### Independent Living Outcomes Evaluation Project

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**Overview**

Centers for Independent Living have been using a needs-based reporting process to continue showing funding entities that their continued support is justified. Recently, the Office of Budget and Management has determined that U.S. Centers are not effectively proving that continued support is justified by current reporting practices. It has been determined that outcomes will need to be evident in future funding considerations.

The National Council on Independent Living (NCIL) was established to ensure that Centers meet the “core” program requirements to have the designation as a Center for Independent Living. NCIL has begun to initiate the process for conducting outcome evaluations by establishing the logic behind the program and the indicators that are most appropriate. They have provided three indicators that will need to be surveyed through participant self-reports. These are at least two increases in skills, knowledge, and resources over the first nine months of the last fiscal year. These were found to be very broad and vague.

This project developed specific examples of skills and resources for three example categories of ILST and developed recommendations for enhancing the creation of goals. It was important to develop indicators into a tiered structure for reinforcing those skills and resources into knowledge through an added educational component. Methodology was developed and necessary instrumentation and processes were designed for implementation. And, an informed consent was designed for any organization providing Independent Living Skills Training (ILST).

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### Literature Review

Much of the data that needs to be collected is related to a consumer’s goals.

- A connection between consumers and their goals is crucial for goal accomplishment.
- Goals must have importance to the individual.
- Goals need to be personal and fall in the consumer’s value-base.
- And, goals should be clear and concise.

There is evidence that is contrary to the recommended data collection methodology.

- It is important to ensure that a vulnerable population is fully informed with all relevant information before consenting to any type of research.
- It is imperative for the evaluation team to provide informed consent in person.

Considerations for reducing exclusionary criteria include transportation limitations.

- Methodology needs to be flexible and mobile.
- It is important to maintain the IL Philosophy by excluding as few consumers as possible.
- Consumers should have as much access as possible to participate in the direction of organizations providing their services.

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### Foundational Objectives Example

**National Month: January, 2010**

**Goal:** To be able to independently maintain a checking account successfully.

**Foundational Objective 1:** Consumer will independently write numbers into bank account

90% of attempts with IL staff.

**Foundational Objective 2:** Consumer will independently utilize a calculator correctly as a resource to show independence when needed at 90% of attempts with IL staff.

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### References

References are available from the author upon request.