

**IM4Q and NCI: Meeting Waiver  
Assurances and Beyond**

Reinventing Quality Conference

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# **IM4Q & NCI: Two Peas in a Pod**

- **Independent Monitoring for Quality (IM4Q) is PA's umbrella program for improving satisfaction and life outcomes of persons receiving services, along with their family, guardians and friends.**
- **The Essential Data Elements (EDE) interview for IM4Q includes National Core Indicator (NCI) consumer survey measures + other items**
- **The IM4Q sample includes NCI subsets for comparing quality performance across state and national service sectors**

# Different Scope for Different Folks

## IM4Q

- 6000 children and adults /yr.
- 3000 family members, friends and guardians /yr.
- All types of service
- Contains PFDS Waiver sample
- Modified versions for different groups and purposes
- Reported in HCSIS, Data Warehouse, and AE/State Summaries
- Certain questions can only be answered by the person receiving services
- Team observations are part of the considerations process

## NCI

- 1400 adults a year
- 2800 family members
- All types of service
- Reported by HSRI in Annual National Report and AE Extracts
- NCI sample recipients also part of the IM4Q sample
- Certain questions can only be answered by the person receiving services

# IM4Q System: How It Works

- State approves local IM4Q Programs selected by County Administrative Entities (AE) and approved by State Steering Committee
- County/AE contracts with IM4Q Program to conduct monitoring, enter results in HCSIS, and be involved in quality management
- County/AE and local IM4Q Program follow protocols and practices to ensure monitoring is done consistently across the state
- IM4Q funding is allocated to County/AE based on the number of completed IM4Q interviews the IM4Q program is expected to complete

# **Standard IM4Q Features**

- **Same core instrument used for all participants with variations by age and living arrangement**
- **Same team of people with disabilities and families**
- **Same survey protocols**
- **Same “closing the loop” process for addressing IM4Q considerations**
- **Looks at real life outcomes and satisfaction, not just service-related areas**

# IM4Q Beginnings

- Began as a major part of service system modernization/transformation in the late mid-1990s
- Called for in-State Planning Advisory Committee recommendation for Every-Day Lives
- Implemented jointly with the Institute on Disabilities at Temple University, with impetus from the State [Arc](#) and DD Council
- Meant to be independent of services, and person/family driven, and community-based

# **Putting things in perspective**

- **We've matured in how we do things over the last 10 years and kept to our original purposes**
- **We've worked together as a community of practice to improve IM4Q effectiveness**
- **We've earned the respect of the service system for the value Independent Monitoring brings**

# What We See Working Well

- Relationships and certain communication
- Program independence
- Leadership and stakeholder support
- People with disabilities and families as the IM4Q mainstay
- Pursuit of program quality improvement
- Attention to detail
- Participation of people who are interviewed
- Technical assistance advisors
- Diversity of reporting

# Some of Our Challenges

- Management Information System (HCSIS) interface
- Management Detail
- Report timeliness
- Linking findings with systemic quality improvement
- Quality of Considerations
- Involving people who don't communicate by using words
- Involving people who live with their families
- Team orientation to ODP principles
- Resources for IM4Q Programs
- Instrument revision
- Closing the loop
- Interviewing people who haven't been seen

# HCBS Waiver Utility

- Supports quality improvement in people's lives and in the service system
- Demonstrates State commitment to customer satisfaction and HCB outcomes
- Demonstrates high inter-rater reliability
- Translates to the CMS HCBS Framework
- Promotes assurance of health and well-being

# **Where IM4Q/NCI Goes From** **Here**

- **Provider Profiles**
- **Participant friendly reports**
- **Service Principles Orientation for Team members**
- **Implementing Statewide QI Action Plan**
- **Quality Councils at all system levels**
- **Reaching People Living in Different Types of Living Arrangements**
- **Reaching People with Different Disabilities (e.g. Autism, etc.)**

# Take-Aways

- Independent Monitoring works when its *by, for and with* people with disabilities and families
- IM4Q is about the communities across PA taking responsibility for quality of life of its citizens
- Independent Monitoring requires a consistent and stable statewide management approach
- Findings find meaning when they translate to improving peoples' lives and the service system
- A statewide system that applies to people regardless of their living arrangement or funding promotes a uniform standard of quality improvement

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