

What is supported decision making?

Just like other Manitobans, individuals with intellectual disabilities have the right to make choices and decisions about their lives. Often, individuals will make their own decisions, without the advice or support of others.

There are times when we all ask others to help us with a decision. Adults living with an intellectual disability are no different. They may turn to their parents, other family members or friends to help them understand their choices. The members of this support network can provide information, ideas and advice that enable adults living with an intellectual disability to make their decisions. This is what supported decision making means—adults living with an intellectual disability making their own decisions, with support and advice from family and friends, if desired.

Just like other Manitobans, adults living with an intellectual disability have the right to make choices and decisions about their lives.

What services are available to adults living with an intellectual disability under the Act?

Under the legislation, the Department of Families may provide support services for adults living with an intellectual disability, within available program resources. Examples of support services include residential services, counseling, day services, vocational training and life-skills programs.

Generally speaking, existing services, service providers and community services workers remain in place for vulnerable persons.

How are services decided upon?

The Act states that an individual plan must be developed for every adult living with an intellectual disability receiving support services. The plan identifies the person's strengths and needs, and sets out the support services that may be provided.

The planning process may involve a number of people. The adults living with an intellectual disability, members of the support networks, and the substitute decision maker or committee, if any, will be invited to work with a community service worker to develop an

Individual Service Plan

What is substitute decision making?

When an adult living with an intellectual disability needs decisions to be made and is unable to make them, alone or with the help of a support network, then a substitute decision maker (SDM) may be appointed.

Before a substitute decision maker is appointed, an application must be made to the Commissioner for Adults Living with an Intellectual Disability, an official appointed under the Act to protect the decision-making rights of adults living with an intellectual disability, and appoint and monitor SDMs. If the criteria for appointment appear to be met, a hearing panel will be appointed to consider the adult living with an intellectual disability's needs and capabilities and make recommendations to the Commissioner regarding the appointment. The adult living with an intellectual disability, and SDM or committee, a close relative, other members of the support network, service providers and the community service worker will be invited to participate in the hearing.

An appointed substitute decision maker makes decisions only in areas where the adult living with an intellectual disability cannot make them, and only for the period of time required to make the decision. The adult living with an intellectual disability is still able to make all other decisions not granted to the

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substitute decision maker. The substitute decision maker's decisions must respect and encourage the participation and independence of the adult living with an intellectual disability.

How does the Act protect adults living with an intellectual disability?

The legislation provides for the protection of adults living with an intellectual disability from abuse or neglect. By law, service providers, substitute decision makers and committees must report to the Department of Families suspected abuse and/or neglect of the adult living with an intellectual disability they support. Other Manitobans are also encouraged to report such concerns.

All reports will be investigated promptly and, when appropriate, referred to the police. If abuse or neglect is found, immediate action will be taken to protect the individual. The Act may include providing support services to taking the person to a safe place.