

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

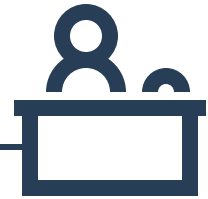
SUPPORTS COORDINATOR (SC) CHECK-IN FOR WELL-BEING TOOL

Updated 1/15/2021

A tool for guiding conversations during individual well-being check-ins



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INDIVIDUAL RISK

What is the purpose of the updated SC Check-in for Well Being Tool?

This updated tool is to be used by SCs as a guide when conducting individual well-being check-ins.

ODP updated this tool as a result of the impact of the prolonged nature of the COVID-19 pandemic. The impacts range from, but are not limited to, change in routine, extended remote services and schooling, closing of CPS programs, not being able to spend time with family and friends, and job loss.

Initially, the expectation was that check-ins would take place weekly however some individuals and/or families have expressed the need for the calls to take place less frequently or on an as-needed basis. The frequency of the SC check-ins should be based on the needs of the individual and/or family.

SC reengagement with individuals and/or families using this updated tool is important to ensure there are no gaps in services and supports as needs may have changed over time.

The tool is not intended to be used as a checklist. SCs should engage in conversation and only ask questions that are applicable to the individual and/or family. Not every question needs to be asked and the tool does not include all questions that may be applicable based on the individual and/or family circumstances.

Reminders:

- For individuals unable to engage in well-being check-ins, the SC should speak to the individual's caregiver or staff person.
- SCs do not need to conduct check-ins for Individuals residing in a public ICFs
- The results of the check-in with the individual, caregivers and/or staff (if applicable) must be documented in a service note.
- Well-being check-ins do not take the place of waiver and Targeted Services Management (TSM) individual monitoring requirements, however, the questions on this tool can be asked during the same time that the required monitoring takes place.
- The tool does not need to be completed or submitted to ODP.

TOOL DESIGN

This tool includes helpful conversation starters for SCs to use when facilitating conversations during weekly check-ins, to assess an individual and family's well-being. These questions are not intended to be used sequentially; but rather are designed to help facilitate conversations, surrounding each of the seven areas of wellness (basic needs, individual wellness, physical health, mental health, behavioral health, individual risk, and screening for COVID-19 symptoms) identified by the Office of Developmental Programs.

Consider the following when incorporating these conversation starters into your check-ins:



Is the question applicable?



How can I incorporate this naturally into the conversation?



Am I being sure to remove my own bias or judgments?



Should I rephrase how I ask the question in order for it to be understood?



What other questions can I ask as a follow up?



Am I being an active listener rather than asking questions simply to get answers?



Do I need to follow up with someone else to receive confirmation or clarity?



Do I fully understand their perspective?



If a need is identified, what are my next action steps?

QUESTION: "How are things going at home? How are you spending your day?"

INDIVIDUAL'S RESPONSE: "Things are good. Not much has been going on."

[*An individual may say things are good, but that might mean, "things are good today"*]

CONTINUE WITH PROBING QUESTIONS:

"Have you done anything new this week?"

"What was your favorite part of the week?"

"What was your least favorite part of the week?"

example



Guidance

This section is intended to ensure that the basic needs of the individual and caregiver are being met. In addition, it is intended to assess what services and supports are currently being provided in the home and if there are any gaps.

ASK THE INDIVIDUAL:

"How are things going at home?"
"How are you spending your day?"



*What are you doing today?
Have you done anything new this week?
What was your favorite part of the week?
What was your least favorite?*

"Do you need anything?"
(food, housing, financial assistance, etc.)



*Do you have enough to eat?
How are you getting food?
Do you need a ride to pick up food?
Do you get SNAP to help you pay for food?
If not, why?*



Do they need help applying for benefits or have they been turned down recently?

"Are you receiving staffing support in your home?"
"Do you need additional support?"
"If so, what type of support do you need?"



If not, why don't they have staff? Their choice?
None offered? None available?

Is there anything you want to do, but you need help? If you had staff, what would you ask them to do for you or with you?



ASK RESIDENTIAL STAFF:

"How are things going in the home?"
"How is [INDIVIDUAL] spending their day?"

"How are you helping [INDIVIDUAL] communicate with their family and/or loved ones?"

"Is additional support needed?"
"If so, have you reported this request to the appropriate people on the team?"

ASK THE CAREGIVER:

"How are things going?"
"Is [INDIVIDUAL] finding ways to keep busy?"



*How about you?
Do you need some ideas?*

"Do you need anything?"
(food, housing, financial assistance, etc.)



There are resources available for food and financial assistance, if you know anyone in need, please let me know.



Do they need help applying for benefits (SNAP, LIHEAP, etc.) or have they been turned down recently?

