carf INTERNATIONAL

Three-Year Accreditation

CARF
Survey Report
for

Independent Living
Services, Inc.

CARF INTERNATIONAL
6951 East Southpoint Road
Tucson, AZ 85756 USA
Toll-free 888 281 6531
Tel/TTY 520 325 1044
Fax 520 318 1129

CARF–CCAC
1730 Rhode Island Avenue, NW, Suite 410
Washington, DC 20036 USA
Toll-free 866 888 1122
Tel 202 587 5001
Fax 202 587 5009

CARF CANADA
10665 Jasper Avenue, Suite 760
Edmonton, AB T5J 3S9 CANADA
Toll-free 877 434 5444
Tel 780 429 2538
Fax 780 426 7274

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Organization

Independent Living Services, Inc.
615 East Robins
Conway, AR   72034

Organizational Leadership

Jackie Fliss, Executive Director

Elissa Douglas, Human Resource Director

Survey Dates

March 12-14, 2014

Survey Team

Larry G. Knight, B.S., M.A., M.S., Administrative Surveyor

Timothy W. Landis, Program Surveyor

Programs/Services Surveyed

Community Housing
Community Integration
Organizational Employment Services
Supported Living

Previous Survey

April 27-29, 2011
Three-Year Accreditation

Three-Year Accreditation

Survey Outcome

Three-Year Accreditation
Expiration: May 2017

SURVEY SUMMARY

Independent Living Services, Inc., has strengths in many areas.

■ The board of Independent Living Services is complimented for employing a competent and visionary executive director and management team.

■ The organization has committed to in-depth strategic planning that considers stakeholders' expectations. A written strategic plan has been prepared that sets goals and is implemented, shared, and maintained to ensure that it remains relevant.

■ Independent Living Services has prepared an excellent technology plan that addresses hardware, software, security, confidentiality, backup, assistive technology, disaster recovery, and virus protection. The plan supports information management and performance improvement.

■ The techniques and procedures used for hiring, checking backgrounds, orienting, and training the personnel appear to effectively prepare new employees for their jobs.

■ Independent Living Services is complimented for its comprehensive and well-written accessibility plan. The plan identifies problem areas, schedules their remediation, and documents their correction.

■ The organization's caring and creative staff members are committed to helping the consumers enhance their quality of life.

■ The board obtains community input, in part, through cooperation with three additional boards. Collectively, the boards are composed of a cross-section of the catchment area and possess a diversity of skills and expertise.

■ The board of Independent Living Services is dedicated to the organization's mission and is complimented for its desire to provide quality accredited services to the consumers. The members of the board and administration accept their roles and demonstrate their commitment to the community.

■ The organization is commended for the strong community involvement it displays. There are many examples of its cooperation with other community agencies and businesses.

■ Independent Living Services is commended for its efforts to gather feedback from the stakeholders. The information obtained is used by the management to create positive change for the consumers.

■ The organization uses a personnel evaluation system that appropriately measures the employee's performance. The evaluation includes general job responsibilities and a plan for addressing any areas for performance improvement.

■ Independent Living Services' well-conceived and comprehensive performance improvement system produces results that guide its decision-making process. The system allows for the collection and utilization of information in a manner that allows the managers to focus on defining primary objectives, setting goals for the objectives, and determining the degree of attainment of the objectives. The management uses the reporting system as a tool for making the decisions necessary to effect service changes.

- The staff members are dedicated to the consumers, enthusiastic in carrying out their duties, and motivated to help the consumers succeed in their aspirations. They are recognized as highly capable professionals by the consumers and the other stakeholders with whom they interact.

- Independent Living Services offers services that are administered and delivered in attractive, well-maintained, and welcoming settings decorated with artwork produced by the consumers. The consumers enjoy the newly renovated facility that opened last year, where all of the organization's services are located together.

- The organization is congratulated on recently receiving the regional Nonprofit of the Year Award for its services to the consumers.

- It is apparent that the consumers are the true center of Independent Living Services' practices. The staff members support the consumers to grow toward independence and to meet their outcomes to move into less restrictive environments with a circle of friends and supports.

- The organization's community integration activity center is very well designed and linked to the wishes and abilities of the consumers. The range, depth, and comprehensiveness of the services provided at the center relate to a wide variety of community options. For example, the Acting Creates Therapeutic Success (ACTS) program links to area universities.

- The consumers speak highly of the supported living program, which provides safe, secure, and family-like environments that include their pets. The residences are located close to other activities in the consumers' home communities. The staff members assist the consumers to make the residences unique to their preferences and choices.

