



Michigan Developmental  
Disabilities Institute



WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

## Independent Facilitation for the Person Centered Planning Process Frequently Asked Questions 2.0

### General Questions:

Question: If the person receiving services is not satisfied with the outcome of their meeting, are they allowed to have another Person-Centered Planning (PCP) meeting? Is there a time frame they must wait for a new meeting?

Answer: Yes! The individual can have as many meetings as they require with no minimum amount of time needed between each meeting.

Question: Can you use an Independent Facilitator (IF) for the Autism benefit/waiver programs and if so, can they authorize those program specific services?

Answer: Independent Facilitators should be able to facilitate planning processes for Autism benefit program participants. Independent Facilitators cannot authorize services because facilitators are *independent* from the Community Mental Health system.

Question: How does this process apply to children who receive services in choosing an Independent Facilitator?

Answer: The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services' (MDDHS) philosophy for services for children is that they are family-centered, but as the young person gets older, they begin to take on more ownership of their services. Independent Facilitators can be used to facilitate a Person-Centered Planning process for a child.

Question: Can you have a different Independent Facilitator from one Person-Centered Planning meeting to another?

Answer: Yes! An individual may change Independent Facilitators in between PCP meetings if they desire to do so.

Question: Can an IF be a family member?

Answer: Yes! The person chooses the Independent Facilitator. The Independent Facilitator needs to meet certain requirements such as passing a criminal background check and being over the age of 18 if they want to be paid for their services by Medicaid.

Question: Does Independent Facilitator support apply only to the annual treatment planning meeting or also for addendums?

Answer: Any time the individual requests a Person-Centered Planning process, the individual can request an Independent Facilitator.

Question: What training does the Independent Facilitator receive related to Medicaid requirements and how supports are driven by provisions?

Answer: The training discusses how an Independent Facilitator is part of the Person-Centered Planning process.

Question: How does this process work for people with particular needs or if they are non-verbal?

Answer: When working with an Independent Facilitator, the individual receiving services may have others who know and understand the individual well who can communicate with the Independent Facilitator. Alternative means of communication, such as pictures and symbols, can be used to coordinate with the Independent Facilitator. The Independent Facilitator may need to gather input from the individual's expressions and behaviors.

Question: Isn't facilitating the Person-Centered Planning meetings part of the Supports Coordinator/Case Manager's role?

Answer: The roles of a Supports Coordinator or Case Managers and an Independent Facilitator are distinct and complimentary. Independent Facilitators support individuals during the Person-Centered Planning process, getting to know the individual, and linking the person to local supports. Supports Coordinators or Case Managers connect the Person-Centered Planning process to the Individual Plan of Service (IPOS).

Question: Can Independent Facilitation occur via telehealth?

Answer: Since Person-Centered Planning processes are currently being held virtually, and Independent Facilitation is a part of the Person-Centered Planning process, facilitation can occur virtually. The Independent Facilitator training includes details on how to arrange and facilitate virtual planning processes.

Question: Are the annual training requirements of the Independent Facilitators the same as the employees of the community mental health organization they work under?

Answer: This varies by community mental health agency. The Independent Facilitator may be required to have similar training as employees and contractors, such as current Recipient Rights training.

Question: How often is the list of Independent Facilitators on Michigan Developmental Disabilities Institute's (MI-DDI) website updated?

Answer: After training, Independent Facilitators can choose if they would like to be included in [MI-DDI's Independent Facilitator online directory](#). Independent Facilitators should contact MI-DDI at [middi@wayne.edu](mailto:middi@wayne.edu) with any updates or additions to their directory listing.

Question: Can a trained Independent Facilitator function as both an Independent Facilitator and a Supports Broker in the same meeting?

Answer: No, this could potentially be a conflict of interest that would inhibit the person's ability to provide effect facilitation and would not qualify them as being an "independent" party.

Question: How are Independent Facilitators paid?

Answer: There is a contract that is signed between the Independent Facilitator and the community mental health agency. The contract states the Independent Facilitator payment for the facilitation service. The service description and HCPCS code for Independent Facilitation is Treatment Planning (service description) and H0032 (HCPCS code)

Question: What is the benefit of using an Independent Facilitator over a Supports Coordinator?

