

This Frequently Asked Question (FAQ) document has been developed to respond to questions personal care providers may have regarding the future independent assessment process for personal care services provided on a fee-for-service basis to members enrolled in Wisconsin Medicaid or BadgerCare Plus and members enrolled in the Include, Respect, I Self-Direct (IRIS) program who do not self-direct their personal care services.

This FAQ document is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure providers have the most current information about ForwardHealth's transition to personal care independent assessments. Questions and answers will be dated according to publication or revision date.

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### GENERAL INFORMATION

**Date:** 11/30/2016

**Question:** Why are these changes being made?

**Answer:** The [2015-2017 biennial state budget](#) (2015 Wisconsin Act 55) included appropriation for personal care independent assessments. Using an independent third-party vendor that does not oversee, manage, or provide personal care services will ensure that assessments are made without a conflict of interest.

**Date:** 11/30/2016

**Question:** How was the independent assessment vendor selected?

**Answer:** The independent assessment vendor, Liberty Healthcare Corporation (Liberty), was selected through an open procurement process.

**Date:** 11/30/2016

**Question:** Who will be completing the independent assessments?

**Answer:** Independent assessments will be completed by trained registered nurses (RNs) who are hired by Liberty. All RNs hired by Liberty to complete independent assessments must have at least one year of experience providing or assessing needs for personal care or related services.

**Date:** 01/23/2017

**Question:** When will the new independent assessments begin?

**Answer:** Liberty will begin conducting independent assessments starting June 1, 2017.

**Date:** 11/30/2016

**Question:** How will this new process be rolled out (e.g., statewide, countywide, by region) to members?

**Answer:** After implementation, all new members requesting personal care services will receive an independent assessment. All members currently receiving personal care services will receive an independent assessment prior to the expiration of their current prior authorization (PA).

**Date:** 11/30/2016

**Question:** Will members be notified? How will they be notified?

**Answer:** Members currently receiving personal care services will be notified by mail about the new independent assessment process prior to the expiration of their current prior authorization (PA). Liberty will then contact these members by telephone to schedule their independent assessments.

**Date:** 02/23/2017

**Question:** How will the new process be rolled out to personal care providers?

**Answer:** The following is a timeline of activities related to personal care provider education and the initiation of the new independent assessment process:

### *March 2017*

- ForwardHealth will announce upcoming regional provider trainings by publishing a *ForwardHealth Update*.
- Registration will open for personal care provider trainings.

### *April 2017*

- ForwardHealth will publish an *Update* on independent assessment policy and requirements.
- Liberty will open their Customer Service call center for general questions.

### *May 2017*

- The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) and Liberty staff will hold regional provider trainings.
- Liberty's Customer Service call center will be fully operational.
- Liberty will begin scheduling independent assessments.

### *June 2017*

- Liberty will begin to conduct independent assessments for PAs with a requested start date on or after July 1, 2017.

**Date:** 11/30/2016

**Question:** Will personal care providers have to pay fees to Liberty or ForwardHealth for independent assessments?

**Answer:** Providers will not be subject to any fees related to independent assessments.

**Date:** 11/30/2016

**Question:** What can personal care providers do to get ready for this change?

**Answer:** Personal care providers should monitor the [Independent Assessments for Personal Care Services Portal page](#) for updated information as it becomes available and watch for future *ForwardHealth Updates* and Portal and email subscription messages. Agencies are also encouraged to stay in contact with their provider associations.

### MEMBERS AFFECTED

**Date:** 11/30/2016

**Question:** How many members will the new independent assessment process affect?

**Answer:** The independent assessor will provide independent assessments for personal care services delivered on a fee-for-service basis to members enrolled in Wisconsin Medicaid or BadgerCare Plus and members enrolled in the Include, Respect, I Self-Direct (IRIS) program who do not self-direct their personal care services.

**Date:** 11/30/2016

**Question:** Will this process affect IRIS members who receive self-directed personal care services?

**Answer:** No.

**Date:** 11/30/2016

**Question:** Will members who received veterans' benefits or workers' compensation be excluded from this process?

**Answer:** The independent assessment process will apply to all personal care services billed to Wisconsin Medicaid as fee-for-service. Services that are not billed to Wisconsin Medicaid will not be required to undergo an independent assessment.

### PROVIDERS AFFECTED

**Date:** 11/30/2016

**Question:** Will this affect home health agencies that provide personal care services?

**Answer:** Yes. All personal care services that will be billed fee-for-service will require an independent assessment, regardless of who will be providing the personal care.

**Date:** 11/30/2016

**Question:** Will this process include nurses in independent practice?

**Answer:** No. This process will not affect private duty nursing services.

**VENDOR OVERSIGHT/CONTRACT MANAGEMENT**

**Date:** 11/30/2016

**Question:** Will ForwardHealth be monitoring Liberty's activities and performance?

**Answer:** Yes. Liberty's activities and performance will be monitored to ensure compliance with provisions of the contract.