

Self Directed Supports

*in Family Care
and Partnership*



Take
Charge
of Your
Life!



SDSupports@communitycareinc.org

205 Bishops Way, Brookfield, WI 53005

Toll Free: 866-992-6600 | www.communitycareinc.org



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Introduction

This Guidebook explains the Self-Directed Supports (SDS) option and how to make it work for you. Participation in SDS is voluntary. If you choose to self-direct, you may select which long term care services you want to manage and how involved you want to be in managing them.

This Guidebook will walk you through each of the steps in:

- Identifying what's important to you –your hopes, dreams and goals.
- Developing a plan to reach your goals.
- Arranging for who and what you need to live the life you want.

*** Please note that any reference to “You” could mean with the support or help of someone acting on your behalf.**

What Does it Mean to Self-Direct?

Self-Directing means:

- Making your own decisions about the support you need to live the life you choose.
- Having control over your supports and resources, including the funds to pay for them.
- Taking responsibility for personal decisions and actions.

What Are the Key Values of Self-Direction?

Respect

Acknowledging your unique value as a person.

Choice

Being able to pick from the same wide variety of lifestyles, goals and individual preferences that most people enjoy.

Ownership

More than just decision making - it means you are the boss.

Support

Support is key to making SDS work; supports are not just “assigned” - they are freely chosen.

Self-directing expands opportunities; it includes the ability to take risks, make mistakes and to grow from them.

Where Do I Start?

Step 1: Your Personal Outcomes

The first step in creating a plan to live the life you want is to think about your short-term goals and your dreams for the future. Do you want a full-time job? Do you want to find a hobby? Do you want to spend more time with friends? Do you want to live with people you like? In other words, what are your personal goals and outcomes?

Here are a few examples of personal outcomes:

- John's personal outcome is to find a job that involves working with animals.
- Mary wants to see her friends every week.
- Kate wants to be free from pain.
- Jeff wants to attend college.

Step 2: Your Assessment

Now think about the paid and unpaid support you need to achieve your outcomes. What are your preferences for when and how you'd like to receive that support?

Your care manager and nurse will work on an assessment with you to identify the kinds of support you need and the types of services that would best provide that support. You may invite others, such as your family and friends, to join in this assessment process.

Step 3: Your Member Centered Plan

When you have identified your outcomes, needs, and preferences for support, it's time to make a plan for how you will get those supports or services.

Your member centered plan will list all of your services and supports – both paid and unpaid, the names of those who will provide the services, and how often you will need the support or service.

Important

Your member centered plan should list services that match your needs and outcomes in the most efficient and cost effective-way. Your member centered plan must also address any issues related to your health and safety.

For example, what happens if your personal care worker is scheduled to get you out of bed in the morning, but he or she is sick? Make sure you've got several people to call as a back-up.

Your team will meet with you at least every 3 months to review your health and safety and to see if the supports you have chosen are helping you reach your goals.

How Do I Arrange for the Supports I Need?

You can choose who and what you need to live the life you want. You can also choose how much or how little you want to manage your supports. Ask yourself these questions:

- 1) Which long term care services or supports do I want to manage?
Which of the long-term care services on my plan do I want to manage?
- _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____

- 2) What do I need to include in my individual budget to support my plan?
- Employee Wages
 - Additional Training
 - Emergency Back-Up
 - Recruitment Expenses
 - Other _____

- 3) How will I find someone to provide services?
- Newspaper Ads
 - Flyers
 - Schools, Churches
 - Websites
 - Through friends and/or family

- 4) Who will be a backup to my employees in case of an emergency?
- NAME: _____
- NAME: _____
- NAME: _____

- 5) What training do I need to provide my employees?
- Information about my needs and preferences
 - Skills training that will be needed

- 6) How will I provide feedback to my employee(s)?
- Informal feedback
 - Written feedback

- 7) What will I do to improve the quality of my services if I am not satisfied?
- Work with my team
 - Work with my Fiscal Provider

Where Can I Find Support?

The next step is to think about who will provide your supports. Are any of these people willing and able to assist you?

