



# The Supports Intensity Scale

Saint John of God Community Services



# Presentation Outline

- What is SIS
- Strengths of SIS
- What it means to be successful
- Administering the SIS
- What the SIS measures
- How does SIS 'fit in'?
- Why we selected SIS
- A story about 'support'
- Within service resource allocation
- Building a residential 'rate'
- Implications and challenges



What is the Supports intensity  
scales?





# What is the Supports Intensity Scales

A standardized assessment designed to measure the pattern and intensity of supports a person (16 years and older) with intellectual disabilities requires to be successful in community settings.



# Where did it come from?

- Developed by AAIDD over 5 year period from 1998 to 2003 in response to changes in how society views and relates to people with disabilities. Released in 2004.
- Once administered properly it can provide a reliable framework to
  - Foster positive expectations
  - Focus on appropriate QoL enhancing activities
  - Identify the requirements for planning & delivering person centred individualised supports



# Why was the SIS Developed?

## AAIDD commissioned an *ad hoc* committee:

“The purpose of the Committee is to integrate current theoretical and applied literature on supports assessment; to develop a model for supports intensity assessment that can be used for multiple purposes, including clinical assessment, service delivery, and funding decisions; and to pursue a joint venture development of a supports intensity assessment system.” - May, 1998



# SIS Development

- Normed with over 1300 people, in 33 states and 2 Canadian Provinces, with intellectual and developmental disabilities who had a variety of support needs
- Ranged in age from 16 to 72 and was culturally diverse
- Determined reliable and valid



# Strengths of SIS







# Strengths of SIS

- SIS is not an adaptive behavioural scale. Assessment tools of the past focused on skill deficits - what the person can't do.
- The SIS is Strength Based. SIS reflects a **new way of thinking** about assessment, focusing on the support needs, not deficits.
- The Reliability and Validity of the SIS has been repeatedly demonstrated by research published in peer-reviewed journals.

