

Supports Intensity Scale® (SIS®) and the Person-Centered Process (PCP) in Virginia

The purpose of this document is to explain the connection between the Supports Intensity Scale® (SIS®), the person-centered planning process, the Individual Supports Plan (ISP) and the Developmental Disabilities (DD) waivers levels and tiers. Person-centered planning is a process that focuses on the needs and preferences of the individual (not the system or service availability) and empowers and supports individuals in defining the direction for their own lives. Person-centered planning promotes self-determination, community inclusion and positive control over one's life. The SIS suite of tools includes the Supports Intensity Scale-Adult Version® (SIS-A®, 2015) for ages 16 years and older, and a Supports Intensity Scale-Children's Version™ (SIS-C™, 2016) for ages 5-16 years. The SIS-A and SIS-C are Virginia's required comprehensive assessments for persons receiving DD waivers funding.

1. In order to provide complete and accurate information about the person's support needs, the SIS assesses a person's pattern and intensity of support needs in the following areas:

SIS-Adult Version	SIS-Children's Version
Exceptional Medical Support Needs	
Exceptional Behavioral Support Needs	
Health and Safety Activities	
Social Activities	
Home Living Activities	Home Life Activities
Community Living Activities	Community and Neighborhood Activities
Lifelong Learning Activities	School Participation Activities
Employment Activities	School Learning Activities
Protection & Advocacy Activities	Advocacy Activities

2. It is important to be aware that each of us, regardless of our situation, benefits from supports that allow us to participate in everyday life activities and if we desire, to maintain a healthy lifestyle.
3. Focusing on each of the life areas included on the SIS-A and SIS-C allows the support team to have robust conversations about related topics such as:
 - Natural supports currently available for the person. These may include family, friends and community connections, such as those developed through religious, cultural, and recreational activities.
 - Professional services currently available for the person. These may include medical or behavioral health, psychological, or other therapeutic services.
 - Technology-based supports currently needed for the person to have success. These may include assistive technology, information technology, smart technology and prosthetics.
 - Environmental-based supports currently needed for the person to have success. Environmental based supports include items such as a wheelchair ramp at the entrance of a home or use of a lift for transferring an individual from a bed, chair or shower.

4. The individual's own goals, dreams, and desires are fundamental in identifying support needs that are important **to** the person. These are things expressed by the person in his/her/their preferred mode of communication or through observation by members of the support team.
5. Identifying support needs that are important **for** the person is based on higher support needs scores in areas where that support is needed for the person to be healthy and safe and may also include areas where interventions are prescribed by a professional.
6. After the SIS assessment is completed, the SIS is quality reviewed by the assigned SIS assessment vendor and provided electronically to the appropriate support coordinator for distribution.
7. The support coordinator provides a copy of the SIS-A or SIS-C Family Friendly Report (FFR) to the person, his/her/their guardian, (if applicable) and providers.
8. The Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS), based on a mathematical algorithm, uses the scores from the sections listed below to assign one of seven levels of need and one of four reimbursement tiers to each SIS assessment.

Section 1A Exceptional Medical Support Needs
Section 1B Exceptional Behavioral Support Needs
Section 2 Supports Needs Index
A Home Living Activities (Home Life Activities in SIS-C)
B Community Living Activities (Community and Neighborhood Activities in SIS-C)
E Health and Safety Activities

- A. The result is called the person's level and tier assignment.
 - B. For tiered DD waivers services, the reimbursement tier sets the rate at which the service is to be reimbursed by the Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS).
9. The person's level and tier are entered in the DBHDS Waiver Management System (WaMS) where it is visible to the support coordinator and DD waivers services providers.
 10. The person-centered planning process includes the input of the person's support team which typically includes the person, his/her/their substitute decision maker(s), if applicable, the support coordinator, family, friends, providers and others.
 11. The SIS Family Friendly Report should be reviewed for items of significant and/or exceptional supports needs, important "tos" and "fors", and any other areas or activities which need to be discussed and included at the person-centered ISP planning meeting.
 12. The reader should be aware that the SIS Family Friendly Report starts with Sections 2 and 3 and ends with Section 1, Exceptional Medical Support Needs and Exceptional Behavioral Support Needs.
 13. Not every item with a high rating on the SIS is expected to be reflected in the person-centered ISP, as the person and support team will together determine priorities for the plan.

14. Ideally, the combined SIS assessment and person-centered planning process will lead to increased involvement and choice making by the person in everyday life areas and improvements in areas of medical and behavioral supports needs.