

MnCHOICES and Equitable Access to Services

MnCHOICES is the tool Minnesota uses to assess what long-term services and supports a person needs and to plan those supports with them. Counties, Tribal Nations, and managed care organizations use it for people of any age and any type of disability who need long-term services and supports.

Content

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How it works. A certified assessor meets with the person to learn about their needs, strengths, and preferences, and to talk through the supports that would help them live a good life. The assessment helps determine which programs and services the person is eligible for, and it helps connect them to those services. One assessment covers many programs, so people do not have to repeat the process again and again. There is no fee, and a person does not have to be enrolled in Medical Assistance to have an assessment.

Where equity comes in. An assessment is a gateway. If the process is hard to reach, hard to understand, or not offered in a person's language, some people get less than they are entitled to — and that shows up as a disparity. Equitable access means:

- Language access: interpretation and translated materials so people are assessed in the language they use.
- Cultural responsiveness: assessors who listen for how culture shapes what a good life and good support look like.
- Reaching people: making sure communities that have been underserved know about and can get an assessment.
- Consistent, person-centered practice: the same respectful, choice-driven process for everyone.

When you support someone through MnCHOICES, you are often standing at the door to their services. Hold it open, in their language, on their terms.

This is a working summary for staff. For current assessment policy, check DHS guidance or route the question to the consultant.

Define the decision, compare evidence and impacts, document limits, and name the owner using MnCHOICES and Equitable Access to Services.

Connect the guidance to the person's goals, program rules, access needs, and follow-up using MnCHOICES and Equitable Access to Services.

Confirm the current purpose, audience, and decision authority before using MnCHOICES and Equitable Access to Services to define the decision, compare evidence and impacts, document limits, and name the owner.

Choose the sections of MnCHOICES and Equitable Access to Services that match the situation; do not apply unrelated guidance as a blanket rule.

Document the action taken from MnCHOICES and Equitable Access to Services, the people affected, unresolved questions, and the responsible follow-up owner.

Check the stated limitations and evidence status for MnCHOICES and Equitable Access to Services; escalate when current authority or individual context is missing.

Review the result with the affected person, team, or community and revise the analyze and make decisions approach when it creates a barrier or unintended effect.

For program service staff, use MnCHOICES and Equitable Access to Services to define the decision, compare evidence and impacts, document limits, and name the owner; apply the guidance in the person-specific workflow, explain options accessibly, and document the next step. Start by define the decision, compare evidence and impacts, document limits, and name the owner using MnCHOICES and Equitable Access to Services.

For community engagement staff, use MnCHOICES and Equitable Access to Services to connect the guidance to the person's goals, program rules, access needs, and follow-up; plan accessible participation, make influence visible, and close the feedback loop with community partners. Start by connect the guidance to the person's goals, program rules, access needs, and follow-up using MnCHOICES and Equitable Access to Services.

Verify the current primary authority and effective date; this resource does not provide fact-specific legal advice or replace authorized program interpretation.

Do not replace official legal, policy, clinical, supervisory, program, or Tribal authority.

Do not infer an individual's identity, preferences, needs, or experience from group-level information.

State uncertainty, use current authoritative sources, and escalate when the decision exceeds the user's role.

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