Level framework discussion

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Human Services Research Institute

Founded in 1976, the Human Services Research Institute (HSRI) is a national non-profit improving the availability and quality of supports for vulnerable populations, including children and adults with disabilities.

We believe that all people and their families have the right to live, love, work, play and pursue their life aspirations in their community.

HSRI technical assistance & systems redesign team

- Assisted in developing frameworks with over 20 jurisdictions in the United States and Canada over the past two decades

  - Most frameworks used for individual supports budgets and/or rate tiers

  - All use assessment data to determine level or group membership

  - Details of the frameworks – the assessment used, the addition of supplemental information, the number of levels, the budgets associated with each level, etc. – vary across jurisdictions

Support level framework

Provides each individual with a level based on their support needs relative to the overall population being served. This allows the service system to be more equitable, transparent, and responsive to need.

- Uses responses to the assessment – often with additional information such as supplemental questions and results of any additional review process – to assign a level to each person
- Each level is associated with a description that defines the typical range in supports
- Each level can then be tied to a budget amount
- Exceptions must be considered

Support level framework and assignments

Support level framework

- Easily understood
- Transparent
- Reflective of policy intentions

Support level assignments

- Determined by an assessment using statistically sound criteria with an opportunity to get an exception if needed
- Known to individual, family, providers, DSP
- Often used to inform budget and/or rates offered
- Requires validation and evaluation

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Key questions for creating a support level framework with the SIS-A in Vermont

1 What is the most appropriate number of levels for a general support needs framework?

2 How should the typical characteristics of individuals in each group be described?

How levels align with resources, service planning, payment all come later

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Framework analysis plan - done to date

Apply SIS-A 2.0 norming table to national SIS-A dataset of over 100,000 assessments

Conduct analysis of national dataset to evaluate sections of the SIS that work best for creating levels, the appropriate number of levels, etc.

Apply SIS-A 2.0 norming table to Vermont sample data

Conduct analyses with Vermont SIS-A sample data (with SIS-A 2.0 norming applied) to develop preliminary general support need in the framework

Framework analysis plan - next steps

Solicit stakeholder feedback on preliminary general support needs levels

Repeat analyses with Vermont data to confirm general support need in the framework with SIS-A 2.0 data

Analyze SIS-A 2.0 data on medical and behavioral needs to finalize framework and incorporate supplemental information as appropriate

Conduct record review validation processes to support use of the framework

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Model requirements

| Groups are statistically and practically meaningful | Individuals assigned to groups from low to high need | Groups are different from one another |

Latent class analyses

- LCA is a statistical method used to create groups ("classes") with similar characteristics using a set of data
  - Best method for answering questions about the best fitting framework

- Multiple models are tested with LCA and compared to one another with "fit indices" and other diagnostics to determine which model(s) best fit the data
  - One a model is selected as best fitting, the classes (subgroups) found in the LCA will be converted into levels for framework(s)

- LCA does not identify criteria for assigning individuals to a group
  - Instead, it groups individuals together; further analysis is conducted to determine the criteria that best reflects these groupings

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Potential frameworks

Elements of the support level framework

- Use all sections and subsections of the SIS:
  - Exceptional medical support needs
  - Exceptional behavioral support needs
  - Support Needs Index (SNI)

- Separate levels for medical and behavioral support needs called levels "M" and "B" in later slides

- Three or four levels for general support needs as measured by SNI

- Contextual information and how it will be used to be determined

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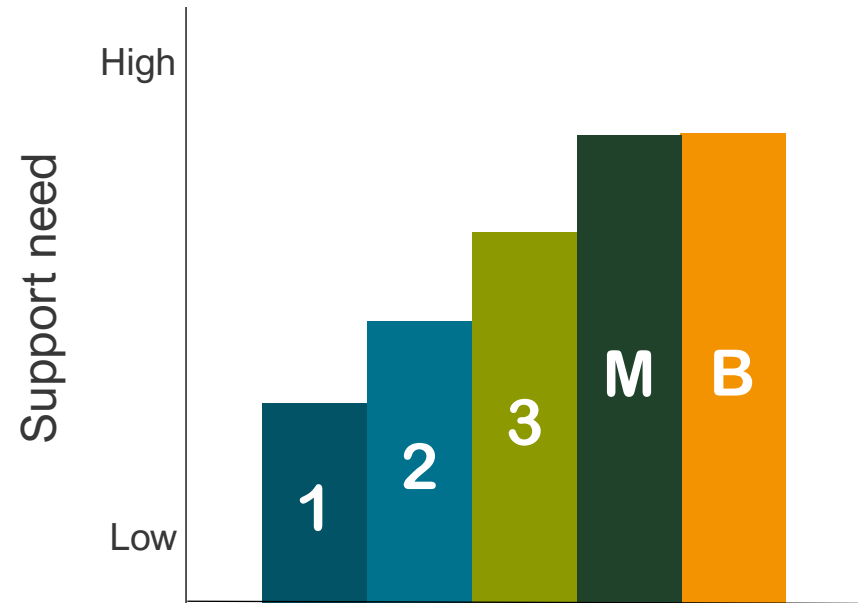
Framework options with standard SNI scores