- Independent Living Services' well-designed employment services are linked to the wishes and abilities of the consumers. The range, depth, and comprehensiveness of the services relate to a wide variety of community employment options.

- The staff members have a diversity of expertise and experience and are dedicated to the enhancement of the consumers' quality of life. They have developed strong relationships with the consumers, funders, referral sources, and community members. The care, compassion, dedication, and knowledge of the staff members are recognized and evident in their day-to-day service delivery and the stakeholders' feedback.

- The referral sources, families, and consumers express strong and positive comments regarding their satisfaction with the quality of the organization's services.

Independent Living Services should seek improvement in the areas identified by the recommendations in the report. Consultation given does not indicate nonconformance to standards but is offered as a suggestion for further quality improvement.

On balance, Independent Living Services has made a commitment to apply the CARF standards in its pursuit and maintenance of international accreditation. As a result, the organization has built a solid service delivery system that demonstrates substantial conformance to the CARF standards. It has a history of excellence in service delivery, is well respected by the community, and appears to have the expertise and financial resources to continue to deliver quality services to the residents of central Arkansas. The board, administration, and staff members aggressively seek new ways to provide traditional services and new ways to serve the community. Independent Living Services appears to be formulating appropriate plans to deal with the new opportunities and challenges presented by recently announced changes in the funding mechanism used by the state of Arkansas Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDDS). The board, administration, and staff

members have worked very hard to effectively address the areas for improvement identified in the previous CARF survey report. The management and staff members were receptive to the consultation and other feedback provided during this survey and expressed their strong commitment to the organization's ongoing performance improvement.

Independent Living Services, Inc., has earned a Three-Year Accreditation. The board, administration, and staff members are recognized for their efforts in pursuit of international accreditation. They are encouraged to use their resources to address the opportunities for improvement noted in this report and to continue to utilize the CARF standards on an ongoing basis as guidelines for continuous quality improvement.

SECTION 1. ASPIRE TO EXCELLENCE®

A. Leadership

Principle Statement

CARF-accredited organizations identify leadership that embraces the values of accountability and responsibility to the individual organization's stated mission. The leadership demonstrates corporate social responsibility.

Key Areas Addressed

- Leadership structure

- Leadership guidance

- Commitment to diversity

- Corporate responsibility

- Corporate compliance

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

C. Strategic Planning

Principle Statement

CARF-accredited organizations establish a foundation for success through strategic planning focused on taking advantage of strengths and opportunities and addressing weaknesses and threats.

Key Areas Addressed

- Strategic planning considers stakeholder expectations and environmental impacts

- Written strategic plan sets goals

- Plan is implemented, shared, and kept relevant

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

D. Input from Persons Served and Other Stakeholders

Principle Statement

CARF-accredited organizations continually focus on the expectations of the persons served and other stakeholders. The standards in this subsection direct the organization's focus to soliciting, collecting, analyzing, and using input from all stakeholders to create services that meet or exceed the expectations of the persons served, the community, and other stakeholders.

Key Areas Addressed

- Ongoing collection of information from a variety of sources

- Analysis and integration into business practices

- Leadership response to information collected

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

E. Legal Requirements

Principle Statement

CARF-accredited organizations comply with all legal and regulatory requirements.

Key Areas Addressed

- Compliance with all legal/regulatory requirements

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

F. Financial Planning and Management

Principle Statement

CARF-accredited organizations strive to be financially responsible and solvent, conducting fiscal management in a manner that supports their mission, values, and annual performance objectives. Fiscal practices adhere to established accounting principles and business practices. Fiscal management covers daily operational cost management and incorporates plans for long-term solvency.

Key Areas Addressed

- Budget(s) prepared, shared, and reflective of strategic planning

- Financial results reported/compared to budgeted performance

- Organization review

- Fiscal policies and procedures

- Review of service billing records and fee structure

- Financial review/audit

- Safeguarding funds of persons served

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

G. Risk Management

Principle Statement

CARF-accredited organizations engage in a coordinated set of activities designed to control threats to their people, property, income, goodwill, and ability to accomplish goals.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Identification of loss exposures

■ Development of risk management plan

■ Adequate insurance coverage

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

H. Health and Safety

Principle Statement

CARF-accredited organizations maintain healthy, safe, and clean environments that support quality services and minimize risk of harm to persons served, personnel, and other stakeholders.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Inspections