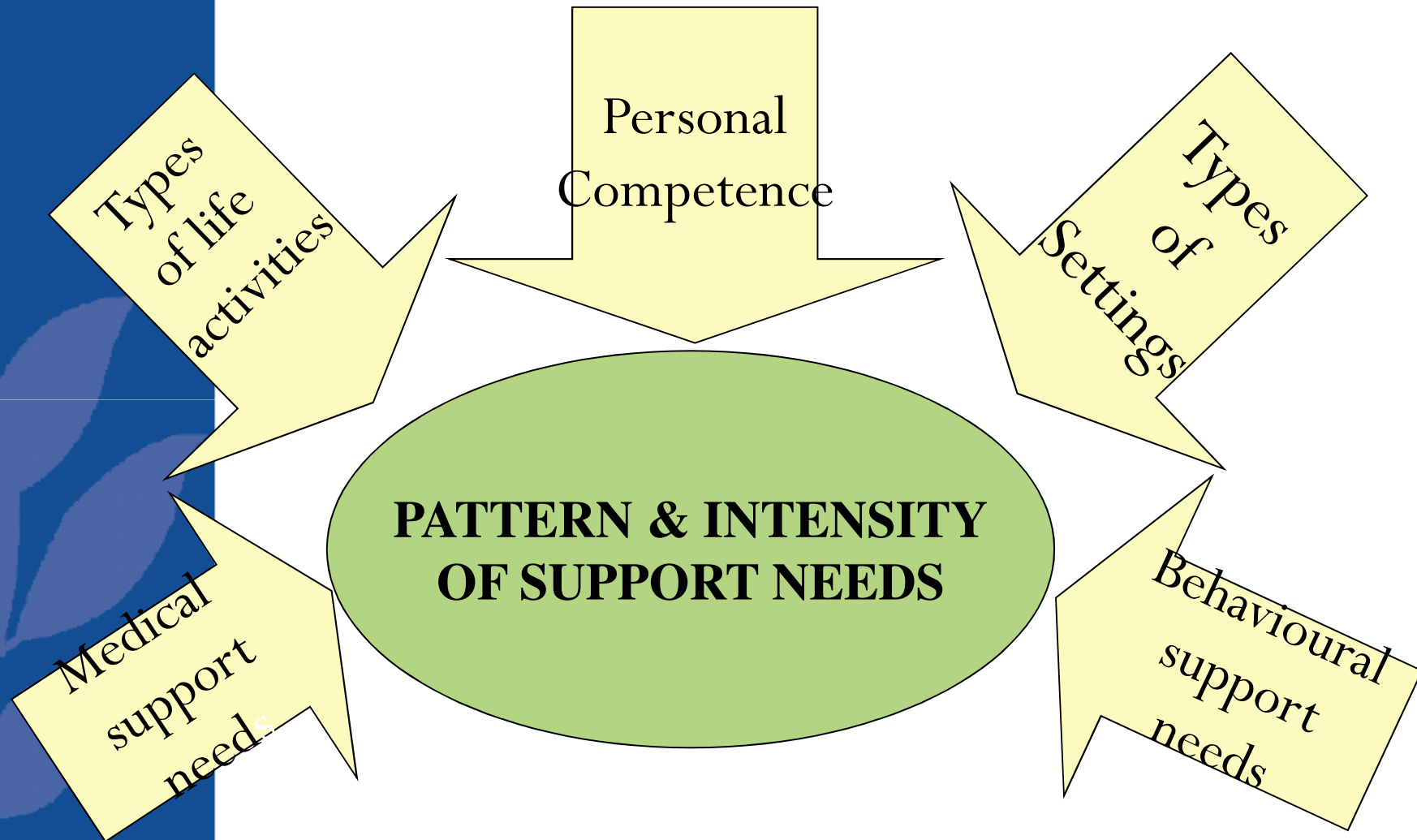


# Strengths of the SIS

1. The SIS is consistent with the values of community inclusion, self direction, individual choice/control, and person-centered services.
2. It WORKS! The ability of the SIS to measure, with precision, the intensity of support needs for a given person relative to others with similar disabilities has been repeatedly verified over time.



# Major Influences on Needed Supports





To Be Successful.....



# Success is the Key

“Successful engagement” in an activity entails a **level** of performance, involvement, and participation in an activity that is comparable to that of typically functioning adults without disabilities.



# Supported Success

*With the Right Supports in place...  
people soar!*



individual

Support

Success



## Individual Being Assessed:

Expectations  
Responsibilities  
Involvement in the  
activity

# What SIS Measures



1. Type of Support
2. Frequency of Support
3. Daily Support Time

## Standard of a Typical Adult:

Expectations  
Responsibilities  
Involvement in the  
activity



# Administering the SIS







# SIS Administration

- SIS is administered via a **semi-structured interview** with two or more respondents who know the individual well.
- The SIS, each section and domain of the tool should be introduced and explained prior to the interviewer asking item questions.
- The SIS is measuring what support or help a person needs to complete each task. Note- each task contains multiple steps. The SIS is not measuring whether a person can or can not do the task.



# Supports Intensity Scale

- Administration Time: 1.5 to 2.5 hours
  - Section 1. Support Needs Scale  
(49 items; pp 2-5)
  - Section 2. Supplemental Protection and Advocacy Scale (8 items; p 5)
  - Section 3. Exceptional Medical  
(16 items; p 6) and behavioural  
(13 items; p 7) Support Needs



# Section 1: Support Needs Scale

## 6 Activity Domains (49 life activities):

- Home Living Activities
- Community Living Activities
- Lifelong Learning Activities
- Employment Activities
- Health and Safety Activities
- Social Activities

Note: You may start the SIS administration with any item/section, as long as ALL items are completed.



## SECTION 2: SUPPLEMENTAL PROTECTION AND ADVOCACY SCALE

- **This section is supplemental to Section 1**
  - Each activity is scored with regard to Frequency, Time, and Type of Support (as per Section 1)
- **Items Focus On**
  - Encouragement and acceptance
  - Opportunity and access
  - Exercising legal responsibilities
  - Assisting with acquisition and expression of skills



## Section 3: Exceptional Medical and behavioural Support Needs

- This section consists of 16 medical conditions and 13 problem behaviours that typically require increased levels of support.
- The interviewer assesses the individual's intensity of support need for each medical and behavioural item using a 3-point scale (0 = no support needed; 1 = some support needed; 2 = extensive support needed).
- Complete all items.



