

## Options Counseling Supervisor Observation and Support Tool Guide

A standardized options counseling process across ADRCs supports a consistent, high-quality customer experience. The [F-02861 Options Counseling Supervisor Observation and Support Tool](#) is designed to assist in quality assurance by monitoring fidelity to the Options Counseling Model.

### **General Guidance:**

This guide is designed to accompany the Options Counseling Supervisor Observation and Support Tool and is designed to be used while observing the service of options counseling. Frequency of use of the guide and tool are addressed in the Options Counseling section of the ADRC Operations Manual.

The tool follows the structure of options counseling. Each section outlines key competencies that should occur during that portion of the conversation with the customer. Customer conversations don't happen in a linear fashion. Supervisors who use the tool may need to take notes as they observe the conversation and complete sections as they occur naturally.

For options counseling observations, the supervisor should observe the options counseling visit and follow-up contact. This may require observation of multiple contacts.

### **Reviewer Guidance:**

Generally, supervisors should begin by reviewing the ADRC staff member's performance in light of the Level 2 "Meets Requirement" guidelines.

- If the ADRC staff member's performance appears to exceed the Level 2 guidelines, review the guidelines for Level 3.
- If the ADRC staff member's performance does not appear to meet the Level 2 guidelines, review the guidelines for Level 1.
- If the ADRC staff member's performance appears to be between two numbers (for example, a 1.5), round down. This is not to penalize ADRC staff, but to offer the most opportunities for improvement.

**Evaluation:**

When evaluating the staff's performance, supervisors should review any competency that received a score of Level 1 "Below Requirement." If a staff person received a Level 1 score for one or more competencies on the observation and support tool, then supervisors should meet with staff to discuss the areas where the competencies were not met. Supervisors may also assign one or more of the following tasks to increase staff understanding about options counseling:

- Staff review the options counseling curriculum modules associated with the areas in which competencies were not met.
- Staff shadow a colleague who has met competencies during a prior observation, in order to observe the steps of an options counseling meeting while using the observation tool. Staff may use the tool during the observation to "check off" when they see components occurring; this process provides an opportunity for recognition of what each step looks like.

Completion of the assigned tasks should occur within a time frame determined by the supervisor, not to exceed four weeks. Upon staff completion of the assigned task(s), the supervisor should complete another observation or record review to ensure that staff now meets expectations for competency. It is not necessary to provide documentation regarding the completion of the assigned tasks to the Office for Resource Center Development.

The use of the "Feedback/Notes" and "Additional Comments" fields are useful to document the supervisor's review and may be used during the discussion of the tool with staff.

**Observation Script:**

This optional script may be used to request permission for another person to observe your call or meeting.

"Part of our ADRC's quality assurance includes having one of my colleagues or a supervisor observe me during a home visit periodically. This helps ensure that I am providing quality services. Are you comfortable with (name of the person) attending our meeting? If not, please let me know. I respect your decision and want you to feel as comfortable as possible during our meeting."

Key: (1) = Below Requirement, (2) = Meets Requirement, (3) = Exceeds Requirement

<b>Overall</b>	<b>Reviewer Guidance</b>
Remain sensitive to cultural differences.	<p>(1) The staff member does not attend to possible cultural issues or behaves in a biased manner towards a customer's culture.</p> <p>(2) The staff member attempts to take customer's culture into account. May lack the skills and understanding to adapt approach to meet needs of diverse populations.</p> <p>(3) The staff member actively inquires about issues of culture and works to incorporate cultural strengths into service plan.</p>
Use appropriate non-verbal communication.	<p>(1) Non-verbal communication towards customer is not warm, open, or friendly. The non-verbal communication may hinder rapport building.</p> <p>(2) The staff member uses warm, open, and friendly non-verbal communication. The staff member often responds appropriately to customer's non-verbal communication.</p> <p>(3) The staff member uses warm, open, and friendly non-verbal communication. The staff member consistently attends to and responds appropriately to customer's non-verbal communication. The staff member uses non-verbal communication to enhance and support verbal communication.</p>
<b>Welcome</b>	<b>Reviewer Guidance</b>
Offer a warm and inviting professional greeting.	<p>(1) The staff member does not greet customer, or greets customer in a manner that is not warm, inviting, or professional.</p> <p>(2) The staff member provides greeting that is warm, inviting, and professional.</p> <p>(3) The staff member provides greeting that is warm, inviting, and professional. Posture and facial expressions of the staff member signal openness and positive attitude. The staff member offers affirmation or reassurance that customer has taken a positive step in contacting the ADRC.</p>

