CERTIFICATE OF INITIAL PROFICIENCY (CIP)

The Certificate of Initial Proficiency (CIP) is a series of Modules that dives deeply into the skills and abilities required for success as a Direct Support Professional (DSP). Furthermore, it focuses on developing learners' individual confidence in that knowledge, in preparation for entering the DSP workforce. It is a direct follow-up to the Basic Certificate. CIP requires sixty (60) hours of instruction. Additionally, to complete CIP, learners are required to show competence in specific areas through the National Alliance for Direct Support Professionals' (NADSP) E-Badge Academy.

Module 100: Introduction to DSPaths

This Module provides an overview of and the reasoning behind NADSP's *Competency Areas*, fifteen standards developed and validated by a national coalition of key stakeholders in the intellectual and developmental disabilities field (I/DD). The Module also introduces NADSP's *Code of Ethics* and its nine principles. Finally, the Module presents the mission and structure of DSPaths, as well as the benchmarks for successful completion of CIP.

Module 101: Overview of Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities

This Module begins with an overview of four general types of disabilities and their most common causes. Next, the Module reviews five specific kinds of I/DD, including intellectual disabilities, cerebral palsy, autism spectrum disorders, Down syndrome, and epilepsy. Finally, the Module instructs learners in the basics of Medicaid Waiver Funding for individuals with I/DD.

Module 102: History of Services for Individuals with Disabilities

This Module reviews the trends in care for individuals with disabilities, from the mid-1800s to the present, as an examination of the persistent issues surrounding the rights, roles, and status of this segment of society. Learners review the growth of institutional care and social attitudes including those favoring segregation, involuntary sterilization, and euthanasia. The Module also discusses more recent developments in national policy and social movements affecting individuals with disabilities, such as social security amendments, the parents' movement, and the disability rights movement.

Module 103: Ethics on the Frontline

This Module moves in closer on NADSP's *Code of Ethics*, and focuses on how to use the *Code*'s nine principles for resolving decisions and dilemmas ethically. Scenarios and small group activities help learners apply the *Code* to realistic work situations.

Module 104: Supporting Health & Safety

This Module prepares learners to support individuals in managing their own health and safety. It involves a discussion of best practices for preparing and administering medication, and recognizing and responding to medication side effects, as well as the management and tracking of health care delivery, health status, and health-related assessments. Learners also investigate their own roles and responsibilities in teaching and encouraging healthy daily diets.

Module 105: Understanding & Utilizing Assessments

This Module takes learners through the assessments used in the human services field, including the formal and informal evaluations covering educational and academic performance; vocational skills and aptitudes; psychological, behavioral, and medical status; and independent living skills. Learners also discuss ways to prepare individuals for assessments, and approaches for assisting their participation. The Module also presents potential ethical problems that can arise before, during, or after assessment processes.

Module 106: The Direct Support Professional as Teacher

This Module outlines and discusses the teaching skills essential for the work of an effective and competent DSP. Learners investigate concepts related to functions of the intellect and of "multiple intelligences," with a strong focus on understanding and applying their own preferred learning styles and the learning styles of others. Learners also review the use of multi-sensory instruction to help individuals process information and practice new skills.

Module 107: Utilizing Augmented Alternative Communication Systems

This Module provides learners with an overview of augmented alternative communication (AAC) systems and their uses, from unaided (non-electronic) AAC systems and aided (electronic) AAC systems. This range includes both low-tech and high-tech aids, all of which DSPs may create for or adapt to the individuals they support.

Module 108: Interpersonal Communication

This Module discusses techniques of effective communication and tools for achieving mutual understanding. Learners identify barriers to successful listening, and the traits of a great listener. Role-play activities investigate four approaches to communication and emphasize the skills and behaviors of an assertive communicator, particularly for use in difficult situations.