# SIS ADMINISTRATION

- Fully Integrated Adult Activities
  - All items will be set in fully integrated settings not supported/sheltered settings
  - For example: leisure activities such as supports needed to go out dancing must look at dancing as any adult would do so such as a bar, club or local association; Life long learning activities and work are to be rated in settings any adult can access



# What SIS Measures





# What SIS Measures



Supported  
Success



Type



Frequency



Time





## 3 Dimensions of Support Needs: Frequency, Time, and Type

**Type of Support:** What kind of support should be provided?

- 0 = None
- 1 = Monitoring (reminders)
  - Checking in
  - Asking questions to trigger but not telling the person the step
- 2 = Verbal/gestural prompting (coaching)
  - includes modeling, visual prompts, and walking through steps
- 3 = Partial physical assistance (help through doing)
  - Hand over hand for some steps but not all
  - Assistance by doing some steps but not all
- 4 = Full physical assistance (doing for)
  - Hand over hand for all, or nearly all steps
  - Assistance by doing all, or nearly all steps



## 3 Dimensions of Support Needs: Frequency, Time, and Type

**Frequency:** How frequently does this person need assistance that typically functioning adults would not need to participate in this activity?

- 0 = **None** or less than monthly
- 1 = At least once a **month**, but not once a week
- 2 = At least once a **week**, but not once a day
- 3 = At least once a **day**, but not once a hour
- 4 = **Hourly** or more frequent assistance



## 3 Dimensions of Support Needs: Frequency, Time, and Type

**Daily Support Time:** On a typical 24-hour day when support in this area is needed, how much total time should be devoted?

- 0 = **None**
- 1 = **Less than 30 minutes**
- 2 = 30 minutes to **less than 2 hours**
- 3 = 2 hours to **less than 4 hours**
- 4 = **4 hours or more**



# Exceptional Medical and Behavioural Support Needs

0= No Support Needed

- Not an issue or no support needed to manage

1= Some Support Needed

- Continuously aware
- Monitoring, minimal contribution
- Episodic support

2= Extensive Support Needed

- Significant support: intense or time consuming



# How Does SIS Fit In & What Does it Offer





# How Does the SIS Fit In?

- The Council on Quality & Leadership
- **PERSONAL OUTCOME MEASURES**
- MY SELF: Who I am as a result of my unique heredity, life experiences and decisions.
- **MY WORLD: Where I work, live, socialize, belong or connect.**
- MY DREAMS: How I want my life (self and world) to be.



# How Does SIS Fit In?

## Personal Outcomes

- The focus on the person
- Service action is based on the person's criteria
- Services and supports are designed for the person
- Expectations for performance are defined by the person

## SIS Interview & Data

- Involves the person
- SIS asks what is need, not current supports
- All items are explored and rated
- SIS provides informed options



# Key Factors And Success Indicators In Person-Centred Supports

## **FACTOR 1: Person-centered Assessment and Discovery**

### **Indicators:**

**People feel welcomed and heard**

**Assessment of needs is fair and accurate**

**Assessment and discovery identify  
personally defined quality of life**

**CQL | The Council on Quality and  
Leadership [www.c-q-l.org](http://www.c-q-l.org)**





# SIS offers Discovery!

- Broaden and Deepen a person's opportunities
- Guided Discussion to explore “what it will take”
- Safe Environment to examine unfamiliar or untried
- Surrounded by People who know



## SIS Interviews Provide Opportunity

- Discussion about topics important to or for you
- Plant a seed of interest in areas of life
- The team learns ways to help you
- The team and your family are educated about you & liberates your thinking
- Hear from important people in your life
- Provides an opportunity for difficult conversations



# SIS Helps the Person

## SIS provides important information

- Explores different aspects of your life
- Points out activities you may want to do
- Helps people understand how to provide meaningful support
- Provides an in-depth picture of the support needs



# What SIS Provides

- Direct, reliable, and valid measure of supports needed across life areas
- Evaluation of the impact of significant medical and behavioral conditions
- A way to present the individual's support needs in comparison to a national sample of adults with developmental disabilities
- Help in planning for individualized supports and services
- Information useful in developing individual budgets/resource allocation
- Takes the guess work out of determining needs



