

DAC-NW, INC.

INDEPENDENT LIVING PLAN ASSESSMENT

I. Introduction

This document is an open question format tool to help in development of an IL plan. Remember that the planning process is interactive and that these questions and topics are only a guide and are not exhaustive. Every consumer's life is unique to him/her and staff questioning needs to respond to the consumer's individual responses and priorities.

II. Assessment of Current Level of Independence

A. Mobility

1. Is the person able to ambulate without assistance? If not, what type of adaptive aids are necessary? With aids what level of mobility is evidenced? Does the person now have those aids, or is that an area which needs to be addressed? Are conditions likely to change so different equipment may be needed in the future?
2. Can the person climb stairs or even a curb? Is any change in level difficult, or impossible to navigate? Are the barriers physical or attitudinal; that is, does it appear likely that the person could access more than they currently do except for fear or anxiety?
3. Is the person able to manipulate objects with his/her hands? What level of manual dexterity do they demonstrate? Can they turn knobs, faucets, operate switches, and so on?
4. If there is any cognitive deficit is the person able to safely negotiate crosswalks, etc.? Can they find addresses, neighborhood locations, and, if public transportation is available, are they able to access it?

B. Self-Care Skills

1. Is the person able to care for their own personal needs including dressing, bathing, clothes selection, hair care, dental care, medical care, and general grooming? Do they use any adaptive devices to assist them?
2. Does the person use a personal assistant? If so, how are they funded, trained? Does the person feel that they have any problems in locating, hiring and managing attendants? Have they been an employer before? do they have any familiarity with employment laws?

C. Home Maintenance and Safety Issues

1. Does the consumer experience any difficulty in following basic safety measures like locking doors, windows, etc.?
2. Can the person independently, or with the aid of a personal assistant whom they direct, clean all rooms in the house?
3. Can appliances be safely and correctly used?
4. Does the person have emergency attendant care in place? Have they planned for any problems in case their regular personal assistant doesn't show up?
5. Does the person have a procedure for exiting their residence in case of fire?
6. Is the person able to reset breakers, or replace fuses if necessary, with or without the use of assistive devices or an attendant?
7. Can the person self-medicate as needed?
8. Does the person have medical insurance, or some form of medical coverage? What kind? Is it adequate? If not, why not?
9. Is the person able to use a telephone without any assistance to contact someone in case of an emergency?

D. Food Skills

1. Is the person able to plan a menu, obtain, and prepare nutritious foods?
2. If they use a personal assistant can the person direct them to prepare the kinds of foods they like, and instruct them in shopping within necessary budget constraints?
3. Can the person follow safety precautions in handling and storing foods?

E. Social/Communication Skills

1. What kind of social contact is available? Does the person have any contact with other people with similar disabilities? Are they on the mailing lists of any support groups, advocacy groups, informational publications, product guides, and so on?
2. Does the person have limitations in use of a telephone, etc.? For example, do they need an environmental control unit to use the phone, do they need a speaker phone, or might they need a TDD or some other specialized device?
3. Does the person need to utilize a communication device to be able to speak? If so, do they currently have such a device? And, do they have a way to get it replaced and repaired, and so on?

4. Does the person speak and read English? If not, do they have access to classes to learn?
5. Does the individual need an interpreter, and, if so, are these services being offered when and where required?
6. Does the person have the social skills to communicate appropriately in a social setting?
7. Is the individual satisfied with their current level of social contact?

F. Academic Skills and Goals

1. What is the person's level of education?
2. Is the individual able to independently manage finances; ie., balance a checkbook, pay bills, etc.? Are they able to direct an attendant if necessary in maintaining accurate financial records?
3. Does the person have clocks or watches that are usable to them; for example talking clocks for people who are blind?
4. Does the person have any specific goals relating to increasing their level of education?

G. Environmental Accessibility

1. Is the individual's current living environment accessible? If needed are there ramps, both for entry and emergency egress? Do the ramps meet code? Have handrails been installed where necessary?
2. Are the electrical outlets at a height which can be easily reached?
3. Are light switches accessible?
4. Are lever handle faucets installed so the person can work both cold and hot water faucets?
5. Are the doors wide enough to allow access to all necessary living areas?
6. Can door handles and lock mechanisms be easily turned, and can window latches be worked?
7. Are grab bars installed in the bathroom? Are hot water pipes wrapped if exposed?
8. Are outdoor sidewalks suitable for wheelchair or crutch assisted travel?
9. Are cupboards, etc. accessible? If not, can the person use a reacher or some other assistive device to access them?

10. Are there Braille or other raised markings to indicate thermostat temperature, burner settings, and so on?

H. Transportation

1. Does the person have private transportation?
2. Is there access to public transportation?
3. Are there any other resources for transport to and from services, shopping, etc.?
4. If public transportation is available does the person know how to access it, and can they afford it? If they own their vehicle are they able to drive it, or must they hire a driver?
5. Is transportation readily available in an emergency, and is the person able to access it? Would they benefit from an emergency call service?
6. If transportation is not readily available how much of a barrier is it to the individual?

I. Recreation

1. What kinds of activities does the person enjoy for recreation? What types of activities did they participate in before an acquired disability? Are some or all of those activities still possible with adaptations or accommodations?
2. What types of recreational opportunities are available in the area in which they live?

J. Employment

1. Is the person currently working?
2. Is the employment adequate or what the person wants?
3. Might the person benefit from or desire vocational rehabilitation or other employment related services?

K. Income and Money management Issues

1. What is the current source(s) of income?
2. Is the income enough to meet needs?
3. Is there any need for advocacy related to qualifying for income support such as with SSA, etc.?

L. Other

1. Are there any other specific barriers in this person's life; for example psychological, medical complications, relationship issues, housing problems, etc.?

2. How much knowledge does the individual have about their own disability? Do they know enough to be able to understand their options?
3. What level of knowledge does the individual have about human rights protections, legislative options, etc? Do they have enough information to be a good self-advocate? Does their particular living situation indicate a need for education in self-advocacy methods? Do they evidently need to have more information about protections under the law?

III. **Recommendations and Possible Goals**

Follow through on points raised above to address identified barriers. Forecast ahead to potential problems in identified future situations such as changes in housing, school, etc.

Discuss others that may be involved in a person's life that impact the above questions. Do they have a VR counselor with whom you both can consult about possible vocational issues/questions. Are they working with other professionals that it may be helpful to talk to? How about others in their personal lives?

Services including the core services as well as others should be identified as possible solutions for barriers associated with inadequate services, discriminatory actions, and isolation or difficulty in dealing with aspects of disability (and others as appropriate).

The individual with a disability will be given the final say in goals set, timelines for achievement, etc., and the IL specialist will support and assist to identify services and options.

The key to a successful IL planning process will be to provide enough information and structure to empower the individual to make informed decisions about their own independent living services and options as related to his/her whole life.