■ Emergency procedures

■ Access to emergency first aid

■ Competency of personnel in safety procedures

■ Reporting/reviewing critical incidents

■ Infection control

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

I. Human Resources

Principle Statement

CARF-accredited organizations demonstrate that they value their human resources. It should be evident that personnel are involved and engaged in the success of the organization and the persons they serve.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Adequate staffing

■ Verification of background/credentials

■ Recruitment/retention efforts

■ Personnel skills/characteristics

■ Annual review of job descriptions/performance

■ Policies regarding students/volunteers, if applicable

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

Consultation

■ Although the general job functions of each employee are addressed in the annual performance evaluation, it is suggested that the specific job responsibilities included in the job description also be addressed. This might be easily accomplished by directly addressing the job function items in the margin of the job description, which is attached to the back of the evaluation instrument. This could allow the employee and supervisor to share talking points regarding the performance on specific job requirements.

J. Technology

Principle Statement

CARF-accredited organizations plan for the use of technology to support and advance effective and efficient service and business practices.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Written technology and system plan

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

K. Rights of Persons Served

Principle Statement

CARF-accredited organizations protect and promote the rights of all persons served. This commitment guides the delivery of services and ongoing interactions with the persons served.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Communication of rights

■ Policies that promote rights

■ Complaint, grievance, and appeals policy

■ Annual review of complaints

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

L. Accessibility

Principle Statement

CARF-accredited organizations promote accessibility and the removal of barriers for the persons served and other stakeholders.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Written accessibility plan(s)

■ Status report regarding removal of identified barriers

■ Requests for reasonable accommodations

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

M. Performance Measurement and Management

Principle Statement

CARF-accredited organizations are committed to continually improving their organizations and service delivery to the persons served. Data are collected and information is used to manage and improve service delivery.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Information collection, use, and management

■ Setting and measuring performance indicators

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

N. Performance Improvement

Principle Statement

The dynamic nature of continuous improvement in a CARF-accredited organization sets it apart from other organizations providing similar services. CARF-accredited organizations share and provide the persons served and other interested stakeholders with ongoing information about their actual performance as a business entity and their ability to achieve optimal outcomes for the persons served through their programs and services.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Proactive performance improvement

■ Performance information shared with all stakeholders

Recommendations
N.1.c.(2)
N.1.c.(3)

Independent Living Services has a very comprehensive and well-designed performance measurement and management system. A written annual analysis analyzes performance indicators in relation to performance targets, including service effectiveness and efficiency, service access, and the satisfaction of the consumers and other stakeholders. It addresses extenuating circumstances that might impact performance and identifies areas for performance improvement. It is recommended that the areas identified as needing performance improvement in the written performance analysis result in an action plan to address the improvements needed to reach established or revised performance targets and outline actions taken or changes made to improve performance.

N.3.a.(1)
N.3.a.(3)

The organization shares performance information with the staff members in order to effect performance improvement. It is recommended that it communicate accurate performance information to the consumers and other stakeholders according to the needs of the specific group, including the format, content, and timeliness of the information communicated. Graphs might be used to pictorially display the accomplishment of the performance indicators.

SECTION 2. QUALITY INDIVIDUALIZED SERVICES AND SUPPORTS

A. Program/Service Structure

Principle Statement

A fundamental responsibility of the organization is to provide a comprehensive program structure. The staffing is designed to maximize opportunities for the persons served to obtain and participate in the services provided.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Services are person centered and individualized

■ Persons are given information about the organization's purposes and ability to address desired outcomes

■ Documented scope of services shared with stakeholders

■ Service delivery based on accepted field practices

■ Communication for effective service delivery

■ Entrance/exit/transition criteria

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

B. Individual-Centered Service Planning, Design, and Delivery

Principle Statement

Improvement of the quality of an individual's services/supports requires a focus on the person and/or family served and their identified strengths, abilities, needs, and preferences. The organization's services are designed around the identified needs and desires of the persons served, are responsive to their expectations, and are relevant to their maximum participation in the environments of their choice.

The person served participates in decision making, directing, and planning that affects his or her life. Efforts to include the person served in the direction or delivery of those services/ supports are evident. The service environment reflects identified cultural needs, practices, and diversity. The person served is given information about the purposes of the organization.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Services are person-centered and individualized

■ Persons are given information about the organization's purposes and ability to address desired outcomes

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

C. Medication Monitoring and Management

Key Areas Addressed

■ Current, complete records of medications used by persons served

■ Written procedures for storage and safe handling of medications

■ Educational resources and advocacy for persons served in decision making

■ Physician review of medication use

■ Training and education for persons served regarding medications

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

D. Employment Services Principle Standards

Principle Statement

An organization seeking CARF accreditation in the area of employment services provides individualized services and supports to achieve identified employment outcomes. The array of services and supports may include:

■ Identification of employment opportunities and resources in the local job market.

