



Self Directed Supports Guide book (SDS)

This is a guide book for those enrolled in
Community Care's PACE, Partnership, and
Family Care Programs

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WHAT IS THIS GUIDEBOOK ABOUT?

This Guidebook explains the Self-Directed Supports (SDS) option and how to make it work for you.

Participation in SDS is voluntary. If you choose SDS, you may direct some of your services. You might even choose to direct one portion of a service but not another. This Guidebook will walk you through each of the steps in developing your own service plan, managing your individualized service budget, hiring, and paying providers.

WHAT IS THE SELF-DIRECTED SUPPORTS (SDS) OPTION?

Self-Directed Supports (SDS) means:

- Making your own decisions about how you want to live life and receive the support necessary to do so.
- Having control over resources, including finances.
- Taking responsibility for personal decisions and actions.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF SELF-DETERMINATION

Dignity and Respect

All people have the right to be treated with dignity and to be respected as a whole person.

Choice and Control

People have the right to choose what they will do with their lives and with whom they will do it. When people need help with choices, family and friends who are closest to them should be the primary source of assistance. Self-determination means that people have the power to make decisions and truly control their lives. This includes authority over financial resources available for support services, authority to determine the goals and nature of support services, and authority to hire the people who will provide chosen supports.

Relationships

Those with whom the individual has real relationships provide the strength, assistance, and security that ensures each person's well being. It is essential that each person have a circle of friends and family to provide strength and assistance.

Dreaming

All people have hopes and dreams, which guide the actions that are most meaningful to them. A commitment to helping people determine their dreams, listening to and respecting those dreams, and helping to make them come true is crucial.

Contribution and Community

Everyone has the ability to contribute to his or her community in a meaningful way. Giving of ourselves helps us establish a sense of belonging and identity. Community membership includes having an opportunity to be employed, to have your own home, to be truly involved in the routines of the community and to make a difference in the lives of others.

Fiscal Responsibility

Control over how funds get spent comes with responsibility to live within a budget. When people have choice and control, it allows them to purchase supports to get what they need, pay only for what they get, invest in goods or services that will produce long-term benefits, spend money more efficiently, explore alternatives to paid supports, and make adjustments to their supports as their needs change.

Whatever It Takes

"No, we can't" as an answer is replaced by "How can we make this happen?" Realizing dreams is about opening up opportunities that are not restricted to the resources and approaches the current system has available. Making things happen doesn't always require money.

Choice Has Limits

Public funds will not be used to support choices that are illegal or harmful to the person or others. There are also limits to the level of risk society will allow people to take with their own lives and physical well being. You may lose access to the Self Directed Supports option if these limits are crossed.

Role of Professional

The role of the professional must change from one of planning and making judgments for people to one of helping people to understand what their choices are and to realize their own dreams and aspirations.

Self-Determination is Not Abandonment

Self-determination is not an excuse of abandoning someone in an unsafe situation on the grounds that he or she "made the choice." It does not mean offering a "choice" between a restrictive services model and no support. Teams will be creative in helping people find ways to assess and manage risk.

CREATING A PLAN FOR SERVICES

Step 1: Your Personal Outcomes

The first step in creating your plan for services is to think about your short-term goals and your dreams for the future. Do you want a full-time job? Do you want to find a hobby? Do you want to spend more time with friends? Do you want to take a vacation? Do you want to own your own home? In other words, what are your personal goals and outcomes?

Here are a few examples of personal outcomes:

- John's personal outcome is to find an attendant who will help him shower at 6:00 am every day.
- Mary's personal outcome is to attend church every Sunday.
- Kate wants to get to and from her medical appointments in a timely fashion. Her goal is to find reliable transportation.

Step 2: Comprehensive Assessment

Now think about the paid and unpaid support you need to achieve your personal outcomes. What are your preferences for when and how you'd like to receive that support?

Your Team will work with you to complete a comprehensive assessment. The comprehensive assessment process will generate ideas about the kinds of support you need and the types of services that would best provide that support. You may invite others, such as your family and friends to join in this assessment process.

Step 3: Individualized Service Plan

Now that you've discussed your personal outcomes, needs, and preferences for support, it's time to make a plan for how you will get support or services.

Your individualized service plan will list all of your services, the names of those who will provide the services, and the costs associated with each service.

