

Dignity of Risk

Disability-Competent Care Webinar Roundtable Series

The concept of “**dignity of risk**” honors and respects the rights of an individual’s informed choices even if they are inconsistent with commonly accepted good health and safety practices. This core value of the disability-competent care model supports the participant (i.e., an individual with a disability) as a whole person with their hopes and preferences, recognizes that the participant is often the best steward of resources, and helps cultivate a relationship with the participant.

In the disability-competent care model, each **participant expects and deserves**:

- A sound understanding of all identified risks;
- Respect for his or her needs and priorities;
- Ongoing updates about his or her health status; and
- A trusting and respectful relationship with his or her care team.

Disability-competent care providers support the dignity of risk by:

- Providing participant-centered services to each individual with disabilities;
- Equipping each participant with the information necessary to make his or her own health care decisions;
- Listening, engaging, and respecting a participant’s desires and choices; and
- Identifying risks, developing mitigation strategies, and creating an individualized plan of care.

The following steps can be taken to develop **an individualized plan of care** that respects a participant’s dignity of risk:

- **Step 1: Understand the participant’s story.** The provider can begin building a strong relationship by listening to and appreciating the participant’s experiences, perceptions, hopes, fears and strengths.
- **Step 2: Understand what is important to the participant.** The provider can develop this understanding through questions like: “What would you like to be different in your day-to-day life?” “Why is that important to you?” “Is there someone in your life who supports you?” “How can we be of help?” and “What are some things you hope to accomplish?”
- **Step 3: Develop a plan.** The information gathered in Steps 1 and 2 should be reflected in an individualized plan of care for the participant that accounts for the participant’s preferences for care.
- **Step 4: Implement the plan.** A successful interdisciplinary care team will facilitate the implementation process by instilling a sense of partnership, respect, and support.

Additional Resources

Please visit the *Resources for Integrated Care* website (www.resourcesforintegratedcare.com) for the “Training in Disability-Competent Care and Supports” webinar series, which served as the basis for this

brief and for other Disability-Competent Care-related resources including an interactive self-assessment tool.