"Is [INDIVIDUAL] receiving staffing support in your home?"
"Do you need additional support?"



*Have your needs changed?
If you need additional support, what type of supports would be helpful?*



If staffing is needed, be sure to offer staffing and explore the most appropriate options.

"I know these are hard times. Do you need anything?"



*You seem to be doing so well. Do you have any ideas I could share with other families?
You sound stressed. Is there something I can do for you today? Or any other support I can provide?*



If any type of supports are identified as a need, be sure to follow through with any next steps in obtaining that help or assistance.

resource

Locate related resources on **MyODP**

Dial 211 to help connect with local resources



Guidance

It is important to consider the impact that COVID-19 has had on everyone's daily routine and the importance of staying connected and active during a statewide pandemic. Opportunities for wellness help maintain a sense of balance and control, especially in times of great uncertainty. Helping an individual think about these opportunities will be very beneficial during this difficult time.

ASK THE INDIVIDUAL:

"How are you dealing with changes to your typical day, schedule and routines?"



*How's your day going?
How have your days been?*

"What type of physical activity are you doing?"



*How do you get exercise?
What have you been doing for fun?*

"What type of recreational activity are you doing?"



*Are there any activities you wish you could do?
Are there any activities that you would like to learn to do?*

"Are you keeping in touch with family, friends, co-workers, church members, etc.?"



*Is there anyone in your life that you feel close to?
Who do you consider to be important to you?*

"Have your sleep patterns changed?"

"Maybe you are sleeping more?"

"Perhaps sleeping less?"

"Have you had any disruptions in your sleep such as waking up or walking in your sleep?"



*Did you sleep well last night?
Have you been sleeping well?*

"Where are you getting your information about the coronavirus?"



*Do you feel like you know enough about it?
Or would you like to have access to more information?*

"Do you have a telephone? a cellphone? a computer? a television?"



If not, why? (cost, access, skill issue, preference)



Did they previously have them but lost the service recently?
Do they need help obtaining any type of technology?

resource

For information on wellness strategies, visit **SAMHSA** and **AID in PA**



Guidance

If the individual is experiencing any of these symptoms, the SC should encourage them to call their physician. Make sure the individual knows who and how to contact their physician. Also, SC's should review social distancing, mask wearing and handwashing guidance. Mention that social distancing should not be mistaken for being out of contact with others. Discuss ways and strategies people can engage in meaningful interactions without physically being with them (phone calls, Skype, FaceTime, etc.) Give reminders on staying home unless for essential trips, wearing face masks when going out in public, and keeping appropriate distance between themselves and others in public places.

ASK THE INDIVIDUAL:

"Have you or anyone in your household been tested for COVID-19?"

"Do you know where to get tested?"



*If so, what were the results of the test?
If positive, did you report this to anyone? If so, who?
What precautions were taken?*

"What is your back-up plan if your [CAREGIVER] is unable to care for you?"



Do you have an alternative caregiver or place to go?



If none is identified, discuss options. Continue to explore options in order to develop a plan, if needed.



SCs are required to report incidents in EIM related to the COVID-19 virus as per the following guidelines:

An individual was administered a COVID-19 virus test (awaiting results).

An individual was administered a COVID-19 virus test that indicated a positive result.

An individual was diagnosed with COVID-19 virus by a health care practitioner, regardless of testing.

Please refer to Communications:

20-037 Modification of Key Tasks and Activities in Response to Incidents

20-041 Reporting Cases of COVID-19

20-049 Reporting Cases of COVID-19 and Requesting Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

20-065 Clarification Reporting Cases of COVID

"Do you have updated and accessible information/list of current medications and key medical information that someone may need to know, etc.?"



If not, it will be important to assist the individual in developing this information. PA Family Network is another resource to families who are interested in developing an Emergency One Page Profile. For more information, visit www.visionforequality.org

"Are you aware that there's a vaccine for COVID-19?"



Would you like more information about this?



Refer them to the vaccine resources for additional information



"Do you have any of the following?"

- Fever (100.0 or higher)?
- If you do not own a thermometer, are you experiencing chills, muscle and joint aches which could indicate a fever?
- Cough?
- Shortness of Breath?
- Tiredness?
- Sore Throat?
- Diarrhea?
- Nausea?
- Vomiting?
- Abdominal Pain?
- Loss of taste or smell?

ASK THE CAREGIVER:

"Have you or anyone in your household been tested for COVID-19?"

"Do you know where to get tested?"



If so, what were the results of the test?

If positive, did you report this to anyone? If so, who?

What precautions were taken?

"What is your back-up plan if you are unable to care for [INDIVIDUAL]?"



Do you have an alternative caregiver or place to go?



If none is identified, discuss options. Continue to explore options in order to develop a plan, if needed.

