

**Quality
Services
Resource
Guide**

Self-Determination Independent Living Relationships Participation Person-Centered Practices Well-being Communication Collaboration Support Systems Respect

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**Vermont Agency of Human Services
Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living
Division of Disability and Aging Services**

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This Resource Guide will tell you:

- ★ **Information about quality in long term care services**
- ★ **The outcomes you should expect from your services.**
- ★ **How the State of Vermont assures and improves the quality of services.**
- ★ **Your role in assuring and improving the quality of your services.**
- ★ **How to get more information or assistance.**

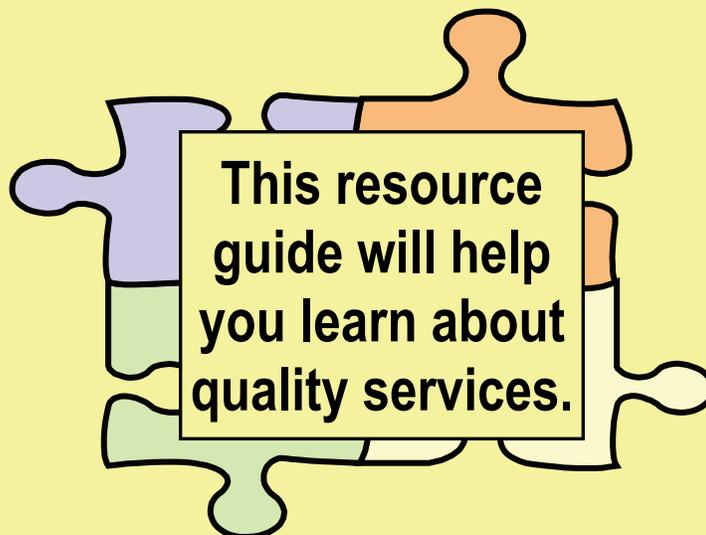
Introduction

Who should read this Resource Guide? Why should it matter to me?

If you or someone you know gets help that is paid for by a Medicaid waiver for long term supports in Vermont, this resource guide will tell you what to look for to know that you are getting the best possible support from the agency that helps you. This Resource Guide is a helpful way to learn about quality services. It contains highlights from a document called the “Quality Management Plan” and is a good introduction.

What is the Quality Management Plan?

The Vermont Division of Disability and Aging Services is responsible to assure and improve the quality of Long Term Care services. The Quality Management Plan describes how the State of Vermont will review these programs so they continue to improve. Many people helped develop the Quality Management Plan, including people who receive services, family members of people who receive services, and local service providers. You can look at this document and many other documents online at <http://www.ddas.vermont.gov/>. If you do not have internet access, call your local library to see if they provide public access to the internet.



Programs and Services

The Department of Disabilities, Aging, and Independent Living (DAIL) is responsible for Medicaid funded Long Term Care services including:

Services for People with Developmental Disabilities

The Developmental Disabilities Program provides services that assist children, adolescents, and adults who have a developmental disability to live, attend school, work, and participate in their communities.

Services for People with Traumatic Brain Injuries

The Traumatic Brain Injury Program helps Vermonters with a moderate to severe traumatic brain injury. This program helps people gain independence, so they can move from hospitals and residential facilities to their community.

Services for Older Adults and People with Physical Disabilities

The Choices for Care program assists people with everyday activities. Some of the activities include: assistance with meal preparation, eating, bathing, toilet use, dressing, transferring from bed to chair, household chores, medication management, and maintaining independence.

Values that Guide Services

DAIL Mission Statement

The mission of the Department of Disabilities, Aging and Independent Living (DAIL) is to make Vermont the best state in which to grow old or to live with a disability—with dignity, respect, and independence.

DAIL Core Principles

Person-Centered: The individual will be at the core of all plans and services.

Respect: Individuals, families, providers and staff are treated with respect.

Independence: The individual's personal and economic independence will be promoted.

Choice: Individuals will have options for services and supports.

Self-Determination: Individuals will direct their own lives.

Living Well: The individual's services and supports will promote health and well-being.

Contributing to the Community: Individuals are able to work, volunteer, and participate in local communities.

Flexibility: Individual needs will guide our actions.

Effective and Efficient: Individuals' needs will be met in a timely and cost effective way.

Collaboration: Individuals will benefit from our partnerships with families, communities, providers, and other federal, state and local organizations.

The word “Individual” refers to recipients of services, families, surrogates, and legal representatives where applicable.

