

Exploring Core Competencies for Information and Assistance (I&A) Professionals in Self-Direction

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NCAPPS



Applied
Self-Direction



Welcome to Today's Webinar



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Thank you for joining us to learn about the characteristics of strong Information and Assistance (I&A) professionals in self-direction.

Today's webinar is co-sponsored by the National Center on Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems (NCAPPS) and Applied Self-Direction.

NCAPPS is funded by the Administration for Community Living (ACL) and Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).

NCAPPS webinars are free and open to the public.

The goal of NCAPPS is to promote systems change that makes person-centered principles not just an aspiration but a reality in the lives of people across the lifespan.





Webinar Logistics

- Participants will be muted during this webinar. You can use the **chat** feature in Zoom to post questions and communicate with the hosts.
- Toward the end of the webinar, our speakers will have an opportunity to **respond to questions** that have been entered into **chat**.
- The webinar will be live captioned in English and live interpreted in Spanish.
 - Live English captions can be accessed by clicking the “CC” button at the bottom of your Zoom screen.
 - Live Spanish interpretation can be accessed by clicking the “interpretation” button at the bottom of your Zoom screen (world icon). Once in the Spanish channel, please silence the original audio.
 - Se puede acceder a la interpretación en español en vivo haciendo clic en el botón "interpretation" en la parte inferior de la pantalla de Zoom (icono del mundo). Una vez en el canal español, por favor silencie el audio original.
- This live webinar includes polls and evaluation questions. Please be prepared to interact during polling times.



Feedback and Follow-Up

- After the webinar, you can send follow-up questions and feedback about the webinar to NCAPPS@hsri.org.

(Please note that this email address is not monitored during the webinar.)

- The recorded webinar, along with a PDF version of the slides and a plain language summary, will be available within a few weeks at NCAPPS.acl.gov. We will also include questions and responses in the materials that are posted following the webinar.

Who's Here?

“What is your connection to today’s topic? Select all that apply.”

1. I participate in a self-direction program
2. My family member participates in a self-direction program
3. I am interested in enrolling in self-direction
4. I am a case manager, support broker, or similar role
5. I am a state employee
6. I am a federal employee
7. I work for an organization that provides Fiscal Management Services (FMS)
8. Other

Meet Our Speakers



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Our mission is to **advance self-direction**. We believe **everyone who needs long-term services and supports should have the option to self-direct**- that is, to decide when, where, how, and from whom their services are delivered. Our work is based on the principles of self-determination- **everyone has the right to make meaningful decisions about their life and their future**. Our work supports the right of people with disabilities to live the lives they want.



Information & Assistance in Support of Self-Direction

What is Information & Assistance (I&A)

According to CMS in the 1915(c) waiver technical guide:

- Service/function that assists the participant or participant's family or representative in arranging for, directing and managing services.
- Assist in identifying immediate and long-term needs
- Developing options to meet those needs
- Accessing identified supports and services
- Practical skills training to independently direct and manage waiver services
 - Providing information on recruiting, hiring, and managing workers
 - Providing information on communication & problem solving
- Ensure participants understand responsibilities

Who Provides I&A in Self-Direction?

- The I&A provider works with the participant to ensure s/he understands and can be successful when self-directing
- The title of the I&A provider varies state by state, common titles include:
 - Case Manager
 - Service Coordinator
 - Support Broker
- Responsibilities include:
 - Informs the participant of program guidelines
 - Informs the participant of their responsibilities
 - Works with the participant to create a person-centered plan
 - Provides guidance and resources on all aspects of self-direction
 - Provides support and encouragement for self-directing

How I&A is Different from Traditional Case Management

- Fully understands and supports the self-directed experience
- Understands the importance of independence and cultivates it
- Works with the participant to create a person-centered plan
- Empowers vs. manages
- Uses a personalized approach
- Cares about participant's goals and personal outcomes
- Cultivates problem solving techniques
- Does "with" instead of does "for"
- Understand "Important To" vs "Important For"
- Provides tools for continued success instead of solving the current problem

Why Does I&A in Self-Direction Matter?

- States vary widely in their approaches
- Without robust I&A systems, states struggle to implement self-direction at scale
 - Most people need support to be successful with self-direction
 - People typically decline participation in self-direction if they feel they've not received enough support to understand the model
 - Includes the provision of program monitoring and safeguards
- Many states have plans underway to expand self-direction and well-designed I&A will be critical to their success

Approaches to I&A Structure

In self-direction, different models of I&A structure include:

- I&A is provided by the case manager, in conjunction with their other responsibilities
- I&A is offered by a standalone service
 - Agency structure (e.g., a specialized support brokerage agency or as a service offered by a Center for Independent Living)
 - An independent model (i.e., individuals who meet provider qualifications for the service may enroll as providers)
- I&A offered as part of a Financial Management Services (FMS) entity or Managed Care Organization (MCO) scope of work



Approaches to I&A Professionals

Differences in skills required to provide I&A support:

- Some states require minimal initial training with little or no ongoing training
- Other states require professional credentials and offer rigorous opportunities for further training

Approaches to I&A Payment

In self-direction, approaches to I&A payment include:

- Per Member Per Month flat fee (cap on hours)
- Unit based, ex. per 15 minutes or 1 hour

Applied Self-Direction's I&A Initiative

- Our goals:
 - To better understand what works well and what doesn't work well in states varying approaches to I&A
 - To provide meaningful guidance to states and other stakeholders regarding best practices in I&A design and implementation
 - To collaborate with a geographically diverse cross-section of knowledgeable experts and practitioners
- Generous sponsorship from Centene supported this work

Aim of the I&A Core Standards

- Recommendations designed to offer answers to the following questions:
 - What should an I&A professional know to help them successfully support participants?
 - What should an I&A professional do to help them successfully support participants?
 - What abilities and resources should an I&A professional have to help successfully support participants?
 - How can states and other program administrative entities gauge the success of their I&A professionals?



