



Tips/Suggestions to Help Choose a Service Provider

Selecting a Service Provider requires research. The following tips/strategies have been useful to others who had to make this difficult decision. Once an individual/family has gathered information using the strategies mentioned below, a choice that truly meets the needs of the individual and family can be more confidently selected.

- Find general and contact information for local providers on the Illinois Life Span website at www.illinoislifespan.org. You can find providers who offer services in which you are interested in and around the county in which you live by using the Search for Advocacy/Service Providers tool to choose the appropriate Service Type and county or counties.
- Visits to the programs/service providers that an individual is interested in considering are very important. See for yourself!
- Speak with other consumers and their families that participate in the programs/services that are being considered. Ask about their experience with this program/provider.
- The Arc of Frederick County in Maryland has developed a comprehensive document to help families ask the right questions and gather information that will lead to an informed choice. They have assembled two full pages of questions that can help individuals and their families compare and define the differences between agencies/providers. That document is available at: <http://www.arcfc.org/documents/selectingaprovideragency.pdf>
- The Illinois Department of Human Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities (DHS-DDD) also provides information that can help with this process. On a yearly basis, the Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) randomly selects names of individuals living in Community Integrated Living Arrangements (CILAs). DDD then visits and reviews the CILA to see how the provider complies with the Medicaid Waiver regulations and how they comply with their contract with DDD. These reviews are available at the following web address: <http://www.dhs.state.il.us/page.aspx?item=61239>
- The DHS DDD Bureau of Quality Management states the following about their monitoring of Illinois service providers:

Every program, whether operated by the State of Illinois or independently run, is closely monitored to ensure that services are delivered appropriately. But more importantly, they are monitored to ensure that the

needs of the person are being met. It is critical that the services provided assist the individual in meeting his or her goals and objectives.

Here is how the IDHS Division of Developmental Disabilities routinely monitors all the programs it funds:

- *Ensure all providers and staff have proper licenses, certifications and training.*
- *Observe staff in action to ensure understanding of individual needs.*
- *Interview individuals, guardians and agency staff to ensure needs are being met.*
- *Review substantiated cases of abuse and neglect.*
- *Ensure services are available across state where needed.*

If you have comments or questions about our quality monitoring process, please contact us at 217-782-9438, or contact us via mail or email at:

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