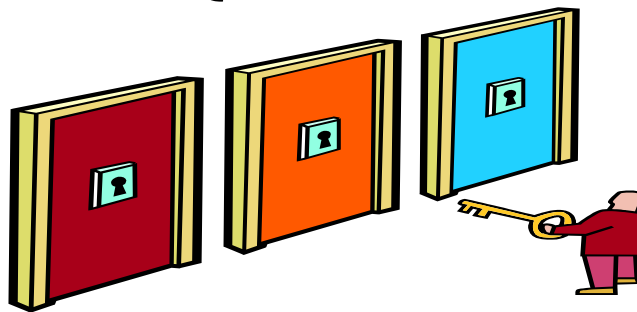


IDEAS FOR SOME QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN LOOKING FOR A SERVICE PROVIDER

DEVELOPED BY THE RHODE ISLAND
STATEWIDE QUALITY CONSORTIUM



- Basic Questions
- Provider Qualifications
- Services/Supports
- Family Support
- Agency Planning
- Medical/Health Care
- Concerns/Issues



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RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE QUALITY CONSORTIUM



The Office of Quality Assurance (QA), DDD, conceptualized the idea of a statewide **Quality Consortium** to directly involve key stakeholders from various organizations in reviewing and analyzing data and information, discussing initiatives and brainstorming strategies to make quality improvements within the system of services/supports for people with developmental disabilities in Rhode Island. Individuals on the Consortium represent a diversity of perspectives and an incredible wealth of knowledge and expertise.

Purpose

The purpose of the Quality Consortium is to bring together representatives from various organizations to work collaboratively to:

- Identify various ongoing projects/activities that collect or have collected information (*PAL Quality of Life Initiative, DDD's Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Project, Incidents reported to the Office of Quality Assurance, Developmental Disabilities Council's satisfaction project, etc.*)
- Review various data/information regarding services, satisfaction, outcomes
- Identify trends within the system
- Make recommendations for quality improvement

Representation

The Consortium includes people with disabilities, family members, community agencies, state departments, advocacy and private organizations and staff from the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD).

Sub-Committees

There are currently three sub-committees of the Quality Consortium:

Health and Safety
Employment
Incident Management Trends Analysis

For more information on the Quality Consortium contact Sue Babin, Quality Consortium Chairperson, at 401-462-3234.

BASIC QUESTIONS TO ASK

Selecting A Service Provider



There are approximately 35 community agencies in RI that are certified to provide supports/ services to adults with developmental disabilities. All of these agencies are required to be certified by the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) and licensed by the Department of Mental Health, Retardation and Hospitals (MHRH).

This booklet has been developed to assist people with disabilities and their families to think about various questions to ask which will be helpful in selecting a provider. The questions included within this booklet are intended to be a guide. You may want to select the questions that are the most important to you.

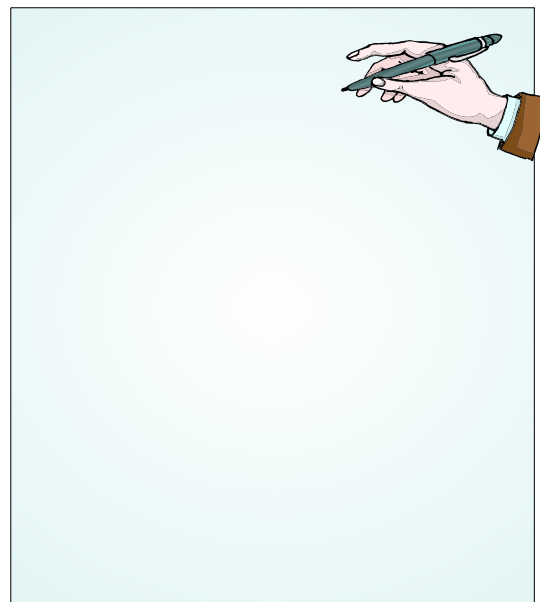
You can also discuss any of this information with your state social worker from the Division.

WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU?

- What information is available about your agency? What formats (brochures, web, newsletters, annual reports, etc.)? Can you send me copies?
- What is the size of agency...people served, number of employees?
- Where is/are your office (s)? What areas of the state do you serve?
- What kinds of services do you offer?
- Is there an area that you specialize in?
- How many people are in sheltered, competitive employment and other types of programs offered?
- Do you have any family members whom I can speak with?

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- What information do you want to write down?*
- What else do you want to know about?*



PROVIDER QUALIFICATIONS



What are the training requirements for all staff?

