

Staffing Instructions

Other Important Things to Know When Clinical Services are being provided

Clinical services are provided when they are necessary to protect an individual's health and safety or to address a barrier to the individual achieving an important outcome. Almost always the clinical interventions must be incorporated into the individual's routine (e.g. tooth-brushing desensitization should be conducted in the morning and at night, the typical times for brushing one's teeth) and are techniques that must be used by all staff responsible for assisting the individual (e.g. the residential staff and day staff must all use the correct positioning, food consistency and feeding techniques developed by the clinician for an individual prone to choking since, of course, the therapist will not be in attendance at each meal). For acquiring a skill that is necessary in order for the person to achieve an outcome, the clinician's role is to develop techniques to remove a therapy-related barrier (e.g. the individual has an outcome to be employed in a warehouse but is having difficulty meeting the expectations of her employer due to mobility limitations. The therapist may develop an assistive device or alternative approach to complete the tasks that the individual and her Job Coach could use to improve her work performance. The therapist may also recommend other activities that can be incorporated into her preferred activities that may also improve mobility)

Only rarely will the therapist work directly with an individual in a setting apart from his support staff and daily routine, and then for a limited duration. Even for individual's who have little voluntary movement and require exercising to maintain reasonable health, Direct Support Professionals must learn to carry out the procedure since the therapist will not be on site to conduct it often enough to benefit the person.

Once the staff has learned the necessary techniques, the therapist's role is to monitor whether the techniques are working for the person or need to be revised, whether staff are able to carry them out correctly or need more training, and to assess the person's progress.

Consequently, the provider and therapist must plan together how to implement the interventions and how it can be fit into the individual's daily routine which often includes participating in scheduled group activities and within an appropriate staffing plan for the group of individuals the staff is responsible for. They must also agree on times that the therapist will be present at the person's home or day service site. Once agreed on, changes in schedule should be rare, should always be communicated to each other well in advance except in unavoidable circumstances.

Resources: Resources for staff training on skill acquisition/teaching techniques are plentiful-- from Marc Gold's "Try Another Way" to Dale Dileo's "Enhancing the Lives of Adults with Disabilities" to Dennis Reid and Marsha Parson's "Positive Behavioral Supports". Also see DMRS Resource Handbooks for "Day Services" and "Supported Employment".