# What SIS Provides

- An opportunity to introduce your staff teams to the cultural change required to provide ‘support’ to an individual
- As distinct from providing a service
- The focus moves away from the ‘business’ of the staff to what supports funded and unfunded an individual might require



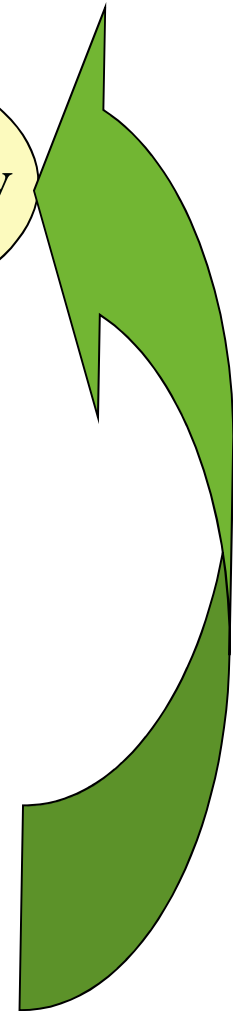
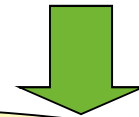
# What a Support Plan Involves

**#1:**  
Identify desired life  
experiences and goals

**# 2:**  
Determine the Intensity  
of Support Needs

**# 3: Develop the  
Individualized Support Plan (ISP)**

**# 4: Monitor Progress**





# Merging SIS into Person-Centered Planning

- Important to or important for
- Activity or subcomponent of QOL
- Enjoyment or satisfaction
- Control (choice and participation)
- Potential Enhancement



# Why we selected SIS







# Why did we choose it

- Standard measures of measuring supports using dependency measurement & workload index problematic
- Congruent with an individualised model of support
- Compatible with our quality framework Personal Outcome Measures (2005)
- Goes beyond the budgetary – has other features that attracted us



- Developed specifically for people with intellectual & developmental disabilities
- Focuses on measuring supports not deficits
- It has high inter-rater reliability
- Evidence based, validated & uncomplicated – came with a pedigree
- Met the criteria for establishing individual funding strategies

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## What IB systems should be

- Logical – to those who use it
- Transparent – decisions are based on easily understood methods
- Equitable – it gives each individual equal opportunity to receive support
- Accurate – results of the funding methodology provide resources that meet the person's needs