- How do you ensure quality and address continuous learning for the agency?
- Will my family member or I have any input in hiring their own staff?
- What is your staff turnover rate?
- Can I have a copy of the most recent licensing survey on your agency?
- Can I have a copy of your most recent Agency Review completed by the Division of Developmental Disabilities?
- Can I have a copy of the most recent Fire Safety Code Inspection Report?
- How do you address safety issues?
- What information is available on incidents that have occurred?
- What are your staff ratios for day and residential programs?
- Can I have a copy of your family/consumer satisfaction survey?
- Can I have a copy of your annual agency evaluation?

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- What information do you want to write down?*
- What else do you want to know about?*



SERVICES/SUPPORTS



- How is individual planning done? Who is involved? When is the plan reviewed?
- What is the focus of your planning?
- How does your agency assist people with disabilities to develop and build friendships and intimate relationships?
- Describe a typical day for a person... *realistically what would someone be doing most likely?*
- What kinds of volunteer community work are people involved with (*can you name a sampling of places?*)?
- What kind of clubs, community organizations do people belong to?
- Do you offer individual supports vs. shared supports for day programs?
- How do you educate people about their human rights?
- How long will it take for services to begin?
- Does my family member have to contribute to the cost of services?
- Will I have access to information on how my family member's personal needs money is spent?

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- What information do you want to write down?*
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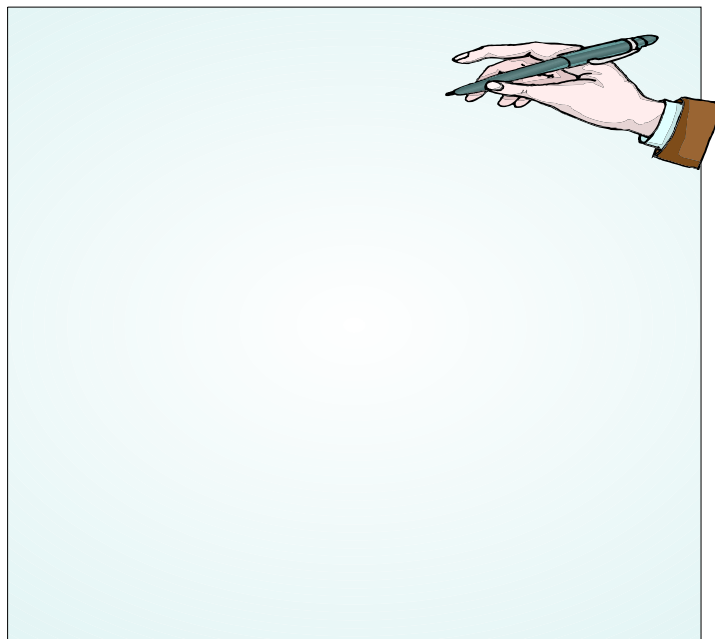
FAMILY SUPPORT



- What kinds of opportunities do you have for family members to get involved with your agency?
- How can you/your agency help/support me?
- Can I come by or visit at any time?
- Will you communicate with me in my language... are interpreters available?
- How do you provide information to families?
- Do you have a website?
- Do you have an agency newsletter? Can I have a copy?
- Do you have any materials specifically for families?
- Do you offer any training or educational opportunities for families?
- Do you have in-home supports available?

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- What information do you want to write down?*
- What else do you want to know about?*



AGENCY PLANNING



- Are people you serve involved in planning for the future for your agency?
- Are people with disabilities on your Board of Directors? How many?
- Are family members on your Board of Directors? How many?
- What are the primary goals of the agency?
- Do you have an agency Mission and Vision Statement?
- What major challenges do you have?
- Can I have a copy of the agency plan?
- Do you have an annual planning session? Are families invited or have an opportunity to provide input?

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- What information do you want to write down?*
- What else do you want to know about?*



