Trillium HEALTH RESOURCES
Transforming Lives. Building Community Well-Being.

NC INNOVATIONS
Individual & Family-Directed Supports Fact Sheet

Individual & Family-Directed Support Services Overview

Agency with Choice (AWC) or Employer of Record (EOR) Option

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to hire, manage, and make changes in staffing for yourself or your family members?

If the answer is yes, then you will want to learn more about the NC Innovations Individual & Family-Directed Supports option (IFDS).

What are Individual & Family-Directed Supports?

Individual & Family-Directed Supports in the NC Innovations Waiver is a way for individuals and families to have greater control over all or part of the supports in their Individual Support Plan. There are two options for you to direct your own services: Agency with Choice and Employer of Record. These options allow you to choose the way you wish to control your services and supports.

What are the advantages of Individual & Family-Directed Supports?

- Being able to determine the best way to support your family member in learning skills
- Having more choice and control about when, where and how your services are provided
- Helps you become more connected to your community
- May lead to improved quality of services
- Individuals who direct their own services are proven to be much more satisfied with what they receive
- Recipients may also access Individual Goods & Service, a flexible service described in the NC Innovations Individual & Family Guide.

Who can participate in Individual & Family-Directed Supports?

Individuals, the parents of children, and legally responsible persons for individuals participating in the NC Innovations Waiver have the option of directing one or more NC Innovations Waiver Services. Participants receive education to learn about Individual & Family-Directed Supports. They may also choose a Representative to assist. The Representative should be someone the recipient trusts and is interested in the well-being of the person.

What services can be self-directed?

You may elect to direct one or all of your services, including any of the following:

- Community Living Services
- Community Networking Services
- Individual Goods and Services
- Natural Supports Education
- Respite Services
- Supported Employment Services
- Supported Living

What help is available for individuals and families who choose to self-direct their services and supports?

- Orientation and Education
- Community Navigator Services
- Agency with Choice Provider Services
- Representative

What are Community Navigator Services?

Community Navigator is a service that focuses on empowering individuals to define and direct their own services and supports.

What is a Representative?

The representative is a family member, friend, appointed representative (other than the legal guardian), income payee, or other person who willingly accepts responsibility for performing the Employer tasks that the individual is unable to perform.

What does "Common Law Employer" mean?

The Common Law Employer is the individual who must be recorded by and registered with federal and state government agencies as the employer for legal purposes.

The Agency with Choice Model

In the Agency with Choice model, a provider agency serves as the Common Law Employer. You recommend employees for hiring/firing, schedule their work, and assist in training the employees. Through recommendations from families and individuals, the Agency with Choice provider makes final hiring and firing decisions and sets the pay rates of the employees.

What does "Managing Employer" mean?

In the Agency with Choice option, you are the Managing Employer and are responsible for the day-to-day supervision of your staff. The Managing Employer recommends individuals to the Agency with Choice provider for hiring. The Managing Employer partners with the Agency with Choice provider to provide training, evaluation of employees and hiring new staff as needed.

What are Agency with Choice provider services and what is their role?

Agency with Choice providers are agencies that work with Individuals and Families to self-direct services. The Agency with Choice provider:

- Manages payroll for your employees
- Pays all taxes and unemployment fees on behalf of the person self-directing services and
- Provides the Managing Employee with reports about funds spent
- Employs the Qualified Professional who provides oversight of documentation of services.
- Takes responsibility for a large number of accounting and bookkeeping services for individuals who participate in the Individual and Family Directed Supports option
- Partners with you to supervise your employees.

What back-up staffing options will be available for individuals who choose to self-direct services and supports?

Each Individual Support Plan describes how the individual will get the most critical needs met if a direct service employee is absent. The Agency with Choice provider works with families and individuals to develop a back-up staffing plan.

The Employer of Record Model

The Employer of Record may be the Individual receiving services, the Parent of a Minor Child or the Legally Responsible Person. The Employer of Record is the Common Law Employer responsible for supervising and managing all employees. In this self-direction option, the Employer of Record is responsible for providing back-up staffing.

What is the role of the Financial Support Services Agency?

- Managing payroll for your employees
- Deducting all required federal, state, and local taxes, including unemployment fees, prior to issuing paychecks to employees
- Ordering employment related supplies and paying invoices for other expenses such as training of employees
- Administering benefits for employees hired to provide services and supports;
- Maintaining ledger accounts for each individual's funds
- Producing expenditure reports that are required, including reports to the individual/ employer/family, concerning expenditures of funds against their budgets
- Requesting criminal background checks, driver's license checks, and health care registry checks of providers of self-directed services
- Tracking and monitoring individual budget expenditures
- Facilitating Workers Compensation Application on behalf of the Employer of Record

What if I try it and do not like the Individual & Family-Directed Supports Option?

Individuals and families may change back to Provider Directed Services at any time they choose.

What are the next steps for implementing Individual & Family-Directed Supports?

- Let your Care Manager know you are interested.
- A Community Navigator will provide initial training to you on Family Directed Supports.
- An easy step-by-step manual with directions will be available to you.
- Your Care Manager will revise your Individual Support Plan to include Individual & Family-Directed Supports.
- Your Care Manager will assist you in selecting an Agency with Choice or Financial Support Services provider enrolled with the Trillium Provider Network.