Outcomes &

- ★ These ten “Desired Outcomes of Services” are also called “Quality Service Standards”.
- ★ “Outcomes” describe the way people want to live their lives.
- ★ “Indicators” describe what should happen when you’re getting services and how it should happen.

1. **Respect**: Individuals are treated with dignity and respect.

- a. Interactions and services are respectful to individuals at all times.
- b. Services respect and encourage the civil and human rights of individuals.
- c. Individuals receive information and are supported to understand and advocate for their rights and responsibilities.
- d. Individuals’ choices that present risk are addressed to promote a balance of autonomy and safety.
- e. Individuals’ cultural and ethnic values and traditions are respected and accommodated.
- f. Individuals may change service staff and providers without retaliation.
- g. Positive behavioral supports are used when behavioral interventions are needed; individuals are not subject to aversive treatment.
- h. Individuals’ privacy is respected.

2. **Self-Determination**: Individuals direct their own lives.

- a. Individuals have the information and support they need to make informed choices.
- b. Individuals make the decisions that affect their lives.
- c. Individuals live and receive services where they choose.
- d. Individuals have opportunities to manage services and choose how resources are used.

3. **Independent Living**: Services support independent living.

- a. Individuals are supported to secure and maintain community integrated employment.
- b. Individuals are safe in their homes and communities.
- c. Services and homes are accessible and accommodate individuals’ needs.
- d. Individuals’ transportation needs are met.

4. **Relationships**: Individuals receive support to foster and maintain relationships.

- a. Opportunities and supports are provided for individuals to develop and maintain a variety of relationships, including intimate relationships.
- b. Individuals are supported to spend time with people and in places that are important to them.
- c. Family ties are honored and supported.

5. **Participation**: Individuals participate in their local communities.

- a. Individuals have a sense of belonging, inclusion, and membership in their community.
- b. Individuals are supported to live in their own families, in their own homes, and in their local neighborhoods.
- c. Individuals have support to exercise their civic responsibilities.
- d. Individuals have support and opportunities for community service/volunteering.
- e. Individuals have support and opportunities for recreation within the community.

& Indicators

Values such as the “Core Principles” guided the development of these “Outcomes & Indicators”.

6. Person-Centered Practices: Services and supports are individualized to meet people’s needs and honor their strengths and preferences.

- a. Individuals are supported to develop and achieve their goals.
- b. Individuals direct the development of their service plan.
- c. Individuals know about the range of service options available to them.
- d. Service plans reflect and are changed based on an individual’s strengths and needs.
- e. Individuals are satisfied with their services.

7. Well-being: Individuals’ services and supports promote health and well-being.

- a. Services foster personal growth, learning, and the development of practical life skills.
- b. Individuals are supported to maintain healthy lifestyles and habits.
- c. Individuals receive physical and mental health services that reflect best practices.
- d. Individuals are supported to express their spirituality.

8. Communication: Individuals communicate effectively with others.

- a. Communication is in a format and language that the individual can understand.
- b. Individuals have access to the necessary supports to communicate in their preferred method(s).
- c. Opportunities to enhance and expand communication skills are offered.



9 Collaboration: Individuals receive effective, coordinated, and efficient services.

- a. Individuals know who to contact for help with services.
- b. Individuals benefit from collaboration among multiple service providers.
- c. Individuals receive assessments and services in a timely manner.
- d. Service providers are knowledgeable of and collaborate with other community resources.
- e. Family caregivers are valued and supported.
- f. Families are actively supported and recognized as an integral part of an individual’s life.

10. Support Systems: Individuals benefit from a trained and competent support system.

- a. Service providers are qualified and effectively trained.
- b. Service providers are provided effective supervision and support.
- c. Service provider organizations have an effective quality management plan.
- d. Services reflect innovative and best practices.
- e. Individuals participate in hiring, training, performance evaluations, quality management activities,

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How is the Quality of Services Assured & Improved?

How are services reviewed?

Every two years, most agencies that provide services will be reviewed by the Division of Disability and Aging Services Quality Management Unit. The Reviewers look at services to see if they are really helping people meet the ten outcomes shown in the center of this Resource Guide. They interview individuals that receive services, agency staff, family members, guardians and others. They also look at records, and observe services in action.

What do the Reviewers do with the information they gather when they review agencies?

After the review, the Reviewer takes all the information and puts it into a report for the agency. Many times an agency is required to make improvements to the services as a result of the review process. Agency staff involve the people they serve in developing, implementing, or evaluating “Quality Action Plans” or plans for improvement. Your agency might ask you to help with their Quality Action Plan or with other improvement activities.

How is this information shared with Individuals that receive services?