Here is what part of a service plan may look like for Mike. Mike's personal outcome is to remain living in his own apartment. These are the services he needs to achieve his personal outcome:

EXAMPLE	
Service	Help with laundry, housecleaning and grocery shopping.
Provider	Neighbor Sam
How often	8 hours per week
Cost	\$8.00 per hour
Service	Emergency / back-up plan for
Provider	Mike's sister
How often	When Sam is unavailable
Cost	No charge

Service	Transportation
Provider	County transportation
How often	4 round trips per month
Cost	\$4.00 per round trip
Service	Meals
Provider	Meals on Wheels
How often	5 days per week
Cost	\$4.50 per meal

*****IMPORTANT*****

Your service plan should list services that match your needs and personal outcomes in the most efficient and cost effective-way.

Your service plan must also address any issues related to your health and safety, including emergency back-up plans.

For example, what happens if your personal care worker is scheduled to get you out of bed in the morning, but he or she is sick? Make sure you've got someone else to call as a back-up.

Your Team will meet at least every 6 months to review your personal outcomes. Your team is responsible for working together to insure that your services are meeting your needs and helping you achieve your outcomes.

DEVELOPING A SERVICE BUDGET

Managing your individualized service budget is an important part of SDS. The amount of money in your service budget is based on your needs identified during your comprehensive assessment and the type and amount of services in your service plan.

Your Team will work with you to set up a monthly service budget amount. The amount in your budget depends on the cost of your services. The cost of each service is based on what a typical formal service provider would charge for that particular service. For example, the typical cost of adult day care may be \$ 45 per day, so if you need adult day care, \$45/day would be in your budget for adult day care.

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EXAMPLE	
Service	Help with laundry, housecleaning and grocery shopping.
Provider	Neighbor Sam
How often	8 hours per week
Typical Charge	\$8.00 per hour
Budget	8 hours/week x \$8/hour x 52 weeks = \$3,328/year (\$277.33/month)
Service	Emergency / back-up plan for

Provider	Mike's sister
How often	When Sam is unavailable
Typical Charge	No charge
Budget	\$0.00
Service	Transportation
Provider	County transportation
How often	4 round trips per month
Typical Charge	\$4.00 per round trip
Budget	4 trips x \$4/trips/month = \$16/month
Service	Meals
Provider	Meals on Wheels
How often	5 days per week
Typical Charge	\$4.50 per meal
Budget	5 meals/week x \$4.50/meal x 52 weeks = \$1,170/year (\$97.50/month)

Over Budget / Under Budget

We will be financially responsible when you spend more than what is in your budget. If you are substantially over-budget (or over-budget by a small amount on a regular basis), then you may lose access to Self-Directed supports. Your team will routinely assess your needs to make sure that your needs can be met with your plan. Your team will also work with you to regain SDS once it has been stopped.

You will not be able to use any part of your budget for things that are not listed in your service plan. In other words, if you need adult day care but do not buy adult day care, you cannot use the money you saved for things that are not in your service plan.

In this example, the “typical charges” equals Mike’s “actual costs” (see above). However, if the typical charges were higher (or lower) than the actual cost, Mike could make some budgeting choices.

SHOPPING FOR SERVICES

Ask yourself these questions before shopping for services:

Who will provide my services?

Be aware of costs. It may cost more to hire staff from a provider agency because of the agency's administrative costs. It may be cheaper for you to hire a friend or neighbor instead.

What do I want my providers to do?

Do you just need a ride to the grocery store, or do you also need help putting groceries away at home? Try to be specific when thinking about the type of assistance you need.

When do I want my services delivered?

Think about your daily routine. Do you need to wake up at a certain time for work? Do you like to eat lunch at 11:00 instead of noon? Do you prefer morning or evening baths?

Where do I want to receive my services?

Do you want services in your own home, or do you prefer to receive them in another setting, such as an adult day care center? If you work, do you need support at your job site?

How do I want my services delivered?

Make sure your providers understand your needs and are comfortable doing the work you expect. If you need help with personal care, are your providers properly trained? Are you willing to train your providers to perform tasks the way you prefer?

Remember to think of your personal outcomes, needs, and preferences identified during your assessment and service planning process when shopping for services. There are many different ways to find the support you need.

The next step is to think about who will provide your supports.

