



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEBRA FERGUSON, Ph.D.  
COMMISSIONER

DEPARTMENT OF  
BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

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## Memorandum

TO: ID Directors

FROM: Dawn Traver, Waiver Operations Director *DAT*

DATE: September 8, 2014

SUBJECT: New Supports Intensity Scale® Contract

I am pleased to announce that the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) has contracted with *Ascend Management Innovations* (based in Tennessee) to conduct Supports Intensity Scale® assessments going forward. Ascend will be making a presentation about their plans for implementation in Virginia at the October 2, 2014 Developmental Services Council meeting at the VACSB Conference in Roanoke. I hope that many of you will be able to hear their presentation and ask questions.

As part of the transition to this new vendor, I would like to request that each CSB assist DBHDS in maintaining and relaying to Ascend important information through:

- Reconfirming your SIS® point person and back up staff with Cheri Stierer
- Updating email and phone numbers in SIS® Online
- Updating individuals' case managing CSB in SIS® Online when individuals move from one CSB to another
- Notifying Cheri of the individual's name and SIS® ID number, as individuals leave the waiver (either through death or movement out of state)
- Keeping individuals' ISP dates updated in IDOLS, as Ascend will use these dates for scheduling purposes.

DBHDS is in the process of hiring team members for a SIS® unit, members of which will be regionally-based. This unit will conduct training for family members, support coordinators, and providers on their roles in the new process and how to be good SIS® informants, perform SIS® verification reviews for those with high medical or behavioral scores, as well as other related tasks. Ascend is in the process of hiring SIS® interviewers and other regional staff and hopes to begin scheduling new assessments in

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November. Their first order of business will be to begin catching up the SIS® backlog that has occurred since February.

We look forward to working with Ascend and getting back on track with scheduling SIS® assessments.

pc: CSB Executive Directors  
Connie Cochran, DBHDS  
Cheri Stierer, DBHDS  
Terry Smith, DMAS