



# The Pennsylvania Office of Developmental Programs' Independent Monitoring for Quality

## History

Independent Monitoring for Quality (IM4Q) is a result of the Multi-Year Plan created for Pennsylvania's intellectual disabilities system in 1997. The Multi-Year Plan called for the creation of local independent teams to evaluate the quality of life for people with intellectual disabilities and autism. These teams were to consist primarily of people with disabilities, family members, and interested others.

## Purpose

The purpose of IM4Q is to collect information to improve the quality of lives of people served/supported by the Pennsylvania Office of Developmental Programs (ODP). IM4Q is part of the intellectual disabilities/autism (ID/A) system's Quality Assessment and Improvement process. This process is guided by the values and principles of Everyday Lives: control, choice, freedom, stability, health and safety, connection, responsibility, communication, success, employment/meaningful contribution, individuality, relationships, partnership, quality, and advocacy.

## How IM4Q Works

- IM4Q uses trained independent monitoring teams (at least 2 people) to interview people receiving services and their families about the quality of their lives.
- IM4Q involvement is completely voluntary. People and families are asked to participate on a random basis.
- Interviews are arranged at a time and place convenient to the person and take about an hour to complete using a standard survey instrument.
- Local IM4Q programs enter interview results into a confidential database. Information is shared only when the individuals grant permission.
- The Bureau of Supports for Autism and Special Populations uses the results of interviews for quality improvement purposes, such as making changes to policy and addressing other considerations raised by the individual, family or staff.
- People living in a variety of settings may have an opportunity to be interviewed: community homes, with their families or companions, independently, lifesharing, intermediate care facilities, and state centers.



Institute on Disabilities

---

## Reports

IM4Q reports of survey results are shared with providers, County MH/ID Programs, and others for quality improvement purposes. No personal identifying information is displayed in the reports. Copies of reports are available on MyODP by following this path: MyODP.org > Resources > Quality Management > Independent Monitoring for Quality and National Core Indicators > Independent Monitoring for Quality and National Core Indicators > Independent Monitoring for Quality (IM4Q) Reports.

### How Has IM4Q Benefited People?

*Hear what some had to say:*

“They understand me and my plan.”

“They didn’t try to talk me out of things or make me change my mind.”

*–quotes from interviewees*

“...Informed me of things available to me I did not know about.”

“Thank you for taking time to talk with me about my niece. It is good to know that this type of oversight is going on.”

*–quotes from family members*

“One of the most memorable encounters was a chance meeting with a consumer...The consumer told me that he was in the process of taking classes that would ultimately lead to him receiving an operator’s license. The consumer had stated in an IM4Q interview earlier that year that his goal was to obtain a driver’s license...”

*–quote from IM4Q monitor*

### Guiding Principles of IM4Q

- **Independence:** Local IM4Q Programs have no conflict of interest with the intellectual disabilities/autism service systems.
- **Community Participation:** People with disabilities, family members, and interested citizens participate on monitoring teams.
- **Accountability:** The intellectual disabilities/autism service system is accountable to improve services and supports based on results of the monitoring.
- **Self-Determination:** People and families direct policies and procedures that promote choice and control over their financial resources and decisions that affect their lives.

**Further information is available at the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services web site:**

<http://www.dhs.pa.gov/citizens/intellectualdisabilitiesservices/independentmonitoringforquality/index.htm>

Technical assistance for IM4Q is provided by qualified university-affiliated researchers at the Institute on Disabilities at Temple University.