I&A in Real Life Examples

Philosophical Hallmarks

The I&A Person should have these beliefs coming in:

- Person-centered belief and approach
 - Belief that the participant is #1
 - Belief that the participant is the true expert in their own life
 - Belief that everyone should have choice and control over their lives
- Belief in self-direction
 - Anyone who wants to manage and direct their own services can do so with the right supports
- Cultural awareness to be able to work successfully with participants of diverse backgrounds
 - Willingness to learn about and embrace differences
 - Respect the customs and needs of participants

Valuable Skills

The I&A Person should have these skills coming in:

- Creativity and ability to think outside the box
- Being accountable and dependable for the participant
- Effective communication skills
- Ability to multi-task and work on several projects at the same time
- Ability to quickly change from one activity to another
 - Go from a relaxed client meeting to help a participant fire their worker
- Analytical and math skills
- Ability to work independently
- Time management skills

Suggested Core Competencies

These competencies can be taught as long as the person has the fundamental belief in self-direction, examples include:

- In-depth understanding of the philosophy and operations of self-direction, including roles and responsibilities
- Thorough knowledge and understanding of additional resources available to the participant to support the person-centered plan
- Detailed knowledge of necessary paperwork
- Comprehensive understanding of the key players in the program and the roles each person plays

Additional Suggestions

Participant counts

- There is no magical number of participants
- The ideal number of participants is somewhere between 35-45
- The actual number depends on many factors, including
 - The experience and knowledge of the I&A Provider
 - The experience and knowledge of the participant
 - Where the participant is in their self-direction journey
 - The circle of support that the participant has and needs

Additional Suggestions (2)

I&A Providers specific to self-direction

- Have the necessary knowledge for people self-directing
- Have the necessary time to devote to people self-directing
- Won't be tempted to steer people away from self-direction, because it's easier and less time consuming for the I&A Person
- Will decrease gatekeeping, because people truly believe in self-direction
- People with lived experience are the best candidates

Nathan Turner



Support Brokers in Ohio

	IO	Level 1	SELF
Support Brokerage	No	No	Yes
Case Manager/ SSA (Service and Support Administration)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Count of enrollees using self- directed services as of 6/2022	15	14	1481

Support Brokers in Ohio (2)

- Why so little use?
 - IO and Level One had no self-directed services until 2018. At that time “Participant-directed Homemaker Personal Care” was added to both.
 - In SELF, eligibility required the enrollee to choose at least one service to self-direct.
 - Case managers/SSA mostly felt that Support Broker duplicated. It was felt that SSAs were already providing information and assistance.

Support Brokers in Ohio (3)

- Self-direction is a practice and philosophy – a structure within a HCBS Waiver is not required for someone to practice self-direction.
- It can be fulfilled by the person living with a disability in collaboration with a case manager/SSA.

My Personal Experience

- SSA provides information and assistance and that helps me to recruit providers.
- Ohio rules for support brokers allow the person to be their own, but you do not get paid, unless you do this for another person.
- Worked with SSA to figure out a communication style that is different from the established structure of the County Board of DD.
- The screening tool used by the SSA to recruit providers had to be changed to reflect my specific needs and expectations – this resulted in fewer responses, but those who did were more appropriate.
- Work directly with the provider, but do not use a financial management services (FMS) entity.

Pat
Wright





Questions?

Real-Time Evaluation Questions

- Please take a moment to respond to these six evaluation questions to help us deliver high-quality NCAPPS webinars.
- If you have suggestions on how we might improve NCAPPS webinars, or if you have ideas or requests for future webinar topics, please send us a note at NCAPPS@hsri.org

Real-Time Evaluation Questions (cont.)

- 1. Overall, how would you rate the quality of this webinar?**
- 2. How well did the webinar meet your expectations?**
- 3. Do you think the webinar was too long, too short, or about right?**
- 4. How likely are you to use this information in your work or day-to-day activities?**
- 5. How likely are you to share the recording of this webinar or the PDF slides with colleagues, people you provide services to, or friends?**
- 6. How could future webinars be improved?**

Resources

- [Core Standards for Information & Assistance Professionals in Self-Direction](#)
- [Strengthening Information and Assistance in Self-Direction Programs: Executive Roundtable Series White Paper](#)

Thank You.

Register for upcoming webinars at

ncapps.acl.gov

NCAPPS is funded and led by the Administration for Community Living and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and is administered by HSRI.

The content and views expressed in this webinar are those of the presenters and do not necessarily reflect that of Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) or the Administration for Community Living (ACL) .