Are any of these people willing and able to assist you?

- Family members or other relatives
- Friends
- Neighbors
- Church groups
- Co-workers
- Roommates
- Provider agencies
- Community volunteer organizations

CHOOSING PROVIDERS

There are three ways to choose the people that will provide your support and services-

- 1. Network Providers.** Community Care has contracts with different agencies and organizations. Your Team is available to assist you with choosing a provider that will meet your needs.
- 2. Find volunteers.** Do you have a family member, neighbor or friend that is willing to volunteer their time to assist you?
- 3. Hire your own providers.** You may already know someone who would be willing to provide your support for pay. If you do not know anyone who is willing to provide your support, you may need to advertise and interview for providers.

Or, you may choose to use a combination of all three.

HIRING & PAYING YOUR OWN PROVIDERS:

There are two options for hiring and paying your own providers: through a co-employment agency or through a fiscal agent.

- 1. Co-employment.** You and an agency share the duties of an employer.
- 2. Fiscal Agent.** You act as the employer while the fiscal agent helps you with payroll.

Co-employment companies hire the providers you choose for in-home services such as house cleaning and personal care. Here's how it works if you already have a provider in mind: The provider completes an employment application. Then the co-employment agency completes all of the employment paperwork such as background checks, reference checks, tax withholding forms, etc. If you don't know of a provider, both agencies will help you locate one.

Once your provider is hired, the Co-employment agency will:

- Set the wage and benefits for your provider.
- Provide unemployment compensation and worker's compensation benefits.
- Issue a pay check to your providers every two weeks.
- Give your provider basic orientation and training. Both agencies also support you in doing your own training for your providers.
- Provide back-up/emergency coverage in case your provider is unable to work their scheduled shift.
- Complete an annual performance evaluation of your provider based on your feedback.
- Handle the process for resignations, disciplinary actions, grievances, and terminations.

If you choose co-employment, your Team will work closely with you to make sure the SDS option goes smoothly.

The "fiscal agent" service processes payroll, time cards, and issues pay checks to your providers.

If you choose to use a fiscal agent, you are responsible for:

- Finding and hiring your provider.
- Determining wages for certain chore services.
- Training.
- Making an emergency back-up plan in case your provider can not work their scheduled shift.

Once you have located a provider, the fiscal agent will:

- Issue a paycheck to providers every two weeks.
- Provide worker's compensation benefits.

- Handle tax withholdings for your provider.

Here's a chart which gives an overview of each option. You'll notice that the co-employment options offer more assistance and support with employment-related tasks and the fiscal agent requires that you take most of the responsibility for these tasks.

Employment-Related Task	Who is responsible with co-employer option?	Who is responsible with fiscal agent option?
Writing a job description, screening applications, interviewing, hiring providers	You and the co-employment agency	You
Completing background checks	The co-employment agency	The fiscal agent
Deciding wage amount for your provider (within CMO guidelines)	You NOTE: The co-employment agency will ensure that your decisions meet state and federal requirements	You NOTE: The fiscal agent will ensure that your decisions meet state and federal requirements
Deciding on benefits such as health/dental insurance, vacation, holiday, and sick time	These benefits are not offered under co-employment at this time	You
Orientation and training for your provider	You and the co-employment agency	You
Supervision and work performance evaluation of your provider	You and the co-employment agency	You
Disciplinary action and firing, if necessary	You and the co-employment agency	You
Emergency back up coverage	You and the co-employment agency	You
Signing off on provider time card	You and the provider	You and the provider
Sending provider time card	You and the provider	You and the provider
Issues pay checks	The co-employment agency	The fiscal agent
Responsible for payroll deductions	The co-employment agency	The fiscal agent

So which is the best option for you? You decide!

PROVIDER STANDARDS

Your team requires that all providers, including your own staff, pass a criminal background check as well as meet other requirements.

Your Team is available to assist you in making sure that your employees meet these requirements.

You may also add your own requirements to this list such as reference checks and a TB skin test.

Relating To Your Providers

You have hired providers to perform a certain job. Remember that you are the boss. It is important to give your providers feedback. As an employer, you are responsible for telling your providers when they're doing a good job. You are also responsible for discussing concerns with your providers. Remember that you are paying for their support and assistance.

Your providers are there to support you in achieving your goals and personal outcomes.

