



Definition/Criteria

For the purpose of a Complex Support Needs Designation (CSND) review, individuals with complex support needs

- must be 18 or older and have a developmental disability
- must be eligible for services from Persons with Developmental Disabilities (PDD)
- pose a significant risk and/or are destructive to themselves, others or property
- require intensive medical and/or mental health services
- will have, or have had, a history of one or more of the following diagnoses or life experiences:
 - **Mental health disorder**
 - **Termination from services**
 - **Specialized treatment for psychiatric and/or behavioural issues**
 - **Involvement in multi-system medical and/or mental health services**
 - **Incarceration(s) or criminal justice involvement**
 - **Chronic substance abuse/dependency problems/self-harm behaviour**

Diverse Supports

The type of services available to most individuals with developmental disabilities is adequate to meet their specific needs. However, individuals who also have complex behavioural or medical support needs require a more diverse support network.

- **Natural supports**, such as unpaid family, friends and acquaintances
- **Formal supports**, including paid agency staff, home care and/or public guardians
- **External supports** from specialized services, such as psychologists and Alberta Health Services
- **Risk management strategies** that identify response plans, communication around risk, and risk mitigation
- **Training and ongoing mentoring for staff** that outlines the minimum and mandatory training requirements
- **Individual-specific support**
 - Adequate physical space requirements
 - Resources to build community connections
 - Specialized medical supports or interventions
 - Crisis response supports
- **Human resources support for staff including**
 - Ongoing workplace learning
 - Efficient 360° communication systems
 - On-call support
 - Flexible staffing
 - State-of-the-art technology



The CSND Process

In September 2017, the Ministry of Community and Social Services; Disabilities, Inclusion and Accessibility Division (DIAD) began funding CSND reviews for service providers that support individuals who meet the definition/criteria for complex support needs.

When CSND is done in conjunction with either a Level 1 or Level 2 site survey, the review follows the same process as a CET survey.

Benefits of Pursuing CSND

Service providers that pursue CSND

- have the opportunity to compare their services, supports, strategies, and staff training and development with standards that were designed to reflect best practice in the field
- can be confident that
 - their services are designed to significantly mitigate risk for both the individuals and staff
 - their staff will be skilled and proactive in their approach
 - they can offer customized service to individuals and/or guardians who are seeking alternatives to traditional service or treatment options
 - they can manage their workforce strategically and minimize liability

Service providers that align with the CSND indicators demonstrate that they are doing everything possible to provide for the needs and safety of individuals with complex needs in addition to enhancing their quality of life outcomes.

Upon the successful achievement of the review, service providers will be awarded a CSND Certificate to recognize their accomplishments and to act as a visible declaration to applicants and families who are looking for quality services.

CSND for Service Providers Accredited by Equivalent Standards

Service providers that are accredited by equivalent standards as identified by DIAD and that support individuals who meet the definition/criteria for complex supports can apply for a CSND review by

- contacting ACDS' Accreditation Department at accred@acds.ca
- giving us the name, position, phone number and email address of the person in your organization who will be our primary contact person
- providing us with evidence of your accreditation through an approved accrediting body

Additional Resources

We regularly add new documents and update existing ones on the [ACDS website](#).

- [Federal and Provincial Legislation](#) including Acts, Codes, Licensing and Standards
- [CET Preparation Toolkit](#)
- [Webinars](#)
- [Accreditation Resources](#)

For more information about CSND and CET, contact an Accreditation Coordinator by phone at 403-250-9495 or email the Accreditation Department at accred@acds.ca.

Service Tiers were developed to identify the training recommended to support individuals at who have differing levels of complex support needs.

Service Tiers Tools are available online or by requesting a copy of the tool from accred@acds.ca.