Answer: The Independent Facilitator is independent and encourages the commitment of the group to the Person-Centered Planning process, organizes the information gathered through the process, and works with both the Supports Coordinator or Case Manager and the person to ensure the Individual Plan of Services (IPOS) represents the needs of the individual and the identifies services or supports.

Question: Is it better if the Independent Facilitator is involved in the pre-planning stage of the Person-Centered Planning (PCP) process?

Answer: Yes! Involvement in pre-planning is very important because the Independent Facilitator gets to know the individual, their interests, preferences and goals before the PCP meeting. The Independent Facilitator will be more effective in facilitating the Person-Centered Planning process with the information gathered during pre-planning.

### **New Questions as of 3/19/21:**

Question: Does the Independent Facilitator need to be listed on the IPOS for the person to receive Independent Facilitation?

Answer: No. The Independent Facilitator (IF) needs to be contracted with the local community mental health (CMH). This contract enables payment by the CMH to the IF for facilitation services. Individuals have a right to independent facilitation which is different than the authorization process of other services that require an identified need.

Question: What is a sufficient number of Independent Facilitators offered in an area?

Answer: At least two Independent Facilitators should be available in any given area to provide real choices to the individual. Ideally it is good to have numerous Independent Facilitators to offer a variety of options.

Question: Can an Independent Facilitator be a Community Mental Health employee or a provider agency?

Answer: No, Independent Facilitators need to be independent from the rest of the CMH system. The only exception is individuals who provide peer delivered services. A certified Peer Support Specialist or Peer Mentor can provide Independent Facilitation to individuals that are not receiving their peer services.

Question: Can a Community Mental Health agency deny your Independent Facilitation contract after going through the training?

Answer: Each Community Mental Health agency sets their requirements for their Independent Facilitators, with most requiring proof of training completion, Recipient Rights, and the passing of a background check. These are all considered reasonable requirements for a Community Mental Health agency. MI-DDI has been informed that some CMHs and PIHPs are requesting information such as a NPI number, liability insurance, etc.

Question: Can Independent Facilitation be provided through a self-directed service arrangement?

Answer: Yes! It is a service for anyone that receives services through the Community Mental Health System.

Question: Can a Community Mental Health agency employee go through the Independent Facilitator training in order to become more aware of the process?

Answer: No. Community Mental Health or provider agency staff are encouraged to attend MI-DDI's "Independent Facilitation Overview" webinars. The webinar schedule and registration are available at this website: <https://ddi.wayne.edu/if>.

Question: What is the average rate of pay for an Independent Facilitator?

Answer: The rate for an Independent Facilitator (IF) varies from one Community Mental Health agency to another. Some agencies cover expenses such as mileage driven to and from a meeting, when it occurs in person. MI-DDI is working with MDHHS to improve the consistency of IF rates.

Question: If I work as a CLS provider within the Community Mental Health system, can I become an Independent Facilitator as long as it's for those I do not provide services for?

Answer: No, according to guidance from MDHHS/BHHDA<sup>1</sup>, this is not allowed. Independent Facilitators need to be independent from the rest of the CMH system. The only exception is individuals who provide peer delivered services. A certified Peer Support Specialist or Peer Mentor can provide Independent Facilitation to individuals that are not receiving their peer delivered services.

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<sup>1</sup> *Person Centered Planning Practice Guideline*. Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities Administration, 29 July 2020, [www.michigan.gov/documents/mdhhs/Person-Centered\\_Planning\\_Practice\\_Guideline\\_702780\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mdhhs/Person-Centered_Planning_Practice_Guideline_702780_7.pdf).

Question: How does an Independent Facilitator and a Supports Coordinator complete their roles at meetings and both bill and receive payment?

Answer: The Independent Facilitator (H0032) and the Supports Coordinator or Case Manager bill their appropriate codes. The two different services are billed even though the services occur at the same time.

Question: How long is the Independent Facilitator training?

Answer: 12 hours. Currently, the virtual training is 4 half days when taking the training with The Arc of Midland. The virtual training is 2 full days with MI-DDI.

Question: Is the shared database the only resource available for finding local Facilitators in your area?

Answer: No, there are many ways to contact local facilitators, including but not limited to, checking with local advocacy groups or asking the supports coordinator or case manager for a list of available facilitators.