- **Family members or other relatives**
- **Friends**
- **Neighbors**
- **Church groups**
- **Co-workers**
- **Roommates**
- **Provider agencies**
- **Community volunteer organizations**

There are three ways to choose the people that will provide your support and services.

1) Natural Supports

Supports that are a part your life and help without pay. Family, friends, churches, schools, local businesses and volunteers are all examples of natural supports. Because relationships with these supports are built on trust, kindness and caring, they are often more reliable and flexible in meeting needs.

2) Formal Providers

You can hire an agency through SDS. Community Care also has contracts with different agencies and organizations. If you choose not to self direct parts of your care plan, your team is available to assist you with choosing a provider that will meet your needs.

3) Recruit and Hire Your Own Employees

You may already know someone (a friend, neighbor, or family member) who would be willing to provide your support. If you want to hire your own providers, but do not know anyone who is willing to provide your support, you may need to advertise and interview for an employee.

How Do I Choose the Best Employee for Me?

Remember to think of the outcomes, needs, and preferences identified during your assessment and service planning process when looking for a provider. Ask yourself these questions:

Who is willing and able to assist me?

Be sure to ask! Those whom you choose may not always be available to help you.

What do I want my employees to do?

Do you just need a ride to the grocery store, or do you also need help putting groceries away at home? Try to be specific when thinking about the type of assistance you need.

When do I want my services delivered?

Think about your daily routine. Do you need to wake up at a certain time for work? Do you like to eat lunch at 11:00am instead of noon? Do you prefer morning or evening baths?

Where do I want to receive my services?

Consider what is more convenient for you. Do you want services in your own home? If you work, do you need support at your job site?

How do I want my services delivered?

Make sure your employees understand your needs and are comfortable doing the work you expect. If you need help with personal care, are your employees properly trained? Are you willing to train your employees to perform tasks the way you prefer?

How Do I Hire and Pay My Own Employees?

There are three options for paying your own employees. The different options include:

Co-Employment

You (or your guardian) identify who you would like to provide your care and they are hired by an agency that is under contract with your Family Care organization. In this option, the agency is the legal employer and directs your care.

Advantages and responsibilities:

- You identify who you want to provide your supports.
- You defer responsibilities for hiring, scheduling and supervising staff.
- The agency will send a replacement caregiver if your regular caregiver is unable to assist you.

Agency with Choice

You (or your guardian) identify who you would like to provide your care and they are hired by an agency that is under contract with your Family Care organization. In this option, the agency is the legal employer, but you oversee the employee and direct the care they provide to you.

Advantages and responsibilities:

- You identify who you want to provide your supports.
- You work within a budget to set your caregivers' schedules and pay rates (within appropriate limits and following wage and hour laws).
- You decide how to train and supervise your caregivers.
- You choose and manage the tasks assigned to your caregivers.
- You sign employee time cards and submit them for timely payment.
- You and your team develop a backup plan in case your caregiver is unable to assist you.
- Agencies offering this service will consider hiring your caregivers to provide your supports.
- Agencies offering this service will provide some support to you if employment or budget concerns are identified.

Fiscal Employer Agent

You (or your guardian) identify who you would like to provide your care and they are hired by an agency that is under contract with your Family Care organization. In this option, you are the legal employer of your caregivers and direct your own care.

Advantages and responsibilities:

- You recruit, hire, supervise and terminate your staff.

How Do I Hire and Pay My Own Employees? (con't.)

- You work within a budget to set your caregivers' schedules and pay rates (within appropriate limits and following wage and hour laws).
- You decide how to train and supervise your caregivers.
- You choose and manage the tasks assigned to your caregivers.
- You sign employee time cards and submit them for timely payment.
- You and your team develop a backup plan in case your caregiver is unable to assist you.
- Agencies offering this service manage payroll, taxes, and workers' compensation paperwork for your employees.

How Do I Purchase Goods and Services?

Not all Self-Direction means hiring employees directly. You can also purchase goods and services from a provider.

