

Identifying Supports for Success

Supports Intensity Scale (SIS)



New Hampshire's Developmental Services system is starting to use an assessment tool for young adults and adults who have intellectual disabilities and acquired brain disorders. This tool is called the "*Supports Intensity Scale (SIS)*".

Traditionally, a person's level of intellectual disability has been measured by the skills the individual *lacks*. SIS shifts the focus from what a person *lacks* to the support a person *needs* to successfully participate in all aspects of daily life. The SIS evaluates and measures the practical *supports* that people with intellectual disabilities *need* to lead productive, independent lives and to *successfully* engage in everyday activities.

SIS measures support needs in the areas of home living, community living, lifelong learning, employment, health and safety, social activities and protection and advocacy. A formal rating scale is used:

- ♦ Type of Support Needed (ranging from none to full physical assistance)
- ♦ Frequency of Support Needed (ranging from none to hourly or more frequently)
- ♦ Daily Support Time (ranging from none to more than four hours per day)

Exceptional Medical and Behavioral Needs are also evaluated. Support needs in these areas are rated in the following way:

- ♦ No Support Needed
- ♦ Some Support Needed
- ♦ Extensive Support Needed

The individual, family, guardian and others who support the individual are all invited to participate in the SIS interview and assessment, making the SIS process inclusive, personalized and person-centered.

SIS interviewers have been specially trained and certified in administering the SIS. The interview itself must be done face-to-face, may take up to 2-3 hours to complete and must include, in addition to the individual, at least two people who know the person well in a variety of situations.

After the SIS interview is completed, the results are used to develop a "Total Support Needs Index" which is a standard score generated from scores on all the items tested by the scale. An SIS report will be generated and can help the individual, family members, guardians and others who support the person to set goals and to identify the person's aspirations.

Section 1: Support Needs Scale, continued

Circle the appropriate number (1-5) for each measurement. Use only two Complete (6) items and if the person is currently performing a task correctly add the circle score to get the score. Add the two circle scores and get the Total Item Score.

Part B: Community Living Activities	Frequency	Type of Support	Time of Day	Total Score
1. Getting dressed to leave the house	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	6
2. Participating in recreation/leisure activities	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	6
3. Participating in social activities	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	6
4. Using public transportation	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	6
5. Participating in volunteer activities	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	6
6. Shopping for necessities (groceries, clothing, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	6
7. Managing money (banking, budgeting, etc.)	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	6
8. Managing household management	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	6
TOTAL Item Score: Community Living Activities				3-6

Part C: Lifelong Learning Activities	Frequency	Type of Support	Time of Day	Total Score
1. Working with others to complete a project	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	6
2. Learning a new skill or technology	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	6
3. Learning a new language	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	6
4. Learning a new hobby	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	6
5. Learning a new sport	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	6
6. Learning a new skill or technology	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	6
7. Learning a new language	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	6
8. Learning a new hobby	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	6
9. Learning a new sport	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	6
TOTAL Item Score: Lifelong Learning Activities				3-6



Benefits of the Supports Intensity Scale

- ◆ Direct, reliable, and valid measurement of support requirements in 57 specific areas of life activities as well as supports needed to prevent or manage 29 different exceptional medical and behavioral challenges.
- ◆ Solid knowledge of the person's needs, preferences and goals for life. Information about what supports are important *to* the individual as well as those that are important *for* the individual.
- ◆ A consistent method for allocating funding based on individual support scores.

Q Will participation in the SIS interview and assessment process result in a reduction in budgets or funding for individuals currently receiving services?

A No. New Hampshire is conducting SIS interviews on 400 individuals during 2010 in order to collect information about the support needs of a wide variety of individuals. This information will be used to develop a new more individualized approach for allocating funding for individuals entering the adult service system in the future.

Tips for a successful SIS interview:

Before the interview:

- ◆ Learn more about the SIS before the interview
- ◆ Think about the supports the individual needs to be successful (not the supports he/she is currently receiving).

During the interview:

- ◆ Keep an open mind about things the individual may not be doing now, but may do in the future.
- ◆ Follow the rating scales carefully and ask questions of the interviewer if there is anything you don't understand.
- ◆ Don't underestimate support needs.
- ◆ If you disagree with anything that is said, say so.

Family members and guardians working with one of the ten Area Agencies can speak with their case manager about the Support Intensity Scale (SIS).

More information is also available by contacting:

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Where can I find additional information about the SIS?

Additional information on the SIS can be obtained by going to the web site: <http://www.siswebsite.org>