

**CARF Accreditation Report  
for  
The Arc of Opportunity  
Three-Year Accreditation**



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## About CARF

CARF is an independent, nonprofit accreditor of health and human services, enhancing the lives of persons served worldwide.

The accreditation process applies CARF's internationally recognized standards during a site survey conducted by peer surveyors. Accreditation, however, is an ongoing process that distinguishes a provider's service delivery and signals to the public that the provider is committed to continuous performance improvement, responsive to feedback, and accountable to the community and its other stakeholders.

CARF accreditation promotes providers' demonstration of value and Quality Across the Lifespan® of millions of persons served through application of rigorous organizational and program standards organized around the ASPIRE to Excellence® continuous quality improvement framework. CARF accreditation has been the recognized benchmark of quality health and human services for more than 50 years.

For more information or to contact CARF, please visit [www.carf.org/contact-us](http://www.carf.org/contact-us).

**Organization**

The Arc of Opportunity  
564 Main Street  
Fitchburg, MA 01420

**Organizational Leadership**

Angela Chery, Chief Program Officer  
Mary Heafy, President & CEO

**Survey Number**

178695

**Survey Date(s)**

January 25, 2024–January 26, 2024

**Surveyor(s)**

Kathy Leuelling, Administrative  
Kara Kimes, Program

**Program(s)/Service(s) Surveyed**

Community Integration  
Services Coordination

**Previous Survey**

January 7, 2021–January 8, 2021  
Three-Year Accreditation

**Accreditation Decision****Three-Year Accreditation**

**Expiration: February 28, 2027**

# Executive Summary

This report contains the findings of CARF's site survey of The Arc of Opportunity conducted January 25, 2024–January 26, 2024. This report includes the following information:

- Documentation of the accreditation decision and the basis for the decision as determined by CARF's consideration of the survey findings.
- Identification of the specific program(s)/service(s) and location(s) to which this accreditation decision applies.
- Identification of the CARF surveyor(s) who conducted the survey and an overview of the CARF survey process and how conformance to the standards was determined.
- Feedback on the organization's strengths and recognition of any areas where the organization demonstrated exemplary conformance to the standards.
- Documentation of the specific sections of the CARF standards that were applied on the survey.
- Recommendations for improvement in any areas where the organization did not meet the minimum requirements to demonstrate full conformance to the standards.
- Any consultative suggestions documented by the surveyor(s) to help the organization improve its program(s)/service(s) and business operations.

## Accreditation Decision

On balance, The Arc of Opportunity demonstrated substantial conformance to the standards. The Arc of Opportunity has a long history of supporting participants and families through a variety of services. Services have expanded over the years to include day habilitation, community-based day supports, and adult family care. The board of directors and leadership are dedicated to the mission of The Arc of Opportunity, ensuring that the participants and families have the support needed to live and succeed in their community. The organization has a strong strategic plan that is integrated with the business plan and performance measurement plan to provide a cohesive guide for daily operations and long-term plans. There are opportunities for improvement identified in the recommendations in this report, including updates to the ethics policies, annual external inspections, the technology plan, action plans for service delivery improvement, and written procedures related to disposal of medications.

The Arc of Opportunity appears likely to maintain and/or improve its current method of operation and demonstrates a commitment to ongoing quality improvement. The Arc of Opportunity is required to submit a post-survey Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) to CARF that addresses all recommendations identified in this report.

**The Arc of Opportunity has earned a Three-Year Accreditation.** The leadership team and staff are complimented and congratulated for this achievement. In order to maintain this accreditation, throughout the term of accreditation, the organization is required to:

- Submit annual reporting documents and other required information to CARF, as detailed in the Accreditation Policies and Procedures section in the standards manual.
- Maintain ongoing conformance to CARF's standards, satisfy all accreditation conditions, and comply with all accreditation policies and procedures, as they are published and made effective by CARF.

# Survey Details

## Survey Participants

The survey of The Arc of Opportunity was conducted by the following CARF surveyor(s):

- Kathy Leuelling, Administrative
- Kara Kimes, Program

CARF considers the involvement of persons served to be vital to the survey process. As part of the accreditation survey for all organizations, CARF surveyors interact with and conduct direct, confidential interviews with consenting current and former persons served in the program(s)/service(s) for which the organization is seeking accreditation. In addition, as applicable and available, interviews may be conducted with family members and/or representatives of the persons served such as guardians, advocates, or members of their support system.

Interviews are also conducted with individuals associated with the organization, as applicable, which may include:

- The organization's leadership, such as board members, executives, owners, and managers.
- Business unit resources, such as finance and human resources.
- Personnel who serve and directly interact with persons served in the program(s)/service(s) for which the organization is seeking accreditation.
- Other stakeholders, such as referral sources, payers, insurers, and fiscal intermediaries.
- Community constituents and governmental representatives.