■ Development of viable work skills that match workforce needs within the geographic area.

■ Development of realistic employment goals.

■ Establishment of service plans to achieve employment outcomes.

■ Identification of resources and supports to achieve and maintain employment.

■ Coordination of and referral to employment-related services and supports.

The organization maintains its strategic positioning in the employment sector of the community by designing and continually improving its services based on input from the persons served and from employers in the local job market, and managing results of the organization's outcomes management system. The provision of quality employment services requires a continuous focus on the persons served and the personnel needs of employers in the organization's local job market.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Goals of the persons served

■ Personnel needs of local employers

■ Community resources available

■ Economic trends in the local employment sector

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

F. Community Services Principle Standards

Key Areas Addressed

■ Access to community resources and services

■ Enhanced quality of life

■ Community inclusion

■ Community participation

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

SECTION 3. EMPLOYMENT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

Principle Statement

An organization seeking CARF accreditation in the area of employment and community services assists the persons served through an individualized person-centered process to obtain access to the services, supports, and resources of their choice to achieve their desired outcomes. This may be accomplished by direct service provision, linkages to existing generic opportunities and natural supports in the community, or any combination of these. The persons served are included in their communities to the degree they desire.

The organization provides the persons served with information so that they may make informed choices and decisions. Although we use the phrase *person served*, this may also include *family served*, as appropriate to the service and the individual.

The services and supports are arranged and changed as necessary to meet the identified desires of the persons served. Service designs address identified individual, family, socioeconomic, and cultural preferences.

Depending on the program's scope of services, expected results from these services/supports may include:

■ Increased inclusion in community activities.

■ Increased or maintained ability to perform activities of daily living.

■ Increased self-direction, self-determination, self-reliance, and self-esteem.

■ Increased independence.

■ Increased employment options.

- Employment obtained and maintained.

- Competitive employment.

- Economic self-sufficiency.

G. Organizational Employment Services

Principle Statement

Organizational employment services are designed to provide paid work to the persons served in locations owned, leased, rented, or managed by the service provider. A critical component and value of organizational employment services is to use the capacity of the organization's employment and training service design to create opportunities for persons to achieve desired employment outcomes in their community of choice.

Service models are flexible and may include a variety of enterprises and business designs, including organization-owned businesses such as retail stores, restaurants, shops, franchises, etc.

Key Areas Addressed

- Paid work provided by organization

- Employment goals of persons served

- Legal guidelines adherence

- Increased wages and skills

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

K. Community Housing

Principle Statement

Community housing addresses the desires, goals, strengths, abilities, needs, health, safety, and life span issues of the persons served, regardless of the home in which they live and/or the scope, duration, and intensity of the services they receive. The residences in which services/supports are provided are typically owned, rented, leased, or operated directly by the organization, or may be owned, rented, or leased by a third party, such as a governmental entity. Providers exercise control over these sites in terms of having direct or indirect responsibility for the physical conditions of the facility.

Community housing is provided in partnership with individuals. These services/supports are designed to assist the persons served to achieve success in and satisfaction with community living. They may be temporary or long-term in nature. The services/supports are focused on home and

community integration and engagement in productive activities. Community housing enhances the independence, dignity, personal choice, and privacy of the persons served. For persons in alcohol and other drug programs, these services/supports are focused on providing sober living environments to increase the likelihood of sobriety and abstinence and to decrease the potential for relapse.

Community housing programs may be referred to as group homes, halfway houses, three-quarter way houses, recovery residences, sober housing, domestic violence or homeless shelters, and safe houses. These programs may be located in rural or urban settings and in houses, apartments, townhouses, or other residential settings owned, rented, leased, or operated by the organization. They may include congregate living facilities and clustered homes/apartments in multiple-unit settings. These residences are often physically integrated into the community, and every effort is made to ensure that they approximate other homes in their neighborhoods in terms of size and number of individuals.

Community housing may include either or both of the following:

■ Transitional living that provides interim supports and services for persons who are at risk of institutional placement, persons transitioning from institutional settings, or persons who are homeless. Transitional living is typically provided for six to twelve months and can be offered in congregate settings that may be larger than residences typically found in the community.

