



## **Real Life Choices Fact Sheet**

*The Arc of Monmouth is a Real Life Choices Provider agency. For more information on the flexible services we can provide or other service system questions, please contact:*

*The Arc of Monmouth Social Service Department by calling 732-493-1919.*

### ***The following describes the Real Life Choices process:***

- Once an individual and their family has been contacted by DDD for Real Life Choices, the family will contact their assigned Support Coordinator. DDD contracts with a private agency to provide support coordination.
- The Support Coordinator will meet with the eligible individual and his/her family to assess the level of support needed.
- An individual budget will be established based on the level of support needed. Those individuals with lower cognitive and physical abilities, who need more support, will have the highest need for services and, therefore, a higher budget amount.
- The Support Coordinator, individual, family and any other supportive people in the individual's life will get together to complete an "Essential Lifestyle Plan". This plan will identify the individual's strengths and needs in areas such as communication, self-care and mobility, and identify actions to achieve outcomes.
- The Support Coordinator will then supply lists of qualified providers that the family can contact and/or visit to assess whether the services they provide are suitable for the family member with a developmental disability. For some services The Arc of Monmouth is a service provider. An excellent resource for services providers can be found on the Family Support Center of New Jersey website ([www.fscnj.org](http://www.fscnj.org)).
- Families may also choose to do their own hiring of staff for assistance in the home, transportation to appointments and/or companionship in leisure activities. There are some specific qualifications mandated by the DDD for self-hires as well as service providers.
- A fiscal intermediary is used for disbursement of fees to the selected service providers and acts as employer of record for staff hired directly by the individual. Easter Seals of New Jersey is the agency providing fiscal intermediary services.

### ***Fee-for-service supports can include, but are not limited to:***

- Consumer assistance/care-giving (personal assistance: attendant care services, household chores, errand services, training of consumer in these areas).
- Adult day activities (facility-based)
- Sheltered workshops
- Supported employment (job coaching services and supports)
- Activities at generic community agencies (e.g., gym, swim club).
- Respite (by hired staff) or family member provided respite (family member other than parent/spouse or guardian not living in the home). Person hired by the family must apply and complete all necessary Easter Seals hiring requirements.
- Therapeutic services (psychological/psychiatric, occupational, physical and speech therapy services). These services are habilitative, not rehabilitative, which means they are not to restore a previous level of function, but are to improve/maintain individual's current functional ability. These services do not include routine medical care, long-term

- psychiatric intervention and injury/accident rehabilitation and treatment.
- Environmental/vehicle accessibility adaptation (e.g., ramps, grab-bars, widening of doorways and installation of lifts on vehicles).

Monitoring of the plan, support coordination and the fiscal intermediary services are supported fiscally by DDD. Chosen services for the individual will be fiscally supported by the budget allotted to the individual/family.

Additional information about Real Life Choices can be found on the DDD website ([www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd/](http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/ddd/)), or by contacting your DDD case manager. A newsletter called New Directions that contains stories of persons served under Real Life Choices is available under “Publications” at the website of the New Jersey Council on Developmental Disabilities ([www.njddc.org](http://www.njddc.org)), or by writing to New Directions, CCS Communications, P. O. Box 384, Hopewell, NJ 08525.