After all of the agencies have been reviewed, the State will develop a State-wide report about the quality of Medicaid Waiver Services for long term care in Vermont. They will set up a public forum and invite people to talk about changes they might be able to make to the system.

You may be asked to participate in the State review process.

When the Quality Management Unit reviews an agency, they select a “sample” of people who receive services. A Reviewer will ask an individual their opinion about his or her services. Your participation helps to make sure that the people who receive services are receiving consistent and high-quality services, wherever they choose to live and receive their services. Your experience helps to improve the quality of services provided to people all over Vermont.

Your Role in Making Sure You Have High Quality Services

Here are a few things you and your family can do to make sure that the services you receive are doing what they are supposed to be doing:

★ Know who to contact at the agency if you have a concern about your services. Know how to make a grievance (complaint) or appeal. See the helpful resources in the back of this Resource Guide.

★ Advocate for the changes you would like to make to your services. Ask a lot of questions. If you're not sure what something means, ask for an explanation.

★ Know your service options and choose who you want to provide your services.

★ The "Outcomes and Indicators" shown in the center of this Resource Guide show what to expect from your services. They can help you ask good questions and talk to your service provider and staff.

★ Ask the agency that provides your services if you can participate on their advisory board or standing committee. They may have opportunities for you to help them provide high quality services. This may include involving you in things like hiring, training, performance evaluations, quality management activities, and in the design of new initiatives.



Other Things to Know About Quality Services

You can contact someone by phone if you are being, or suspect that a another person is being abused, neglected, or exploited. To report suspected abuse, neglect, or exploitation of a vulnerable adult, call Adult Protective Services. For children, contact your local Department for Children and Families Family Services Office. *See page 12 for information.*

For your safety, all service providers follow a Background Check Policy for their staff. The policy describes what background checks are required and what needs to be done if a background check reveals a potential problem.

The State requires service providers to report when something serious happens to a person receiving services. When something serious happens, it is called a “Critical Incident”. The reports are looked at when the agencies are reviewed.

If you are not happy with your services and you have already talked to your agency about it, you can file an “appeal” or “complaint”. An “appeal” is when you don’t agree with a decision about your services. A “complaint” is when you have a problem with the quality of your services. A complaint is sometimes called a “grievance”.

There are qualifications that some staff must meet. Case Managers may need to take an exam or fulfill requirements about experience or skills. Qualified Developmental Disabilities Professionals (QDDP) have had special training to monitor services for people with developmental disabilities. Many staff are required to have certain hours of training each year.

Agencies have an internal plan for quality. Each service provider describes how they assure quality services in an “Internal Quality Management Plan”. Agencies involve people who receive services in their plan.

Helpful Documents

Here is a list of some of the documents that may help you receive high quality services. You can find these online at <http://dail.vermont.gov/> or call 802-241-2614 to request a copy. You may be able to access these and other helpful websites at your local library.

- Quality Management Plan
- Standards for Adult Day Services in Vermont
- Choices for Care - ARIS Employer Handbook
- Case Management Standards and Certification Procedure
- TBI Statewide Implementation Plan
- Behavior Support Guidelines for Support Workers Paid with Developmental Services Funds
- A Guide for People who are Self- or Family-Managing Medicaid-Funding Developmental Services
- Individual Support Agreement Guidelines
- Policy on Education and Support of Sexuality
- Qualified Developmental Disabilities Professionals: Definitions, Qualifications & Roles
- Regulations Implementing the Developmental Disabilities Act of 1996
- Medicaid Manual for Developmental Disability Services

Helpful Resources

Vermont 2-1-1

For community, regional, state, and faith based human services information, including AHS services, contact Vermont 2-1-1 by dialing 211 from anywhere in Vermont.

Vermont Legal Aid

(Vermont Disability Law Project or Office of the Long Term Care Ombudsman)

1-800-889-2047

Adult Protective Services

1-800-564-1612

Child Protective Services

1-800-649-5285

Green Mountain Self Advocates

1-800-564-9990

Senior Help Line

1-800-642-5119

Vermont Center for Independent Living

1-800-639-1522

Brain Injury Association of VT

1-877-856-1772

Division of Disability and Aging Services

Quality Management Unit

103 South Main Street – Weeks Building

Waterbury, VT 05671-1601

802.241.2614 FAX 802.241.4224

TTY 802.241.3557



DDAS Quality Management Unit Vision

The DDAS Quality Management Unit, through its quality management activities, in partnership with providers, improves the lives of the people we serve, and promotes the continuing contribution of older adults and people with disabilities within our Vermont communities.