■ Long-term housing that provides stable, supported community living or assists the persons served to obtain and maintain safe, affordable, accessible, and stable housing.

The residences in which Community Housing services are provided must be identified in the Intent to Survey. These sites will be visited during the survey process and identified in the survey report and accreditation outcome as a site at which the organization provides a Community Housing program.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Safe, secure, private location

■ In-home safety needs

■ Options to make changes in living arrangements

■ Support to persons as they explore alternatives

■ Access as desired to community activities

■ System for on-call availability of personnel

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

L. Supported Living

Principle Statement

Supported living addresses the desires, goals, strengths, abilities, needs, health, safety, and life span issues of persons usually living in their own homes (apartments, townhouses, or other residential settings). Supported living services are generally long-term in nature but may change in scope, duration, intensity, or location as the needs and preferences of individuals change over time.

Supported living refers to the support services provided to the person served, not the residence in which these services are provided. A sampling of people receiving services/supports in these sites will be visited as part of the interview process. Although the residence will generally be owned, rented, or leased by the person who lives there, the organization may occasionally rent or lease an apartment when the person served is unable to do so. Typically, in this situation the organization would co-sign or in other ways guarantee the lease or rental agreement; however, the person served would be identified as the tenant.

Supported living programs may be referred to as supported living services, independent living, supportive living, semi-independent living, and apartment living; and services/supports may include home health aide and personal care attendant services. Typically there would not be more than two or three persons served living in a residence, no house rules or structure would be applied to the living situation by the organization, and persons served can come and go as they please. Service planning often identifies the number of hours and types of support services provided.

The home or individual apartment of the person served, even when the organization holds the lease or rental agreement on behalf of the person served, is not included in the intent to survey or identified as a site on the accreditation outcome.

Key Areas Addressed

■ Safe, affordable, accessible housing chosen by the individual

■ In-home safety needs

■ Support personnel available based on needs

■ Supports available based on needs and desires

■ Living as desired in the community

■ Persons have opportunities to access community activities

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

P. Community Integration

Principle Statement

Community integration is designed to help persons to optimize their personal, social, and vocational competency to live successfully in the community. Persons served are active partners in determining the activities they desire to participate in. Therefore, the settings can be informal to reduce barriers between staff members and persons served. An activity center, a day program, a clubhouse, and a drop-in center are examples of community integration services. Consumer-run programs are also included.

Community integration provides opportunities for the community participation of the persons served. The organization defines the scope of these services and supports based on the identified needs and desires of the persons served. This may include services for persons who without this option are at risk of receiving services full-time in more restrictive environments with intensive levels of supports such as hospitalization or nursing home care. A person may participate in a variety of community life experiences or interactions that may include, but are not limited to:

- Leisure or recreational activities.

- Communication activities.

- Spiritual activities.

- Cultural activities.

- Pre-vocational experiences.

- Vocational pursuits.

- Development of work attitudes.

- Employment activities.

- Volunteerism in the community.

- Educational and training activities.

- Development of living skills.

- Health and wellness promotion.

- Orientation, mobility, and destination training.

- Access and utilization of public transportation.

- Interacting with volunteers from the community in program activities.

- Community collaborations and social connections developed by the program (partnerships with community entities such as senior centers, arts councils, etc.).

Key Areas Addressed

■ Opportunities for community participation

Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

PROGRAMS/SERVICES BY LOCATION

Independent Living Services, Inc.

615 East Robins
Conway, AR   72034

Community Integration
Organizational Employment Services
Supported Living

Independent Living Services, Inc.

1615 Independence Avenue
Conway, AR   72034

Administrative Location Only

Ross House

1619 Independence Avenue
Conway, AR   72034

Community Housing

South Boulevard

1805 South Boulevard
Conway, AR   72034

Community Housing

Dennison House

388 Dennison
Conway, AR   72034

Community Housing

Conway Apartments

608 South German
Conway, AR   72034

Community Housing

Greenbrier Apartments

96 Cedar Street
Greenbrier, AR   72034

Community Housing

Reynolds House

1617 Independence Avenue
Conway, AR 72034

Community Housing

Patterson House

1627 Tyler Street
Conway, AR 72034

Community Housing

Creative Living

350 Hubbard
Conway, AR 72034

Community Housing

Florentz Apartments

1125 Addybrook Lane
Conway, AR 72033

Community Housing