Introduce self, role, and function of the ADRC.	<p>(1) The staff member does not introduce self, explain role, or discuss function of the ADRC.</p> <p>(2) The staff member introduces self, explains role, and discusses the role of the ADRC. The staff member's introduction may seem generic or "scripted."</p> <p>(3) The staff member introduces self, explains role, and discusses the role of the ADRC. The staff member includes a clear statement that emphasizes the customer's personal autonomy.</p>
Explain confidentiality.	<p>(1) The staff member does not explain confidentiality, or provides information that is unclear or incorrect.</p> <p>(2) The staff member explains confidentiality clearly and accurately. The staff member inquires about customer understanding using closed-ended questions. (Example: "Do you have any questions?")</p> <p>(3) The staff member explains confidentiality clearly and accurately. The staff member follows up with customer to assure understanding and probes for additional questions using open-ended questions. (Example: "What questions do you have about this?")</p>
<b>Discovery</b>	<b>Reviewer Guidance</b>
Obtain information on customer's concerns and needs.	<p>(1) The staff member does not provide customer an opportunity to openly share their concerns. The staff member may behave as if customer's needs are already known. The staff member obtains information about customer's needs using only closed-ended questions or a checklist of needs.</p> <p>(2) The staff member uses both open-ended and closed-ended questions to ask about customer's needs and concerns. The staff member maintains focus on the customer's perspective for the majority of the discussion of concerns and needs. The staff member may incorporate some observations about the home environment in information gathered, if meeting with the customer in their home. The staff member obtains information about customer's health and financial needs and concerns. The staff member asks about concerns and needs in the area of employment, if applicable.</p> <p>(3) The staff member uses primarily open-ended questions and reflective listening to facilitate a discussion about customer's concerns and needs in the areas of health, finance, and employment, if applicable. The staff member uses some closed-ended questions for specific details or as an adaptation if customer appears</p>

	to find the open-ended questioning a challenge. The staff member incorporates observations about the home environment in the discussion, if meeting with the customer in their home.
Identify customer's strengths, goals, values, and preferences.	<p>(1) The staff member ignores the customer's strengths, goals, values, and preferences, or only asks about one or two of those four areas. The staff member may ask in a superficial manner or using only closed-ended questions.</p> <p>(2) The staff member uses both open-ended and closed-ended questions to ask about at least three of the following: customer's strengths, goals, values, and preferences. The staff member may combine inquiry about more than one of those areas into one question or not directly ask if customer has already provided information about that area. The staff member maintains focus on the customer's perspective for the majority of the discussion of strengths, goals, values, and preferences.</p> <p>(3) The staff member uses primarily open-ended questions and reflective listening to facilitate a discussion about all of the following: customer's strengths, goals, values, and preferences. The staff member demonstrates a consistent curiosity about the customer through attentive and active listening. The staff member uses information customer has already shared to help the customer expand their perception of their own strengths.</p>
Learn about customer's family, friends, lifestyle, and current living situation.	<p>(1) The staff member does not ask about the customer's family, friends, lifestyle, or current living situation, or only asks about one or two of those four areas. The staff member may ask in a superficial manner or using only closed-ended questions.</p> <p>(2) The staff member uses both open-ended and closed-ended questions to ask about at least three of the following: customer's family, friends, lifestyle, and current living situation. The staff member may combine inquiry about more than one of those areas into one question or not directly ask if customer has already provided information about that area. The staff member maintains focus on the customer's perspective for the majority of the discussion of customer's family, friends, lifestyle, and current living situation.</p> <p>(3) The staff member uses primarily open-ended questions and reflective listening to facilitate a discussion about all of the following: customer's family, friends, lifestyle, and current living situation. The staff member demonstrates a consistent curiosity about the customer through attentive and active listening.</p>

