



## DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

*Your Partner For A Stronger Arizona*

# DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

Sent on Behalf of DES/DDD

## Quality Management Bulletin - August 2024

Target Audience - Qualified Vendors and Providers

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Happy August; it's nearly fall, but we Arizonans beg to differ! Today's bulletin will be focused on two topics: one is a great presentation given by the Division's program monitoring team and was well-received and educational. The other is information about new Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) quality measures and how they pertain to the National Core Indicator (NCI) surveys.

### Program Monitoring Presentation

The Program Monitoring Unit within the Division of Developmental Disabilities Quality Management Unit plays a crucial role in ensuring the quality and effectiveness of services provided to individuals with developmental disabilities.

This unit is responsible for ensuring Qualified Vendors adhere to contractual requirements, state and federal regulations, as well as internal policies and procedures. This includes conducting regular audits and reviews to verify compliance, conducting on-site visits to Qualified Vendors to assess the quality of care, and ensuring service sites meet safety and health standards. This involves reviewing documentation, interviewing staff and DDD Members, and observing service delivery.

Additionally, the unit provides training and technical assistance to Qualified Vendors to help them understand and comply with regulations and best practices. It offers resources and guidance on how to improve service delivery. Responsibilities also include overseeing the implementation of corrective action plans when deficiencies are identified, ensuring that Qualified Vendors take necessary steps to address and rectify issues promptly.

Furthermore, the unit collaborates with stakeholders to develop and update policies and procedures, ensuring that best practices are followed. By maintaining rigorous standards and continuous monitoring, the Program Monitoring Unit helps to safeguard the well-being and rights of individuals with developmental disabilities, promoting a high standard of care and support.

Please see the PowerPoint titled "[Program Monitoring Overview 6-24](#)" for additional information outlining an overview of the responsibilities of the unit.

## National Core Indicators® and CMS

CMS is placing emphasis on outcomes and performance assessment as more than merely a change in measurement approach. This represents a change in the assumptions about what “quality” is and reflects a larger shift in the field -- specifically from program-oriented, formulaic models of care to individually tailored supports based on individual choices and preferences. As a result, the adoption of performance indicators as a quality assurance technique is both a consequence of the change in expectations as well as a method for maintaining a focus on person-centered outcomes.

National Core Indicators®-Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (NCI®-IDD) was established in 1997. Formally known as “NCI”, NCI-IDD supports National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS) member agencies to gather **standard performance and outcome measures to track performance over time, compare results across states, and establish national benchmarks.**

Originally developed in the field of intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), today NCI (without “-IDD”) is an umbrella term that refers to our performance measurement system that tracks progress toward person-centered outcomes in the fields of intellectual and developmental disabilities, aging and disabilities, and more. Data generated by NCI-IDD is the largest collection of information on the outcomes of public IDD systems internationally.

CMS recognized the importance of the NCI and the need to assess the experience of people to inform these quality measures. Therefore, CMS has put an emphasis on the various surveys to deliver this information.

In the coming year, DDD will place an emphasis on NCI surveys and will send out reminders to take them. These surveys are crucial to improving the quality of life for the people DDD serves and informing us of the struggles and barriers those who serve them face. This information will also help the Division align various performance improvement projects to better the experience of DDD members and those who care for them.

[This fact sheet](#) provides information from NCI about the new emphasis of CMS.

As always, thank you for continuing to care for the DDD community and for your continued collaboration, and have a great fall.

If you have any questions, please reach out to one of the District emails below.

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