

SIS Considerations

- Tool first became available in 2004.
- SIS assesses the individual by identifying what supports the person may need to achieve a valued level of participation in the community. *It is strengths-based, not deficit based.*
 - The need for support in life activities is measured according to frequency (e.g., none, at least once a month), amount (e.g., none, less than 30 minutes), and type of support (e.g., monitoring, verbal gesturing).
 - In addition to subscale scores, a Total Support Needs Index score is generated, which is a composite score generated from the scores across all SIS items.
- The SIS provides broad medical and behavioral support scores. These scores are intended to prompt additional exploration of the supports necessary to address medical and behavioral issues. The SIS doesn't specifically measure adaptive behavior, maladaptive behavior and health status.
- The baseline SIS instrument does not capture certain types of information about the individual (e.g. type(s) of disability, presence of certain conditions, and other demographic/situational information). This information must be captured from other data sets and/or the baseline instrument must be supplemented by adding items in order to obtain a full picture of a person. As a consequence, some states have developed what have come to be termed SIS 'Plus' instruments.
- The SIS does consider employment support needs.
- Assessment process
 - 45-60+ minutes to administer per respondent
 - Requires at least two (2) respondents be interviewed
- Inter-rater reliability concerns have been expressed related to interpretation and consistency in administration. The SIS is designed to be administered by a trained interviewer who has extensive experience in supporting people with disabilities and/or a bachelor's degree in an appropriate human service field.
 - Inter-rater reliability concerns can be addressed through:
 - Extensive and thorough training of assessors;
 - Using a small number of individuals in administering the assessment; and
 - Closely following the published techniques for conducting the SIS interview.
- Many states have moved to using the SIS to fashion funding authorization tiers as part of a **prospective resource allocation model**. However, the SIS doesn't come with an algorithm that translates scores/results into predefined categories of individuals.
 - *Prospective resource allocation models are constructed by tying assessment data to 'usual and customary' expenditures/service consumption patterns of persons who have similar characteristics/support needs.*
- SIS provides information to support individual service plan development.
- Cost
 - SIS is a proprietary instrument. It must be purchased in booklet form.
 - CD-ROM version is available that permits capturing assessment results and support scoring and exporting the data to other applications.
 - A web-based system (SIS Online) is available that supports entering completed assessments into a central database.
 - Whether the CD-ROM or SIS Online alternative is selected, assessments are conducted using the paper booklet and the results are entered into the electronic version.
 - Training is required for individuals to administer the SIS. 'Train the trainer' approach may be used to reduce costs associated with training.
 - Licensing arrangements will need to be made if a state wants to integrate the SIS into their I/T architectures.