<b>Decision Support</b>	<b>Reviewer Guidance</b>
Identify resources that may meet customer-identified needs and preferences.	<p>(1) The staff member provides information that does not appear to be tailored to customer's specific needs and preferences.</p> <p>(2) The staff member provides information that is tailored to customer's specific needs and preferences. Includes, at a minimum, a discussion of informal supports, privately funded services, and publicly funded services.</p> <p>(3) The staff member provides information that is tailored to customer's specific needs and preferences. The staff member includes, at a minimum, a discussion of informal supports, privately funded services, and publicly funded services. If resources do not exist that directly meet both needs and preferences, the staff member explores creative solutions beyond traditional services.</p>
Present options to customer in a manner that supports customer's understanding.	<p>(1) The staff member presents information in manner not adapted to customer's communication needs. The staff member may use jargon, acronyms, and technical terms unfamiliar to customer without explanation. The staff member may provide unnecessary details and information. The staff member may deliver information at rapid pace with disregard to customer's indications that they are confused, overwhelmed, or fatigued. The staff member may fail to check for customer's understanding.</p> <p>(2) The staff member uses clear communication and plain language. The staff member makes effort to adapt communication to the individual customer. The staff member responds appropriately to clear signs that customer has become confused, overwhelmed, or fatigued. The staff member checks for customer's understanding at least once.</p> <p>(3) The staff member uses clear communication and plain language. The staff member effectively adapts communication to the individual customer. The staff member normalizes that the information provided may be complex and confusing. The staff member proactively attends closely to customer's non-verbal communication to avoid customer becoming confused, overwhelmed, or fatigued. The staff member checks for customer's understanding at multiple points throughout the information sharing process.</p>

<p>Facilitate an unbiased discussion about resources to help customer narrow list of options.</p>	<p>(1) The staff member does not remain neutral throughout the discussion. The staff member does not maintain focus on customer's values and preferences. The staff member may offer own opinion, advice, or input. The staff member may take expert role or allow other participants in the discussion to dominate the decision-making.</p> <p>(2) The staff member remains unbiased throughout discussion. The staff member uses open-ended questions to engage customer in discussion about resources. The staff member helps customer evaluate options based on strengths, goals, values, needs, and preferences. The staff member helps customer navigate input from other participants in the discussion to preserve customer's choice, direction, and control.</p> <p>(3) The staff member remains unbiased throughout discussion. The staff member uses open-ended questions and reflective listening to engage customer in discussion about resources. The staff member helps customer evaluate options based on strengths, goals, values, needs, and preferences. Structures discussion so that other participants are encouraged to give their input through the lens of the customer's values and priorities. The staff member helps customer maintain choice, direction, and control, and navigate input from other participants in the discussion.</p>
<p>Gauge customer's readiness to move forward.</p>	<p>(1) The staff member moves forward to action planning without regard to customer's readiness. The staff member may fail to gauge readiness, or may ignore obvious or subtle customer signals that they are not ready to move forward.</p> <p>(2) The staff member asks customer about readiness to move forward, or moves forward without asking only after customer makes explicit statements indicating readiness. The staff member does not force a plan if customer is not ready.</p> <p>(3) The staff member uses open-ended questions to inquire about customer's readiness to move forward. Reflects and summarizes if customer makes explicit statements indicating readiness. If customer is not ready to move forward, the staff member asks open-ended questions to help further explore customer's timeline and additional needs to increase readiness for decision-making.</p>