Purchasing Services or Goods Using a Fiscal Intermediary:

You (or your guardian) manage a budget to purchase goods or services from a provider. You are not identifying or hiring staff. Examples include, purchasing home delivered meals or transportation from a provider of your choice. Agencies providing Fiscal Intermediary services are under contract with your Family Care organization and will manage payments for the goods and services you receive.

Advantages and responsibilities:

- You identify a provider that will provide the needed services or goods.
- You work within an established budget that is based on what your Family Care organization would have paid to a provider within their network.
- You purchase goods or services identified in your care plan.
- You submit invoices, receipts and other paperwork in a timely fashion.

What Are My Options for Hiring Employees?

Here's a chart that provides an overview of each option. You'll notice that Co-Employment and the Agency With Choice option offer more assistance and support with employment-related tasks and the Fiscal Agent option requires that you take most of the responsibility for these tasks.

Employment-Related Task	Who is responsible with the Co-Employment option?	Who is responsible with the Agency With Choice option?	Who is responsible with the Fiscal Agent option?
Identifying employee	You	You	You
Writing a job description, screening applications, interviewing, hiring providers	The agency	You and the agency	You
Completing background checks	The agency	The agency	The fiscal agent
Deciding wage amount for your employee	The agency	You, but you must stay within the established budget. NOTE: The agency will ensure that your decisions meet state and federal requirements.	You, but you must stay within the established budget. NOTE: You must meet state and federal requirements for minimum wage.
Deciding on benefits such as health/dental insurance, vacation, holiday, and sick time	The agency	These benefits are not offered under Agency With Choice at this time.	You, but you must stay within the determined budget.
Orientation and training for your employee	The agency	You and the agency	You
Supervision and work performance evaluation of your employee	The agency	You and the agency	You
Disciplinary action and firing, if necessary	The agency	You and the agency	You
Emergency back up coverage	The agency	You	You
Signing off on employee time cards	The agency	You and the employee	You and the employee
Sending employee time cards	The agency	You and the employee	You and the employee
Issuing pay checks	The agency	The agency	The fiscal agent
Payroll deductions	The agency	The agency	The fiscal agent

So which is the best option for you? You decide!

How Do I Develop a Budget?

Managing your individual budget is a choice available to you when self-directing. The amount of money in your budget is based on the needs identified during your assessment and the type and amount of services in your member centered plan. In self-direction, you choose how much you want to spend for each service based on your individualized budget amount.

Determining an Individualized Service Budget Amount

Your Team will work with you to set up a monthly service budget amount. The amount in your budget depends on the cost of your services. The cost of each service is based on what a typical service provider in the community would be paid for that particular service.

If your service cost is less than what is in your budget, you cannot use the money you saved for things that are not in your member centered plan. However, if costs were higher than the amount in your budget, you might want to make some adjustments. For example, paying lower wages to your helpers or getting fewer paid hours of service.

Creative Budgeting

You are responsible to stay within your budget. There are many ways in which you can be creative when managing a budget. Look at a situation and try to think of alternative ways services could be provided that would cost less and provide you with more freedom in how your monthly budget is used.

What Is Expected of My Employees?

Community Care requires that all providers, including your own staff, meet these requirements:

- Comply with a criminal background check
- Are of legal working age
- Are able to safely and effectively perform tasks
- Has a drivers license, insurance and reliable car if providing transportation

Your care team is available to assist you in making sure that your employees meet these requirements.

You may also add your own requirements to this list such as reference checks or a TB skin test.

What Should My Employees Expect of Me?

You have hired employees to perform a certain job. Remember that you are the boss. It is important to give your employees feedback. As an employer, you are responsible for telling your employees when they're doing a good job. You are also responsible for discussing concerns with your employees. Remember that you are paying for their support and assistance.

Your employees are there to support you in achieving your goals and outcomes.

How Do I Evaluate My Employees?

As you continue to receive services, think about the outcomes that you identified in your member centered plan: Are your employees and services helping you meet those outcomes? If not, remember that your care management team is available to assist you in problem solving to find other ways to make sure your needs and outcomes are met.

