

## Independent Monitoring for Quality (IM4Q) Interviews to include Adult Autism Waiver (AAW) ODP Announcement 19-163

### **AUDIENCE:**

Adult Autism Waiver (AAW) Supports Coordinators (SCs) and SC Supervisors

### **PURPOSE:**

To provide SCs and SC Supervisors information regarding IM4Q interviews and to notify SCs and SC Supervisors that individuals in the AAW will be included in the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) IM4Q samples moving forward.

### **DISCUSSION:**

ODP utilizes IM4Q interviews as a method to independently review the overall quality of life of individuals receiving services statewide in the autism and intellectual disabilities services system. Focusing on the individual's satisfaction and outcomes, IM4Q is one of the few statewide programs of this kind in the country, pioneering community participation in the quality improvement process. Community participation is promoted by having individuals with disabilities, family, and interested citizens as part of each IM4Q survey team. Such participation also helps to ensure the independence of the IM4Q survey process, since team members are not affiliated with any services that the individual receives.

Independent monitoring differs from other monitoring components within the autism and intellectual disabilities services system in that it is independent and not used to measure compliance with rules or laws. IM4Q also helps to:

- Provide a more comprehensive view of quality by engaging individuals with disabilities, families and citizens as stakeholders in the lives of people in their community.

- Strengthen the advocacy base for individuals with disabilities in the community.
- Reinforce to the community what human services professionals already know about the individual or raise issues that the community would want to know.
- Offer an additional safeguard for the health and well-being of individuals receiving services.

All AAW participants will be receiving a letter regarding the IM4Q interviews from the Bureau of Supports for Autism and Special Populations (BSASP) in January 2020. The letter will include general information regarding IM4Q, and the purpose of the interview. Although the interviews are voluntary, BSASP highly encourages AAW participants and their representatives to participate in the IM4Q interviews. Those individuals that are randomly selected to participate in an interview for IM4Q will be notified by the local program monitors between February and March of 2020.

When an individual receiving services participates in an IM4Q interview, the individual may choose whether to share the information supplied with the BSASP and the appropriate Supports Coordination Organization (SCO). If the individual chooses not to share the information, the survey data is used for its aggregate value only. If the individual chooses to share the information with BSASP, then the IM4Q program forwards any considerations or issues to the BSASP regional office, which then forwards the report to the SCO. A consideration is a suggestion of something the individual could need or want that could improve the individual's quality of life. The consideration may be offered by the individual, a family member, a paid staff, or a survey team member. Actions to address considerations are developed with the individual and his or her ISP team. SCOs and provider agencies are involved to the extent necessary to address service and outcome-related issues and concerns. Considerations are linked to the ISP process when there is a change in services stemming from the IM4Q consideration, or when the individual or family wants the ISP team to be involved in decisions related to a consideration.

Any questions regarding this communication can be sent to the appropriate BSASP Regional Office (RO) IM4Q Lead:

Central Region - Stephen Gensemer at [sgensemer@pa.gov](mailto:sgensemer@pa.gov)

Eastern Region - Agnes Gimlewicz at [agimlewicz@pa.gov](mailto:agimlewicz@pa.gov)

Western Region - Jennifer Farmerie at [jfarmerie@pa.gov](mailto:jfarmerie@pa.gov)

*Attachments:* Letter for AAW Participants re: IM4Q  
IM4Q Infosheet

*ODP communications are available at [www.MyODP.org](http://www.MyODP.org)*