

Consumer Directed Services It's your choice.

How the Consumer Directed Services option works

The choices

The Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) offers people living with disabilities home- and community-based services and supports to help them stay as independent as possible. When it comes to managing those services, everyone has different needs and preferences. DADS gives you options about how your services are managed. These options are:

- Consumer Directed Services option (self-managed)
- Agency option (agency-managed)

These options offer two levels of control and responsibility over your program services, depending on whether you want to manage your own services or have a provider agency manage your program services entirely.

No matter which option you choose, the goal is to help you stay in your own home and community.

If you choose the Consumer Directed Services option

You or your designated representative will:

- Recruit, hire and train your own employees and backup employees (including family, friends or neighbors).
- Set wages and benefits for your employees based on a service budget created with the help of your service planning team.
- Set schedules, and approve and submit timesheets for your employees.
- Select a financial management services agency to: Process your timesheets and payroll.
- Process receipts and invoices.
- Act as your vendor fiscal / employer agent to pay your federal and state employment taxes.

Choosing Consumer Directed Services allows you more control over your program services if you're able and willing to take more responsibility for coordinating the services.

Help making a choice

Q: What factors should I consider in making my decision about service delivery options?

Here are five factors you may consider:

1. Personal preference. Do you like to make most of your own decisions, or do you want an agency to make most decisions about your care?
2. Time and effort. Are you willing to do more work in exchange for more control over your care?

3. Capabilities. Are you (or someone you trust) physically and mentally able to handle the responsibilities that come with being an employer?
4. Control. Do you like to control your own day-to-day routines, or do you prefer to let someone else take charge?
5. Support. What support consultation services may be available in your CDS option to help you meet employer responsibilities?

Q: What if I select one option, but then decide another may work better for me?

You can change your mind. If your needs change, or if you decide you want more or less control and responsibility over your services, you are allowed to move from one option to another.

Q: How do I find out more about the Consumer Directed Services option?

Contact your case manager or service coordinator, email cds@dads.state.tx.us or visit www.dads.state.tx.us/services/cds for more information.

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Consumer Directed Services

Make an informed decision

The person who will be the employer must understand the benefits and responsibilities of participating in the Consumer Directed Services (CDS) option. Your case manager or service coordinator can give you information about the CDS option in your program.

There are guidelines to tell you who can be an employer in the CDS option. Ask your case manager or service coordinator for details.

Tell your case manager or service coordinator

After you learn more about CDS, you will decide if you want to participate. If you chose to use CDS, you will be given a list of the financial management services agencies (FMSAs) serving your county. From this list, you choose an FMSA to help you.

Ask for help if needed

If you, the employer, need help to participate in CDS, you can choose an adult to help you meet employer responsibilities. This person is your designated representative.

If allowed by your program, you can also choose to purchase support consultation from a support advisor to help you learn how to meet your employer responsibilities under the CDS option. You can hire an independent support advisor or, if you request it, your FMSA can provide a support advisor.

Receive orientation about CDS

The FMSA you pick will give you an initial CDS orientation in your home. The FMSA will help you set up budgets from the money in your service plan for each service you decide to self-direct. You decide how your staff will be paid, within program rates. You will have a little extra money to purchase items (e.g.,

advertising or fax machine) to help you meet employer responsibilities. The FMSA will review and approve each budget and each revision. The FMSA will also explain important forms for hiring your employee.

Be the employer

After you are enrolled in CDS, you can begin advertising, interviewing and hiring your staff. Your staff has to meet certain requirements, such as employee relationship criteria and criminal background checks, before you hire them.

Receive services from the FMSA

The FMSA processes timesheets for your staff, writes their checks, and makes sure taxes and other withholdings have been taken out and paid. The FMSA also pays bills for other approved items or services in your plan. The FMSA provides you and your case manager or service coordinator with regular reports about your budgets and your participation in CDS.

Remember, with CDS

- You have a choice in how you receive services. This voluntary option is called Consumer Directed Services.
- You can change your choice of service delivery options at any time by contacting your case manager or service coordinator.
- You can choose a designated representative or hire a support advisor to help you with your employer responsibilities in the CDS option.
- If you select CDS, you will have a choice of financial management services agencies to help you with paying your staff and other financial activities.

Contact your case manager or service coordinator to ask for more information about CDS.

“I need home care because of complications from diabetes. When my case manager told me I could manage my own care through Consumer Directed Services, I was hesitant because I didn’t know if I wanted that responsibility. I found out that it’s a lot easier than I thought it would be, and really doesn’t take much time. It gives me control over who provides my care – and if the time ever comes when I decide I don’t want to be responsible for the management and paperwork, my case manager will help me select another option.”

Bobbie, 63

Printing of this brochure was funded by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services’ Money Follows the Person program.

DADS Media Services 16D0110 • October 2015