Ask yourself: Am I happy with the services I receive? Do my employees meet my expectations? Are my needs being met? Are my employees reliable and trustworthy? In other words, am I getting my monies worth from the people I employ and the services I buy?

Quality is very important to Community Care. Your Team is committed to ensuring that you are

How Do I Evaluate My Employees? (con't.)

safe and have the best possible health. When you choose to self-direct, it is your responsibility to continually evaluate if you are receiving quality services. Remember that it is your right to receive services that meet your needs and help support your outcomes.

If you have a conflict with one of your employees, try to discuss the problem openly. Make sure your employee understands exactly what you're asking them to do. It is important to have reasonable expectations for your employees. Chances are an employee will treat you respectfully if you praise and respect them in return. It helps if you and your employee are honest with each other. Everyone deserves a chance to do their very best. However, it is ok to find a new employee if you are just not happy with the one you've hired.

Good relationships involve respect and trust.

Am I Fully Advocating for Myself?

Self-Advocacy means taking control and making your own decisions. It means having a say in who your employees are, the types of services you receive and when, where and how those services are delivered.

Self-advocacy relates to more than just your care and services. It means taking chances and accepting responsibility for the consequences of your actions.

In considering Self-advocacy, you should:

- Set your goals and make a plan to get there.
- Be willing to chance changes in your life.
- Surround yourself with people who support your dreams and will help you reach your goals.
- Speak up for yourself.
- Learn from your mistakes but don't give up!

Your team will work with you to make sure your member centered plan promotes your well being. If for some reason your health or safety (or the health and safety of another person) is being threatened by your choices, your team may need to limit your participation in SDS.

If that happens, your team will work with you to find additional supports or training for you so that you can consider directing your services and supports again.

Frequently Asked Questions About SDS

Will the SDS option work for me?

SDS will work for you if you are willing to manage your own care and accept responsibility for making your own decisions including accepting the consequences of those decisions. Your team will work with you to the extent you choose, to make sure SDS is working for you.

Must I participate in the Self Directed Supports option?

No. Participation in SDS is completely voluntary. Your team will give you information to help you decide if this is the right choice for you.

What is a guardian's role in self-direction?

If you have a guardian, they can work with you to hire, direct and dismiss workers if additional help is needed.

Can a guardian also be a paid caregiver?

It is possible for a guardian to become a paid caregiver if the situation is appropriate and in your best interest.

Can I change my mind and go back to using an agency in the provider network to help me if I decide that self direction isn't for me?

YES. The choice to self direct is yours to make.

If I choose the SDS option, am I on my own to handle all of my long term care services and providers?

No. Your team will make contact with you every month. Your team is still responsible for assuring that your personal outcomes are being met and that you are safe. Your team is available to support you in making the SDS option successful. You can call on your team to assist you at any time.

If I choose the SDS option, do I have to arrange for all of my services and hire all of my own providers?

No. You can choose to direct all or some of your long term care services. For example, you may want to hire your neighbor to help you with grocery shopping only, but let your team arrange for the rest of your services. Your member centered plan will indicate which services you choose to direct.

Are there services that I cannot self-direct?

Yes. Services that are not available for self direction include acute and primary care and services provided as part of your living in a group home or adult family home (i.e. meals, transportation).

However, you could self-direct any service that you would otherwise receive through

Frequently Asked Questions About SDS (con't.)

a licensed setting, such as a group home, when living in a non-licensed setting like your own home or apartment. For example, if you decided to live in your own apartment, you could self-direct the identified support you need to be successful. Ask your team for details.

Do I need to hire a nurse to supervise my cares?

No. Self-directed tasks are not viewed as nurse delegated tasks. However, it is important that a person directing his or her care (or directing guardian), is cognitively intact and competent. The team will work with you to address risks.

Do I pay for liability insurance for the nurse?

No. Professional liability insurance is the responsibility of the nurse. It is not required; however, it is in the nurse's best interest to have coverage.

Can I decide to pay my workers less than minimum wage?

No. Wage and hour laws apply to self-directed supports. Your paid supports must be paid for the hours they've worked and must be paid at or above minimum wage.