5-LEVEL FRAMEWORK CRITERIA	
Level 1	Up to 73
Level 2	74 – 93
Level 3	94 and higher
Level M	[TBD]
Level B	[TBD]

6-LEVEL FRAMEWORK CRITERIA	
Level 1	Up to 71
Level 2	72 – 88
Level 3	89 – 106
Level 4	107 and higher
Level M	[TBD]
Level B	[TBD]

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5-Level Framework

High

Support need

Low

| 1 | 2 | 3 | M | B |

| 1	Low general support need, no extraordinary medical or behavioral needs
2	Moderate general support need, no extraordinary medical or behavioral needs
3	High general support need, no extraordinary medical or behavioral needs
M	Extraordinary medical support need
B	Extraordinary behavioral support need

6-Level Framework
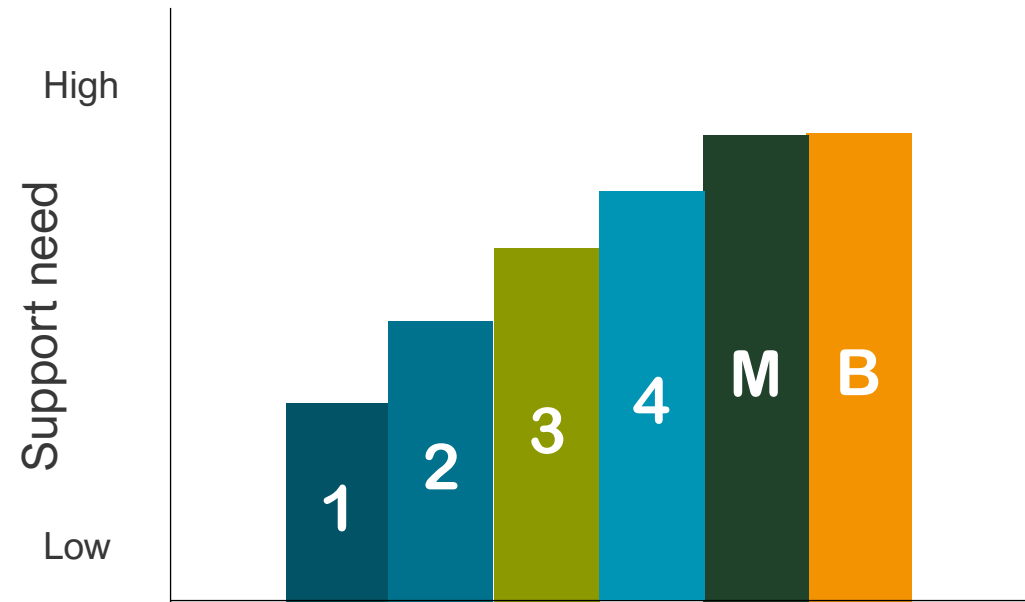
1	Low general support need, no extraordinary medical or behavioral needs	
2	Moderate general support need, no extraordinary medical or behavioral needs	
3	High general support need, no extraordinary medical or behavioral needs	
4	Very high general support need, no extraordinary medical or behavioral needs	
M	Extraordinary medical support need	
B	Extraordinary behavioral support need	

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Framework distribution comparison (based on Vermont sample)

5-level framework*

| 1 23% | 2 45% | 3 24% | M 5% | B 3% |

6-level framework*

| 1 23% | 2 38% | 3 28% | 4 3% | M 5% | B 3% |
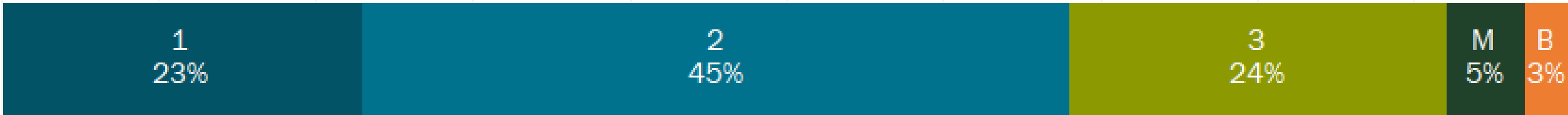
* Levels M and B are approximations based on similar frameworks in other states – criteria for these levels will be developed with new SIS-A 2.0 data

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Considerations in comparison of frameworks

- Both frameworks are statistically valid

- Both frameworks are easy to understand (e.g., low, moderate, high)

- 5-level framework places a large number of individuals in the moderate group (reflecting that most individuals in any group are 'average')

- 6-level framework includes a larger number of individuals in the higher-needs groups, including a small group of individuals with very high needs