

New Mexico National Core Indicator Project: Overview

Introduction:

In the late 1970's, a national movement began to change the way developmental disabilities services and supports were provided. Although nationally there had been a significant shift to community-based care rather than in institutional settings, New Mexico was one of the first states to de-institutionalize individuals with developmental disabilities and provide its participants with community-based services. The Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (DDSD) worked with individuals, families, providers and other community members to develop, refine and improve the Developmental Disabilities (DD) Waiver and other program services. During this period, a tool was needed to reflect New Mexicans' with developmental disabilities perceptions of whether or not services effected changes in their levels of independence.

In fiscal year 2001, DDSD created an in-house assessment tool called the Independence and Cultural Sensitivity Performance Measures Survey (known as the Independence Survey) in to monitor New Mexicans' with developmental disabilities levels of satisfaction with the services they receive. This survey was used annually to evaluate satisfaction rates in the domains of system performance, staff support and access to services. The following indicators were used, analyzed and reported: 1) individuals whose services helped them to maintain or increase independence in daily living skills, 2) in work and functional skills and 3) in cultural sensitivity.

As the waiting list for DD Waiver services grew and pressures increased on federal and state budgets with heightened federal quality management expectations, DDSD made the decision to enhance its program's quality assessment techniques. To improve the division's quality assessment of services to New Mexicans with developmental disabilities and to be able to compare data across states, DDSD began participating in the National Core Indicator (NCI) Project.



The NCI Project:

In FY 2006, DDSD expanded system service monitoring and quality assessment efforts by joining 28 other states in participating in the NCI Project. The NCI project is a group effort among participating state agency members called the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS). As part of a rich array of evaluation supports, both NASDDDS and the Human Services Research Institute (HSRI) offer planning, technical support and tools to help evaluate and monitor satisfaction rates of DD Waiver programs and services that families and individuals receive.

The NCI project's methods for gathering and organizing information involves new strategies but offers the advantage of comparative information on what other states are experiencing. In this way New Mexico can use and compare data gathered from many sources and provide a more in-depth snapshot on the quality of the DD Waiver program and services in New Mexico. The following is an overview of the NCI project and how DDSD uses it in New Mexico:

- **What is the NCI Project?**

NCI was first started in 1996 and is a group effort among participating NASDDDS state agency members and HSRI. Participating states combine their resources and knowledge to create performance-monitoring systems, identify common performance (core) indicators, and work out comparable data collection strategies and share results. The goal of The NCI Project is to develop a uniform method of measuring service performance and outcomes so that results can be compared and shared across states.

- **What are Core Indicators?**

The core indicators are a set of performance indicators developed by NASDDDS that include approximately 100 consumer, family, systemic, cost, and health and safety outcomes. Sources of information related to each indicator include:

1. **consumer surveys** (e.g., what people receiving services think about their services);
2. **family surveys** (e.g., what families think about their satisfaction with the services their family members receive);
3. **provider surveys** (e.g., how often staff turns over) and;
4. **state systems data** (e.g., information about costs).

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These outcomes help to understand the overall effectiveness of public developmental disabilities agencies.

- **What are the NCI methods for gathering data?**

NCI employs two types of data-gathering methods, mailed questionnaires and face-to-face interviews. Both are used to gather information from individuals, families and guardians. The mailed surveys are two different types and are sent to:

1. The families/guardians of individuals receiving services from the DD Waiver and to the family member or guardian who lives with the adult on waiver services and;
2. The family members or guardians of adults who live outside the family home.

The face-to-face survey asks participants about their experiences and satisfaction with services.

- **What is The Developmental Disabilities Supports Division (DDSD)'s Involvement with the NCI Project?**

DDSD collects data for the adult family surveys and uses the results for program assessment. DDSD also uses the NCI Consumer Survey, a face-to-face interview with adults on the DD Waiver, to assess the individuals' levels of program satisfaction. Both surveys (the consumer and family surveys) reveal the systems strengths as well as areas that may need improvement.

- **Who will be involved in the National Core Indicator Project?**

The NCI survey project involves adults on the DD Waiver, their families and guardians, self-advocates, the NM Department of Health, DDSD staff members, National Core Indicator staff members, various policy makers and stakeholders, various advocacy groups and DD Waiver providers.

- **Resources:**

Please see the following resources for more information.

The National Core Indicators Website, part of the Human Services Research Institute (HSRI):

<http://www.hsri.org/nci>

Developmental Disabilities Supports Division: <http://www.health.state.nm.us/ddsd/>

New Mexico Department of Health: <http://www.health.state.nm.us>