# The Emerging Funding Framework

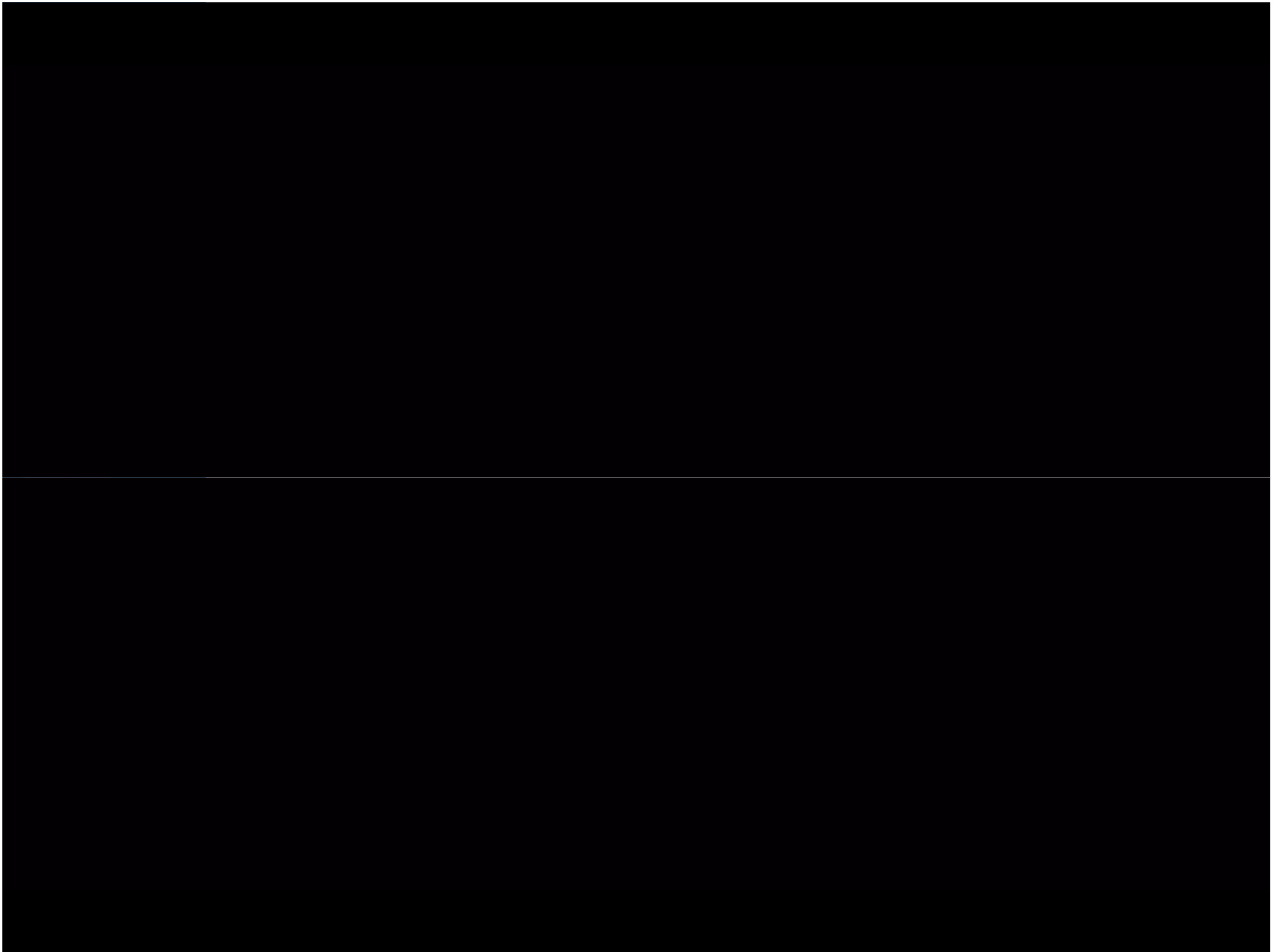
- Allocated at individual, not service or programme level
  - Enhances capacity for individualised supports
  - Contributes to ‘portability’ of available resources
  - Accordingly promotes choice in personal services
  - The person is not ‘slotted’ into a service, they choose & can purchase the service they require
  - Resources required that are both dependent & independent of funding are identified

(Smith & Fortune 2008)



Team Hoyt –  
Support taken to the limit







# Within service resource allocation based on intensity of support

Van Loon, 2008



# Step 1

- Identify the total budget amount available for the total number of people in an organisation or house for example





Location: Country cottage Jan-August 2009

**Report Title**

**8**

**2009**

	<u>Actual</u> <u>Jan-Aug09</u>	<u>Budget</u> <u>Jan-Aug09</u>	<u>Variance</u> <u>Jan-Aug09</u>
<b>Pay</b>			
Nursing	233,195.00	168,168.00	65,027.00
Para-Medical	90,506.00	94,593.00	- 4,087.00
Others	13,857.00	-	13,857.00
<b>Total Pay</b>	<b>337,558.00</b>	<b>262,761.00</b>	<b>74,797.00</b>
<b>Non-Pay</b>			
Medical/Surg appliances	478.00	1,800.00	- 1,322.00
Provisions	12,875.00	10,000.00	2,875.00
Heat/Light/Power	3,659.00	4,082.00	- 423.00
Maintenance	11,832.00	9,850.00	1,982.00
Grounds & Garden	877.00	856.00	21.00
Transport of Clients	403.00	800.00	- 397.00
Office Expenses	1,381.00	588.00	793.00
Bank Charges	182.00	180.00	2.00
Recreation & Entertainment	280.00	320.00	- 40.00
Security	1,107.00	160.00	947.00
<b>Total Non-Pay</b>	<b>33,074.00</b>	<b>28,636.00</b>	<b>4,438.00</b>
<b>Gross Expenditure</b>	<b>370,632.00</b>	<b>291,397.00</b>	<b>79,235.00</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Meals & Accommodation	- 7,980.00	- 7,970.00	- 10.00
Social Welfare Refunds	- 665.00	-	- 665.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>- 8,645.00</b>	<b>- 7,970.00</b>	<b>- 675.00</b>
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>361,987.00</b>	<b>283,427.00</b>	<b>78,560.00</b>



