



MARYLAND Department of Health

*Larry Hogan, Governor · Boyd K. Rutherford, Lt. Governor · Robert R. Neall, Secretary
Bernard Simons, Deputy Secretary of Developmental Disabilities Administration*

To: DDA Providers
DDA Coordinators of Community Services
DDA Regional Directors

From: Bernard Simons, Deputy Secretary

Subject: **The Support Intensity Scale (SIS®)/Health Risk Screening Tool (HRST) Assessments**

Date: March 28, 2018

This communication is to provide further guidance to all of DDA's stakeholders on the Health Risk Screening Tool and The Support Intensity Scale we are using to identify risk and supports needed by the people we support.

In April of 2016 the DDA launched the **Health Risk Screening Tool (HRST)**.

- The HRST is used to detect health risks and destabilization EARLY. The HRST assigns scores to 22 health and behaviorally related rating items. The total points result in a Health Care Level with an associated degree of health risk. Health Care Levels (HCL) can range from 1 through 6; Level 1 being the lowest risk for health concerns and Level 6 being the highest risk of health concerns. It is important to understand that the HRST measures health risk not disability.
- Maryland is currently in its last phase of screening for Day Habilitation and Personal Supports, which began on February 1, 2017.
- All individuals receiving waiver services are required to have an HRST on an annual basis and updated if there is a life changing circumstance.

In May of 2016, the DDA launched the **Supports Intensity Scale (SIS®)**.

- SIS® measures the individual's support needs in personal, work-related, and social activities in order to identify and describe the types and intensity of the supports an individual requires. SIS was designed to be part of person-centered planning processes that help all individuals identify their unique preferences, skills, and life goals.
- SIS® assessments will continue to be required for all individuals receiving DDA services. The DDA's contractor, Telligen continue to complete the initial SIS® on all participants in service, reassessing all individuals on a five (5) year cycle. To the extent that it is practical, the SIS® assessment will be done prior to the annual Person Centered Plan (PCP) date so that it can be used as part of the planning process. It is

imperative that individuals, families, providers and CCSs work with Telligen in completing these assessments. The Administration plans to do roughly 3500 assessments per year.

- For all SIS® interviews, the individual receiving services should be present and can act as their own respondent or self-reporter. The certified SIS® interviewer will make sure that two or more appropriate respondents are included in the SIS® interview. An appropriate respondent is someone who knows the individual well and has had recent and frequent contact with them. According to AAIDD, a respondent must have known the person for at least three months (a full year is recommended) and have had recent opportunities to observe the person in one or more environments for substantial periods of time (at least several hours per setting). Two or three people who know the individual well and who the individual wants to participate should be present. For the assessment to be valid, it is required that at least two of the primary respondents must be present throughout the full SIS® interview.

For additional information:

HRST

- More information on this tool can be found on the [DDA's website](#)
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

SIS®

- Frequently Asked Questions (attached)
- [American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities \(AAIDD\)](#)
- [AAIDD Webinar on SIS, May 11, 2016](#)