"Are you aware that there's a vaccine for COVID-19?"



Would you like more information about this?



Refer them to the vaccine resources for additional information

resource

COVID-19 Resources can be located at

General Coronavirus information

Vaccine information

Symptoms and Testing



Guidance

During this time when people are focused on COVID-19, it is important that other aspects of health are maintained. At a time when routines have been disrupted, it can be easier to forget things like taking medications daily or making sure that the medication supply is adequate. This is also an opportunity to remind individuals about the symptoms of the Fatal Four: aspiration, constipation, dehydration and seizure. These are all conditions that can lead to additional health problems if they are not recognized.

Please note, SCs should not diagnose or make medical recommendations. Individuals should contact their medical provider if they are having any non-emergency symptoms and call 911 if having emergency level symptoms.

ASK THE INDIVIDUAL:

"How do you feel physically?"



*Do you have any new symptoms?
Do you have any worsening
symptoms of an already
established illness (low or high
blood sugar, headaches, etc.)*

"Do you have a health care practitioner
(aka family doctor)?"



*Do you have their phone number?
Have you had any difficulty
contacting any of your health care
practitioners?*

"Do you know what to do if you feel sick?"



What would you do if you were sick?

"Do you use medical equipment?"



*If so, is it in good working
condition?
If not, are you in need of any
medical equipment?*

"Do you have all your prescribed medicine?"



*Are you taking every day as directed?
Do you have refills available?
How many refills do you have left?
Do you have a way to get your medication(s)
from the pharmacy?
How are you getting your medications?*



If they are in need of medical equipment or updated medical equipment, be sure to assist in initiating this and follow through until it is received.

"Do you have any known swallowing difficulties?"


- if yes** →

 - Have there been any changes since the last health care appointment?*
 - Are you following a special diet for aspiration/swallowing difficulty?*
 - Are you following a special diet for any other reason, for example diabetic diet?*
 - Do you have access to the food you need?*
 - Do you have the proper equipment to modify the consistency of your food?*
 - Do you need assistance to modify your food consistency and is that assistance available?*
 - Do you have any questions about food consistency or liquid thickening if it is needed?*

- if no** →

 - Any coughing or excessive drooling, especial during or after meals?*
 - Any frequent clearing of throat, wheezing or complaining of food getting stuck.?*

"Any difficulties with constipation?"

-  This is described as: infrequent, hard, dry stools that may be hard to pass or having a bowel movement less than every 3 days. Sometimes people complain of bloating and stomach pain or have hard protruding abdomen. If you have loss of appetite, vomiting, or even a change in behavioral outbursts consider if constipation may be a cause.

- *It is important to make sure you are getting enough fluids.*

→ *Do you have any of these symptoms of dehydration?*

 - Dry mouth or eyes*
 - Increased thirst*
 - Decrease in urine volume and dark concentrated urine*
 - Headache, dizziness and/or muscle weakness*

"Do you have a seizure disorder?"

- if yes** →

 - Any changes in the pattern or any recent seizures?*
 - I know we spoke about medications already, but I want to double check that you have your seizure medication and that you are taking it as prescribed.*

- if no** →

 - Contact your health care practitioner if you have any concerns for:*
 - Periods of unresponsiveness or staring*
 - Fluttering of eyes or rolling eyes in a specific direction*
 - Lip smacking*
 - Muscle spasms*
 - Loss of bladder or bowel*

resource

Fatal Four: Understanding the Health Risks of Four Common Conditions



Guidance

As with issues of physical health, mental health issues may receive less focus during the pandemic. Consider 2 important factors: 1) Individuals with existing mental health issues may experience changes due to changes in routine and access to the traditional modes of treatment, including face to face visits with prescribers and therapists. 2) Individuals with and without previous mental health issues may experience emotional difficulty associated with exposures to fear, anxiety, and uncertainty of this situation.

ASK THE INDIVIDUAL:



If the individual has specific mental health diagnoses, the following questions can be customized to address those symptoms.

This can be a very delicate issue to address. Be mindful of the way you are asking the questions and be sure to show you are listening and acknowledge their feelings.

"How have you been feeling?"

"Have you felt more emotional lately? Or had a hard time controlling your emotions or reactions?"



*I know [ACKNOWLEDGE SOMETHING THAT IS HAPPENING IN THEIR LIFE].
Anything you want to talk about?
How did that make you feel?*

"Have you been in contact with your [MENTAL HEALTH PRACTITIONER]?"



*Have you had any difficulty reaching them?
When was the last time you spoke with them?
When are you scheduled to speak with them, next?*

"What is [THEIR MENTAL HEALTH PRACTITIONER'S] plan regarding appointments during the COVID-19 pandemic?"