## Step 2

- Identify the ‘stable costs’
- Basically the non-pay costs with once off capital expenses stripped out
  - Transportation
  - Overhead costs - indirect wages, management administration etc
  - Material costs
  - Housing etc
- Identify supports dependent budget – subtract the stable costs from the total costs



## Example 1 (within service allocation)

- **Country cottage**
- No. Of Residents: 06
- Staff Complement: 4.5
- Total Budget (2008): €305,642.00
- Stable Cost (non-pay) 29,124.00 (4854.00/resident)
- Support-dependent cost = total budget – stable costs
- $305,642 - 29,124.00 = 276,519.00$
- Support-Dependent Cost **€276,519.00**



## Step 3

- The supports dependent budget can be divided by services user based on SIS scores
- Key components
  - Add the scores of SIS section 1 (A-F) & Section 3 (medical & behavioural)
  - The resulting total score of an individual is then divided by the score of the whole population & multiplied by the total available supports dependent budget
- This gives us the key to equitably carve up existing / available resources across a service



Formula=  $\frac{\text{Individual's total SIS Raw Scores}}{\text{Total SIS Raw Scores of All People}} \times \text{Total support-dependent budget}$

Person	Age	Raw Scores	Med + Beh. Scores	Total Raw Scores	Index Score	Supports Intensity Level	Support-Dependent Cost/Year
1.	59	196	2+3=5	201	82	I	39,446.00
2.	29	275	2+1=3	278	92	II	54,558.00
3.	51	190	2+0=2	192	83	I	37,680.00
4.	51	237	1+0=1	238	87	II	46,707.00
5.	35	290	2+2=4	294	93	II	57,698.00
6.	40	202	3+1=4	206	83	I	40,427.00
Total SIS Raw Scores of all residents				1409			

Support-dependent cost Person 1:  $\frac{201}{1409} \times 276,519.00 = 39,446.00$



Building a resource  
allocation framework –  
residential rate  
(Weber & Stern, 2008)  
& zero based budget



# Step One

- Establish a Support Intensity Model (see example)
  - Adapt the descriptors in light of our own data
  - The amount of services hours may vary based on
    - Who provides supports
    - Whether supports are shared
    - Refusal of supports
    - Intensity of supports needed at a particular point in time
- (Weber and Stern, 2008)



## Step 2 – Establish Base Hour Model

- Assume we will provide all paid supports
- None will be shared with others
- Using assessment responses individuals we determine the number of hours required in various life areas
- The predicted number of hours in each area of support will then become our base hour model rate





## Step 3 – Economies of scale

- Base hours represent average support required in each life are for people who give similar responses to SIS questions
- In US states resource managers can adjust:
  - To reflect extraordinary circumstances not captured by the assessment (temporal)
  - To reflect additional data
  - Support provided by others
  - Supports refused
  - Number of other people supported in a location



## Step 4

- From this information we can then develop an individualised, unit-based or service level resource allocation framework



## ZBB using SIS

- Taking the average hours required by an individual
- Building the budget from the ground up for actual support requirements
- Adding in the agreed required additional budgetary items



# Implications, challenges & other plans for SIS





# Implications

- Use of SNI scores to ask service management questions
- Comparisons between units / services - using POMs to examine supports & outcomes from a value for money perspective
- Assist in the development of a standardised cost of standardised supports
- Equity in budget allocation using an objective measure based on service support need
- Capture funded & unfunded supports
- Transparency around service agreements



# Financial & Reporting Challenges

- Our financial reporting system EDRs
- Cost-coding at individual level – unit level – service – corporate level
- Setting the individual up as a cost centre
- Ongoing review & administration of SIS to maintain current & accurate picture of people's support needs
- Using objective measure of unmet supports / new services at funding meetings with HSE



# Human Resources Challenges

- Linking with skill mix & standardising across services at different developmental levels
- Current National Employment Control framework
- Current reality of our professionalised workforce & its cost
- Post management & rostering – how can this be managed within our current ICT infrastructure
- Building a SJOG community services base model & standardised ‘rate’ for packages of support.



# SIS Project 2011- 2012

- Individual support planning
- Transition planning
- Resource allocation
- Admissions criteria / application for supports





Thanks for listening