Action Planning	Reviewer Guidance
<p>Offer to help customer create written action plan using Action Plan document.</p> <p>Action Plan Elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Customer's goal</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Actions to meet goal</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Name of agency or support</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Who will complete each action and by when</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Step(s) that need to occur</li> </ul>	<p>(1) The staff member does not offer written plan or may offer a written plan in a way that may be off-putting to the customer. The staff member may fail to allow customer's ideas to guide the plan. The staff member may create written plan despite customer's wishes. The staff member may fail to help customer who does not want written plan to identify next steps. If plan is created, the staff member does not include all actions discussed or leaves elements of the plan blank (list included to the left).</p> <p>(2) The staff member offers a written plan to customer in a manner that helps the customer understand the benefits of a written plan. The staff member only creates one if customer is willing. The staff member guides discussion using open-ended questions so that plan includes customer's ideas. The staff member If customer does not desire a written plan, the staff member uses at least one open-ended question to help the customer identify next steps. If plan is created, the staff member may only discuss four action plan elements (list included to the left).</p> <p>(3) The staff member offers written plan to customer in a manner that helps the customer understand the benefits of a written plan. The staff member guides discussion using open-ended questions and reflective listening so that plan is composed of, almost entirely, customer's ideas. If any ideas from other sources are included in the action plan, it is because of customer's request or with customer's approval and permission. The staff member's discussion includes all action plan elements (list included to the left). The staff member respects if customer does not desire a written plan. The staff member uses multiple open-ended questions to help the customer identify next steps.</p>
<p>Help customer assess plan and their confidence in it.</p>	<p>(1) The staff member does not ask any questions to help customer assess the plan or their confidence in the plan.</p> <p>(2) The staff member uses at least one open-ended question to help customer assess the plan and their confidence in the plan. <i>If the staff member has respected customer's desire for no written plan at this time, score on this competency will be recorded as "Meets Requirement."</i></p> <p>(3) The staff member uses open-ended questions and reflective listening to help customer assess both the plan and their confidence in the plan.</p>



Establish a plan for follow-up.	<p>(1) The staff member does not mention follow-up, or sets up follow-up despite customer's indication that they do not desire follow-up.</p> <p>(2) The staff member offers follow-up to customer. The staff member respects customer's wishes if they decline. <i>If the staff member has respected customer's desire for no follow-up, score on this competency will be recorded as "Meets Requirement."</i></p> <p>(3) The staff member offers follow-up to customer and explains that it will help ensure that customer's needs and goals are being met. The staff member respects customer's wishes if they decline.</p>
<b>Follow-Up</b>	<p><b>Reviewer Guidance</b></p> <p><i>If the customer has enrolled in a publicly funded LTC program, then it is not appropriate to offer follow-up. Check "Customer enrolled in LTC" and score each component of this section as "Meets Requirement."</i></p>
Request update on customer's situation and inquire about customer's progress on planned action steps.	<p>(1) The staff member does not ask about customer's situation or progress on any planned action steps.</p> <p>(2) The staff member uses open-ended questions to ask for an update on customer's situation and progress on any planned action steps.</p> <p>(3) The staff member uses open-ended questions and reflective listening to engage customer in a discussion about their overall situation and progress on any planned action steps. The staff member provides positive affirmation on any progress.</p>
Re-engage in discovery and/or decision support as needed. Discuss possible modifications to Action Plan as needed.	<p>(1) If customer's circumstances have changed significantly, the staff member does not re-engage the customer in Discovery or Decision Support steps despite indications that it would be beneficial. The staff member does not update Action Plan despite obvious need for modifications.</p> <p>(2) If customer's circumstances have changed significantly, the staff member re-engages the customer in Discovery and/or Decision Support steps. The staff member discusses possible modifications to the Action Plan when there are obvious needs for modification. The staff member may fail to address areas where there are subtler indications of need for modification. <i>If re-engaging in previous steps or modifications to action plan are not needed, or if customer declines to do so, score on this competency will be recorded as "Meets Requirement."</i></p>

	<p>(3) If customer's circumstances have changed significantly, the staff member reflects on this observation and includes customer in decision to re-engage in Discovery and/or Decision Support steps. The staff member discusses possible modifications to the Action Plan when there are obvious or subtle needs for modification. The staff member guides customer to take the lead on decisions about modifications.</p>
Continue to schedule additional follow-up contacts or conclude options counseling as appropriate.	<p>(1) The staff member does not offer additional follow-up when it would benefit the customer, or does not conclude options counseling when customer's goals have been achieved. The staff member may fail to discuss next step in the options counseling process with customer altogether, leaving customer unsure of what to expect next.</p> <p>(2) The staff member offers additional follow-up or concludes options counseling as appropriate. The staff member respects customer's preference for timing of continued follow-up or conclusion of options counseling.</p> <p>(3) The staff member offers additional follow-up or concludes options counseling as appropriate. The staff member respects customer's preference for timing of continued follow-up or conclusion of options counseling. The staff member informs customer that the ADRC is available should future needs arise.</p>