

National Core Indicators for Aging and Disabilities Project Overview

National Core Indicators-Aging and Disabilities (NCI-AD) is a consumer experience survey that collects and maintains valid and reliable person-reported data about the impact that states' publicly-funded long term services and supports have on the quality of life and outcomes of consumers. NCI-AD is a collaborative effort between the National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities (NASUAD) and Human Services Research Institute (HSRI).

Data for the project are gathered through annual in-person surveys administered by state agencies, or their subcontractors, to a sample of at least 400 older adults and individuals with physical disabilities accessing publicly-funded services in skilled nursing facilities, Medicaid waivers, Medicaid state plans, and/or state-funded programs, as well as older adults served by Older Americans Act programs. The survey instrument includes a background survey, which gathers data about the consumer from agency records, and an in-person survey, which includes subjective satisfaction-related questions that can only be answered by the consumer, and objective questions that can be answered by the consumer or, if needed, their proxy. The project team interprets each state's data and produces reports that can support state efforts to strengthen LTSS policy, inform quality improvement activities, and compare their performance with national norms.

State Responsibilities

States are responsible for the actual administration of the NCI-AD survey. This includes:

- Project planning, with help from NASUAD and HSRI, at the state level;
- Where applicable, coordinating with their state's Medicaid, Disability, and Aging agencies on all aspects of the project, including funding;
- Working with aging and disability stakeholder groups to inform them of and prepare them for the rollout of NCI-AD;
- Preparing a random sample of at least 400 service participants to be surveyed, with help and consultation from NASUAD and HSRI;
- Collecting specified background information on each individual interviewed;
- Conducting in-person interviews;
- Providing NCI-AD compliant data to HSRI for analysis; and
- Reviewing draft reports for accuracy.

Project Timeline

NASUAD and HSRI require states interested in joining NCI-AD to participate in at least six months (and up to twelve months) of technical assistance and planning calls prior to beginning their first year of data collection – referred to as the “TA Year” of the project. States that have completed their TA Year may begin using the survey on June 1 and have until May 31 of the following year to submit their data to HSRI. Draft state-by-state reports will be available in the fall of that same year, and a final national report will be available in the winter.

NCI-AD Timeline	
New States	Continuing States
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TA Year June 1, 2016 – May 31, 2017 • First year of data collection June 1, 2017 – May 31, 2018 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data collection year June 1, 2017 – May 31, 2018
State Reports	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State-by-State Reports – Fall 2018 • National Report – Winter 2019 	

Cost to Participate

For states participating in NCI-AD for the first time, a \$20,000 fee for NCI-AD membership will be assessed during the TA Year, which this will cover the costs of technical assistance and project planning (outlined below). States will also be assessed a \$15,000 fee for each year of data collection, which covers the costs of project direction, management, data analysis, and reporting (outlined below).

States have estimated they will incur a cost of approximately \$85,000 - \$100,000 to administer the in-person consumer survey to the baseline sample of 400 individuals. States that choose to oversample should plan to budget additional funds to cover the costs of interviewing more individuals. States should also budget between .10 and .25 FTE for state office staff to provide oversight to the project.

What Your NCI-AD Dues Buy

Technical Assistance and Project Planning

Each state's first year of participation in the NCI-AD project (TA Year) is a critical time for project planning and technical assistance. Prior to beginning the data collection, NASUAD and HSRI will work with new states to prepare them for implementation in the following ways:

- Assisting with stakeholder engagement at the state and local levels;
- Helping states to claim Medicaid match and other federal funding;
- Working to design an appropriate data sample based on the state's populations of interest;
- Preparing and distributing interviewer training materials;
- Conducting an in-person training of all interviewers on the survey tool and providing "refresher" trainings as needed;
- Preparing additional data collection protocols as necessary;
- Testing protocols for validity and reliability;
- Working with states to ensure consistency of definitions regarding data elements; and
- Bi-monthly technical assistance calls with NASUAD and HSRI staff.

For each year of data collection, NASUAD and HSRI work together to provide the following benefits to participating states:

Project Direction and Management

The project team provides general oversight of NCI-AD activities. The team will consult and collaborate with state agency partners with respect to project operations, content focus, data and product development, research, and other related activities. Additional project management activities include:

- Maintaining the NCI-AD website;
- Maintaining a data archive for all project data;
- Furnishing project data files to participating states as requested;
- Developing report and presentation templates for states' use;
- Developing and disseminating analytical and interpretative guidelines;
- Preparing the data entry system and codebooks for survey data;
- Preparing newsletters and e-bulletins;
- Developing project guidelines as needed for state participants;
- Conducting periodic check-ins with states on status of data collection;
- Developing and monitoring project timelines, goals and outcomes.

Data Analysis, Management, and Reporting

The project team prepares and distributes annual surveys and project summary reports and works with participating NCI-AD state representatives to examine implications and use of state's data, state and national publications and research opportunities. Specific activities include:

- **Data management:** tracking and reviewing state data for completeness, merging individual state data files into aggregate files, cleaning and formatting aggregate data files to ensure comparability;
- **Analysis:** outcome adjustment, testing for significant differences, computing scales/indicators, creating tables and graphs of indicator and descriptive data (including state-by-state results on survey items);
- **Report preparation:** development and distribution of draft reports to states for comment, incorporating feedback, and annual publishing of aggregate and state-by-state results;
- Developing basic descriptive statistics;
- States may also request additional analyses of their NCI-AD data to provide more refined information on their system's outcomes and performance, sub-state comparisons, correlations between select variables, etc. Depending on the type and intensity of analysis, states may incur additional costs.

Interested States

States interested in participating in NCI-AD are encouraged to contact the project's directors, Kelsey Walter (kwalter@nasuad.org) and Julie Bershadsky (jbbershadsky@hsri.org), to discuss payment options and next steps. In particular, interested states should begin to:

- Develop a project plan;
- Consider how they will staff the project;
- Commence a stakeholder engagement initiative; and
- Budget for the costs of participating, including dues and survey administration expenses.