support.perkins.org/site/MessageViewer?em_id=9881.0&printer_friendly=1

Technology: Lighting Up Your World: A Closer Look at Illuminated Magnifiers, Part 3 by Morgan Blubaugh

www.afb.org/afbpress/pub.asp?DocID=aw110605

Arts & Craft Projects for the Holidays

www.Crayola.com