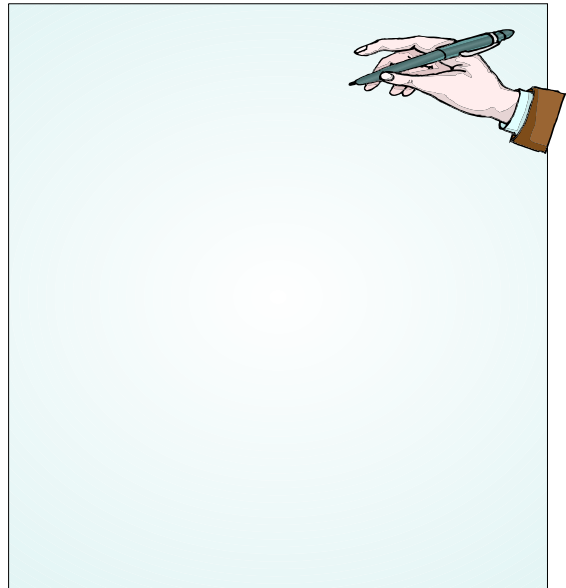
MEDICAL/HEALTH CARE



- Who provides medical and dental care for people?
- Will my family member be able to continue to see his/her current doctor, dentist, psychologist, etc.?
- What hospital will be used for emergencies?
- Who is responsible for transporting my family member to medical, dental, and/or psychological appointments?
- How does your agency ensure people receive necessary ongoing medical care?
- (How do you inform the staff about any particular needs my family member may have such as medications, special diet, etc.)?
- Who will assist my family member with daily routine health/medical needs and how will these people be trained?
- How does your agency handle situations in which people refuse to take medication that has been prescribed for them?
- What type of emergency/first aid training do staff members receive? Do all staff employed by your agency receive this training, as well as regular updates?
- How does your agency handle situations in which people are ill and unable to attend work or day programs?
- Who makes the final decision as to whether a person's illness is severe enough for him/her to be absent from work or the day program?
- If there is a health care problem, are your nurses available by phone at night, on weekends, and holidays?
- How many nurses do you employ and how often does a nurse see people in their homes?

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- What information do you want to write down?*
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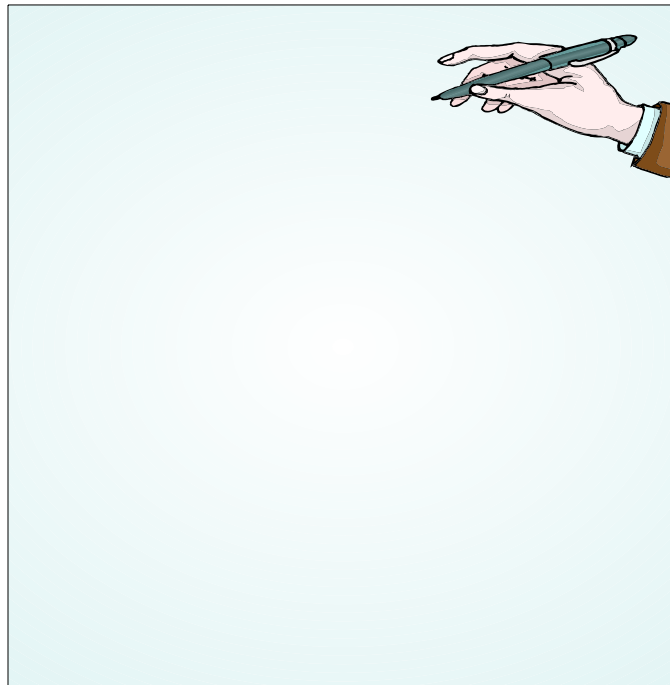
CONCERNS/OTHER ISSUES



- Who can I call if I have a concern relating to the services my family member is receiving?
- Do you have a process for addressing complaints of family members?
- Who can my family member talk to if he/she has a concern?
- What is your grievance process?
- Can I have a copy of the grievance form that my family member would use to file a grievance?
- Who is responsible for helping my family member understand how to make a complaint or file a grievance?
- How many grievances have people filed in the last year?
- Who is involved in resolving grievances?
- Is there an emergency number available for me to call after normal work hours if a serious issue comes up?

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- What information do you want to write down?*
- What else do you want to know about?*



OTHER RESOURCES



If you are interested in understanding more about services and supports provided by community agencies in Rhode Island for adults with developmental disabilities call the **Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)** at **401-462-3234**, **TTY RI Relay 1-800-745-5555** or check out the MHRH website at: www.mhrh.ri.gov and click on **Division of Developmental Disabilities**.

You can also call PAL at 401-785-2100 to receive a copy of *“What’s On The Menu: A Guide to Services and Supports Available to Rhode Islanders Who Have A Disability And Their Families”*.



For other questions to consider check out information at: www.qualitymall.com (a website that has national information and resources from various states)



Click under the Service Provider Store ... Books and Printed Materials... Shopping for Services... *“Consumer and Family Guide to Quality Services”* and *“Through Asking the Right Questions ... You Can Reach Your Destination”*.

This booklet was initially developed by members from the Health and Safety Sub-Committee and further refined by the full Statewide Quality Consortium. The Consortium is a collaborative statewide stakeholder initiative convened by the Office of Quality Assurance (QA), Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD), Department of Mental Health, Retardation and Hospitals (MHRH).

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