EVALUATING YOUR SERVICES AND OUTCOMES

Am I happy with the services I receive? Do my providers meet my service expectations? Are my needs being met? Are my providers reliable and trustworthy? In other words, am I getting my money's worth from the providers I employ and the services I buy?

Ask yourself these questions as you continue to receive services. Think about the personal outcomes that you identified in your individualized service plan: Are your providers and services helping you meet those outcomes? If not, please remember that your care management team is available to assist you in problem solving to find other ways to make sure your needs and outcomes are met.

Quality is very important. Your Team is committed to insuring that you receive the highest quality care. When you choose the SDS option it is your responsibility to continually evaluate if you are receiving quality services. Remember that it is your right to receive services that meet your needs and help you achieve your personal outcomes.

If you have a conflict with one of your service providers, try to discuss the problem openly. Make sure your provider understands exactly what you're asking them to do. It is important to have reasonable expectations for your provider. Good relationships involve respect and trust. Chances are a provider will treat you respectfully if you praise and respect them in return. It helps if you and your provider are honest with each other. Everyone deserves a chance to do their very best.

However, it is ok to find a new provider if you are just not happy with the one you've hired.

SELF-ADVOCACY

Self-advocacy means taking control and making your own decisions. It means having a say in who your providers are, the types of services you receive, and when, where and how those services are delivered.

Self-advocacy relates to more than just your care and services.

It means taking chances and accepting responsibility for the consequences of your actions.

Set your GOALS and make a PLAN to get there.

Be willing to make CHANGES in your life.

Surround yourself with people who SUPPORT your DREAMS and will help you REACH your GOALS

SPEAK up for YOURSELF

LEARN from YOUR MISTAKES.

DON'T GIVE UP.

Your Team is here to support and empower you to make your own choices. In choosing the SDS option, you have accepted responsibility for the consequences of your choices and actions.

Your Team will work with you to make sure your individualized service plan promotes your well-being. If for some reason your health or safety (or the health and safety of another person) is being threatened by your choices, your team may need to limit your participation in SDS.

If that happens, your team will work with you to find additional supports or training for you so that you can resume directing your services as soon as possible.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT SDS

Q: Must I participate in the Self Directed Supports option?

A: No. Participation in SDS is completely voluntary. Your Team will help you decide if this is the right choice for you.

Q: How do I know if the SDS option is for me?

A: Every member of the program has the right to choose to direct some of his or her services. Choosing the SDS option means taking responsibility for arranging and managing your own service providers and service budget. Some people prefer to have their care management team do all of this for them, and that's fine. The SDS option is for you if you want to handle some or all of these responsibilities on your own.

Q: If I choose the SDS option, am I on my own to handle all of my services and providers?

A: No. Your team will make contact with you every six months or more often if you choose. Your Team is still responsible for insuring that your personal outcomes are being met and that you are safe. Your team is available to support you in making the SDS option successful. You can call on your team to assist you at any time.

Q: Are there services that I am not able to direct?

A: Yes. Services that require special skills are not available for self-direction. Ask your Team for details.

Q: Will the SDS option work for me?

A: SDS will work for you if you are willing to accept the responsibility of making your own decisions and accepting the consequences of those decisions. Your team will work with you to the extent you choose to make sure SDS is working for you.

Q: If I choose the SDS option, do I have to arrange for all of my services and hire all of my own providers?

A: No. You can choose to direct all or some of your services. For example, you may want to hire your neighbor to help you with grocery shopping only, but let your team arrange for the rest of your services. Your individualized service plan will indicate which services you choose to direct.

Q: I want to hire my own providers, but it sounds like a lot of work. Do I have to know about employment laws and paperwork?

A: No. Your Team has made the process of hiring your own providers easier by contracting with a co-employment agency to act as co-employer with you. If you are comfortable acting as an employer, but prefer not to deal with payroll issue, a fiscal agent will manage this task for you.

Q: Can I have direct access to my individualized service budget? For example, can I open my own checking account with this money?

A: No. The federal government does not allow individuals direct access to government funding. However, this does not mean that you can't make decisions about how your individualized budget is spent. You have control over which services you buy and who provides them.

Q: Who pays for provider background checks, advertising for employees, and training?

A: All costs associated with your self-directed supports are part of your individualized service budget.