Module 109: Individual Service Planning & Self-Determination

This Module focuses on the components of an Individual Service Plan (ISP), so that learners understand and apply the components in their support of individuals with I/DD. Learners work together in activities designed to develop their skills in gaining information about individuals' strengths, preferences, and dreams. Learners discuss the elements, goals, and processes of the ISP and the importance of facilitating natural partnerships in the design of supports: these better assist individuals in achieving greater levels of power and control in their lives.

Module 110: Self-Determination & Supporting Individuals in Achieving Their Dreams and Goals

This Module guides learners to a thorough understanding of self-determination and self-advocacy as these concepts relate to the individuals they support. Learners discuss the four principles of self-determination and obstacles to it, and work in groups to identify and describe key components of realizing more robust levels of self-determination.

Module 111: Community Living Skills & Supports – Making It Happen

This Module uses the "Success Triangle" to illustrate the three areas (self-esteem, education, and supports) competent DSPs address and evaluate when facilitating individuals' community connections and involvement. Learners investigate self-esteem, self-fulfilling prophecy, learned helplessness, and learned hopefulness, and learn about prioritizing the facilitation of "natural," community-based supports over paid supports whenever possible. Learners also revisit the qualities of the DSP as teacher, in support of individuals living successfully in their communities and achieving their goals.

Module 112: Facilitating & Supporting Community Inclusion

In this Module, learners discuss the importance of and reasoning behind assisting individuals with I/DD growing connections within their communities, including the practical and emotional benefits of assuming valued social roles. Learners investigate the concepts of "Social Guide" and "Community Builder" and how those are part of the support they provide as DSPs.

Module 113: Providing Behavioral Supports & Principles of Positive Intervention Culture

This Module discusses challenging behaviors and their analysis, with an emphasis on techniques and tools for understanding the functions or meanings driving those behaviors (for challenging behaviors to persist over time, they must be meeting some need). Learners discuss the components of successful behavior support techniques, and review the importance of team processes – and that helping an individual with challenging behaviors is dependent on the existence of positive and supportive relationships.

Module 114: Unusual Incidents, Major Unusual Incidents & Incident Report Writing

This Module guides learners to a thorough understanding of the rules and definitions of Unusual Incidents (UIs) and Major Unusual Incidents (MUIs), and assists them in understanding the determination of what needs to be documented in an UI or MUI circumstance. Learners work together to identify factors which can negatively impact the completeness and accuracy of documentation, including those affecting memory and recall, and focus on ways to reduce those factors. Module activities and short video scenarios assist in these lessons.

Module 115: Fundamentals of Effective Documentation

The focus of this Module is best practices in professional documentation. Learners identify types of documentation required on the job and the purpose of each type. The Module also reviews ten guidelines that assure documentation adheres to legal, ethical, and programmatic standards and rules.

Module 116: Providing Personal Care with Dignity

This Module describes and explains the DSP's role in meeting the daily personal care needs of the supported individual, including oral hygiene, bathing, dressing, shaving, and lifting and transferring an individual safely. The Module also identifies numerous assistive devices that help make these processes safer, more thorough, and more efficient; some devices also enhance the supported individual's control and independence.

Module 117: Team Dynamics & Communication

This Module investigates the value of the team and teamwork. Learners discuss the stages of team development and common team and individual behaviors associated with each stage, as well as the traits of a good team member and elements of a great team. Activities help illustrate effective team communication and how to work through barriers. Role-playing assists learners' skills in giving and receiving constructive criticism within the team.

Module 118: The Profession of Direct Support in Disability Services

This Module defines and discusses professionalism in direct support practice and explains how professionalism is part of NADSP's *Code of Ethics*. Learners review time management and organization techniques to increase their professional efficiency and effectiveness. In this Module learners participate in activities designed to assist them to clarify their professional mission and goals in order to determine whether the tasks they spend their time on at work are likely to enable them to achieve their mission and goals.

Module 119: Supporting a Person to Identify & Achieve Vocational Goals

This Module begins with a review of the *Competency Areas* related to vocational, educational, and career support, and how the *Competency Areas* can underpin assisting individuals with career planning and career development.

For more information, contact inquiries@oadsp.org.