



OVERVIEW: National Core Indicators (NCI) Surveys

New Jersey is one of forty-six states including the District of Columbia participating in a national project called the National Core Indicators or NCI. The purpose of this is to develop standard performance measures for state systems that provide services and supports to adults with developmental disabilities.

What is the National Core Indicators?

National Core Indicators (NCI) is a collaborative effort between the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disabilities Services (NASDDDS) and the Human Services Research Institute (HSRI). NCI offers valid, reliable, person-centered measures that states use to demonstrate how publicly funded supports are impacting people's lives and to determine where they can improve the quality of those supports. The NCI are standard measures used across states to assess the outcomes of services provided to individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities and their families. These measures are obtained through a series of voluntary surveys. In 2021, NJ will be using the In-Person Survey, the Adult Family Survey, the Family/Guardian Survey, and the Staff Stability Survey.

What do the NCI Surveys Measure?

The NCI measures how well the public system assists adults with developmental disabilities, and their families, to exercise choice and control in their decision-making, participate in their communities, and maintain family relationships, as well as how satisfied families are with services and supports they receive, and how supports have affected their lives. The NCI surveys cover key areas such as employment, respect/rights, service planning, community inclusion, choice, and health and safety.

How is the data used?

The data that results from NCI surveys are often used to inform strategic planning, produce legislative reports, and prioritize quality improvement initiatives. Many states also share the data with stakeholder groups such as Quality Councils and use the stakeholder feedback to help set priorities and establish policy direction. **Please note that all information collected is kept confidential.**

How do the surveys work?

The **In-Person Survey (IPS)** is a voluntary, face-to-face conversation completed with a minimum of 400 randomly chosen individuals who are 21 years of age or older and receiving at least one paid service, in addition to support coordination, from the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD). **In response to COVID-19 restrictions, the IPS will be administered virtually by DDD staff who have received specialized training in administering the survey.** Before the survey, background information is compiled using administrative records, and often with additional information collected from the individual, guardian, service providers and/or support coordinators. Background information includes data such as demographics, personal characteristics, health information and employment status and wages.

The face-to-face portion of the IPS will be conducted virtually with the person receiving services and consists of two sections; Section I can only be answered by the individual. No proxy responses are permitted. Section II may be completed by a proxy if the interviewer determines the individual receiving services cannot answer for him or herself. Participation in the survey is voluntary and participants may choose to stop the survey at any time.

Calls to individuals to request participation in the virtual IPS will occur in early 2021. Email confirmations with virtual meeting link and instructions will be sent to all IPS participants.

The NCI **Adult Family Survey (AFS)** is a voluntary online survey which is to be completed by family members who have an adult (21 years or older) with an intellectual/developmental disability who lives in the family home and receives at least one additional DDD service other than support coordination.

The NCI **Family/Guardian Survey (FGS)** is a voluntary online survey which is to be completed by family members/guardian who have an adult (21 years or older) with an intellectual/developmental disability who lives outside of the family home and receives at least one additional DDD service other than support coordination.

Both the AFS and FGS are composed of three sections; Demographics, Services and Supports Received, and Questions Regarding Services and Supports. There is also an opportunity for families/guardians to write open-ended comments concerning their participation in the DDD service system. It is through this effort that NCI is able to measure “family indicators”.

Invitations to participate in the AFS and FGS will be mailed to all primary caregivers and guardians by early 2021.

The invitation will include a unique web-link to complete the survey. Participation is voluntary; you do not need to complete the survey if you don't want to. Questions regarding the NCI Surveys or requests to obtain an online invitation or hard copy of the survey in English or other languages can be made by emailing DDD.NCI@dhs.nj.gov.

Additional information regarding the NCI Staff Stability Survey will be sent out in February 2021.

Technical Resources

- **Free and Low-Cost Internet Plans through National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA's):** NDIA has a list of current offers from major Internet Service Providers that will help low-income households to acquire service at no cost, or at very affordable prices. Most have eligibility limitations linked to income or program enrollment. The list also includes established, nationally available low-cost plans offered by nonprofit organizations.
- **Low- Cost Phone and Internet Plans through Lifeline-** Lifeline is a federal program that lowers the monthly cost of phone and internet. It provides subscribers a discount on monthly telephone service, broadband internet access service, or a voice-broadband bundled service purchased from participating providers. Medicaid recipients are eligible for Lifeline. <https://www.lifelinesupport.org>
- **Verizon's Low-Income Internet:** Qualifying Verizon customers may be eligible to receive discounted internet rates. For additional information please visit: <https://www.verizon.com/about/news/verizon-extends-low-income-internet>
- **Access to Technology through The Richard West Assistive Technology Advocacy Center (ATAC)-** ATAC 's mission is to increase awareness, access to and obtain AT devices and services for New Jersey residents of all abilities so they can live, work, and play as independently as possible in the fashion of their choice. ATAC provides a library of devices to individuals, family members, and advocates for temporary loan. <https://at4nj.org/device-loans-2/>

For more information about NCI please visit: <https://www.nationalcoreindicators.org/>