*Phone contact, telepsychiatry, emergency contact plan?
Does this way of communication, work for you?*



If the individual is having problems with the way their appointments are being completed, you can assist in helping them identify alternatives result in a better response.

"Do you have any concerns for your safety (self-harm or aggression)?"



If concerns are identified, report immediately in an attempt to mitigate risk and identify steps to promptly secure health and welfare.

resource

Resources for
Mental Health in PA



Guidance

It is important to recognize the impact the pandemic conditions may have on the individual's behavior. Increases in challenging behavior may occur as a result of heightened anxiety, disruptions to daily routine, increased social isolation, changes in support, etc. The intent of this section is to identify if individuals and/or caregivers need additional or new behavioral support to help cope with changes in behavior.

ASK THE INDIVIDUAL:

"Have any problems come up at home that you did not know how to deal with?"

*If a problem would arise, would you know how to handle it?
Would you have anyone to talk to about the problem?*



If they didn't know how to handle the problem or needed additional assistance, help them develop a plan on who to contact and what to do

[IF THE INDIVIDUAL HAS A BEHAVIORAL SPECIALIST]: "Are you still in contact with your behavior specialist?"

*How do they communicate with you? (skype, text, etc.)
Does this way work for you?*



If they prefer a different way to communicate with their behavioral specialist, assist them in changing the mode of communication

"Do you know how to reach your behavioral specialist if there is an increased need or a crisis?"



If not, help them identify how to contact their behavioral specialist and develop a plan in case they need to contact them or there is a crisis

ASK THE CAREGIVER OR STAFF:

"Have any problems come up at home that you did not know how to deal with?"

If a problem would arise, would you know how to handle it?



If they didn't know how to handle the problem or needed additional assistance, help them develop a plan on who to contact and what to do

"Have there been any concerning behaviors?"

*Are there new concerning behaviors?
Have any previous concerning behaviors, increased?
Is the individual making any concerning statements or threats?
Are there new situations that occur multiple times per week that have been challenging?*

[IF THE INDIVIDUAL HAS A BEHAVIORAL SPECIALIST]: "Is [INDIVIDUAL] still in contact with their behavior specialist?"

*Do they communicate with you?
Do they communicate with staff?
Do you know how to reach them if there is an increased need or a crisis?*

resource

ODP Announcement 20-035: **Preventing and Responding to Behavioral Crises**



Guidance

During this time, individuals may have less contact with professionals that are mandated reporters of abuse, neglect, and exploitation as a result of avoiding public spaces and staying in the home. For some people staying home may not be the safest option. In addition, external factors that add stress and financial strain can negatively impact survivors and create circumstances where safety is further compromised. Encourage individuals to try to maintain social connections online or over the phone, if it is safe to do so, and try to stick to daily routines as much as possible.



RESOURCES

Adult and Older Adult Protective Services:

Call 1-800-490-8505

Child Protective Services

CHILDLINE:

Call 1-800-932-0313

National Domestic Violence

Hotline :1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

COVID-19 Support & Referral

Helpline:

1-855-284-2494

For TTY, dial 724-631-5600

PA Elks Nurses

Centers for Independent Living

Food Pantries

Disability Rights Pa

PA Family Network

Instacart (can use SNAP)

Pharmacy delivery in their area

County Assistance Office

LIHEAP

ASK THE INDIVIDUAL:

"Do you feel safe in your home?"



*Is there anyone that ever hurts you or harms you in any way?
Are you ever around anyone who makes you feel unsafe?
Are you alone right now?
Can someone hear you talking?
Are you worried someone can hear you?*



If they state they are not alone, switch to yes/ no questions. Additionally, try to identify why they don't want to be heard.

"Are you worried about anything?"



*Does anyone say anything that scares you or worries you?
Do you ever have thoughts that keep you up at night?*

"Do you have the necessary contact numbers available in case of an emergency?"



*Do you have the number for the:
SCO's 24 hour response system?
Behavioral Specialist?
Adult Protective Services?*



Remind everyone, in the event of an emergency, call 911.

If an individual discloses that they are being abused or neglect, immediately report the situation to the appropriate protective service hotline and other appropriate authorities. Assist the individual with contacting resources so that a safety plan can be developed.



FINAL QUESTION

Guidance

This question is intended to be the final question so that the individual/caregiver or staff can discuss anything else they may need to talk about that they have not already discussed.

ASK THE INDIVIDUAL:

"Is there anything else you want to talk about?"



I know we just talked about a lot of information, but is there anything that you wanted to talk about that we didn't discuss?



It is important to build these personal questions into conversations rather than asking them in an interview style. This; in combination of having a positive relationship with the individuals you support, can make the biggest difference in the information they share with you.