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EXECUTIVE MEMORANDUM

TO: Regional Center Facility Administrators and Executive Directors of Residential Services

FROM: Janet Brock Priest
Associate State Director of Operations 

DATE: October 29, 2024

SUBJECT: Acuity Assessment Update and Next Steps

Since 2022, DDSN, with the concurrence of DHHS, has been pursuing the use of an “acuity assessment”. The purpose of using an acuity assessment is to enable the state to (eventually) differentiate the groups of people eligible for DDSN services. This differentiation can occur when information about those supported is gathered and patterns identified.

DDSN’s pursuit began with a search for an instrument(s) to be used. Considerable research was conducted to identify reputable instruments that could be used. Those instruments were reviewed and evaluated based on specific criteria. Based on the research and review the Missouri Adaptive Abilities Scale (“MAAS”) was selected as the instrument to be used. The MAAS is easy to administer and can be administered virtually. The MAAS has three stages. Stage I and II cannot be modified, however, Stage III can be modified to address issues unique to South Carolina. The MAAS is not copyrighted so once modified for South Carolina; it will be renamed.

Now that the instrument has been selected, it must be tested. The testing of this instrument will begin in the next few weeks. The testing will include people supported in all DDSN-sponsored residential services settings (e.g., CTH II, Regional Centers). Five hundred (500) people supported through residential services will be asked to participate in the testing of this instrument. The people who will be asked to participate will be randomly selected.

Soon, DDSN will be asking some Residential Services providers and Regional Center Facility Administrators to assist those who are selected to participate. Generally, the assistance needed will include:

- Assisting the person to schedule an on-line appointment for the interview.
- Making an internet connected computer with a camera available (cell phone will not work).

- Making available an informant who knows the person well (the two people have worked together regularly for at least 3 months).

When someone supported by your agency/facility is selected to participate, the person's name and specific, step-by-step instructions will be provided. However, it is possible that no one supported by your agency/facility be selected. If you do not receive additional communication related to this in the next few weeks, it is likely that someone supported by your agency/facility was not selected.

Please contact me via email (jpriest@ddsn.sc.gov) if you have any questions about this correspondence. Thank you in advance for your assistance with this effort.

cc: Lori Manos, DDSN's Associate State Director of Policy
Mary Long, DDSN's Interim Chief Financial Officer
Tommy McDaniel, DDSN's Director of Facility Operations