## Survey Activities

Achieving CARF accreditation involves demonstrating conformance to the applicable CARF standards, evidenced through observable practices, verifiable results over time, and comprehensive supporting documentation. The survey of The Arc of Opportunity and its program(s)/service(s) consisted of the following activities:

- Confidential interviews and direct interactions, as outlined in the previous section.
- Direct observation of the organization's operations and service delivery practices.
- Observation of the organization's location(s) where services are delivered.
- Review of organizational documents, which may include policies; plans; written procedures; promotional materials; governing documents, such as articles of incorporation and bylaws; financial statements; and other documents necessary to determine conformance to standards.
- Review of documents related to program/service design, delivery, outcomes, and improvement, such as program descriptions, records of services provided, documentation of reviews of program resources and services conducted, and program evaluations.
- Review of records of current and former persons served.

## Program(s)/Service(s) Surveyed

The survey addressed by this report is specific to the following program(s)/service(s):

- Community Integration
- Services Coordination

A list of the organization's accredited program(s)/service(s) by location is included at the end of this report.

## Representations and Constraints

The accreditation decision and survey findings contained in this report are based on an on-balance consideration of the information obtained by the surveyor(s) during the site survey. Any information that was unavailable, not presented, or outside the scope of the survey was not considered and, had it been considered, may have affected the contents of this report. If at any time CARF subsequently learns or has reason to believe that the organization did not participate in the accreditation process in good faith or that any information presented was not accurate, truthful, or complete, CARF may modify the accreditation decision, up to and including revocation of accreditation.

## Survey Findings

This report provides a summary of the organization's strengths and identifies the sections of the CARF standards that were applied on the survey and the findings in each area. In conjunction with its evaluation of conformance to the specific program/service standards, CARF assessed conformance to its business practice standards, referred to as Section 1. ASPIRE to Excellence, which are designed to support the delivery of the program(s)/service(s) within a sound business operating framework to promote long-term success.

The specific standards applied from each section vary based on a variety of factors, including, but not limited to, the scope(s) of the program(s)/service(s), population(s) served, location(s), methods of service delivery, and survey type. Information about the specific standards applied on each survey is included in the standards manual and other instructions that may be provided by CARF.

## Areas of Strength

CARF found that The Arc of Opportunity demonstrated the following strengths:

- The Arc of Opportunity is a highly respected organization providing supports for adults with disabilities through a variety of services. The organization benefits from a strong board of directors that is actively involved in the governance and strategic planning processes. The board has a good relationship with the CEO and executive leadership team with open communication and sharing of information needed for effective governance. The board is congratulated on its efforts to ensure diversity with respect to experience and culture.
- The executive and senior leadership teams provide cohesive leadership for the business operations and service delivery of the organization. The teams have a good balance of leaders with significant tenure and newer team members, ensuring a decision-making process that considers multiple perspectives. The CEO and executive team have taken steps to develop plans and people for succession at all levels of leadership and management. The responsible, accountable, consulted, and informed (RACI) model for making decisions empowers senior leaders to take action and manage daily operations, freeing the executive team to focus on building partnerships and developing resources.

- The organization has made significant efforts to improve diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB). A consultant assisted with interviews to identify potential bias, develop training on unconscious bias, and build bias questions into the interview process. The organization’s goal is to become an organization that reflects the communities it supports, both in terms of the participants and staff members, and be welcoming to individuals from all cultures.
- The organization is commended for developing a strategic planning process that includes input from the participants, staff members, board of directors, and other stakeholders. The direction set from the board and staff retreat was to move from a tactical plan to a greater focus on long-term strategy. The planning process resulted in three major goals with a series of objectives to guide implementation and progress. The strategic plan is supplemented with a tactical business plan that focuses more on day-to-day operations.
- The organization is commended for achieving consistently high satisfaction results on surveys from the participants, families, and other stakeholders. These results are even more impressive given the high rate of return on surveys. A significant effort has been made to ensure that everyone contributes and has an opportunity to provide input. Most surveys are sent electronically with follow-up calls, especially for those who may not be comfortable with electronics. Staff members from outside of the program area also assist the participants in completing surveys, as needed. This high rate of return gives the organization confidence that results are valid and reliable, ensuring that actions taken as a result of the input are based on inclusive data.
- The day program has a setting that “feels like home” to many of the participants and their families. It has state-of-the-art services in a bright and welcoming facility. The participants and families feel safe with the people supporting them at the day program. Participants are able to join committees, such as the leadership team, holiday planning committee, and human rights committee, and attend self-advocacy trips. In attending these committees, they are able to help plan their services.
- The Arc of Opportunity has implemented a Saturday recreational program that is not state funded. The program meets every Saturday to do various community activities, such as pottery and visiting museums. Participants can choose which activities to attend. There are even scholarships available for the participants who would not be able to afford the program otherwise.
- The Arc of Opportunity has developed relationships with local community resources, such as the art museum, schools, and a local pizzeria. The participants are able to volunteer or interact with these community connections on a regular basis, building a strong sense of community for the participants. They also attend adaptive skiing, ice skating, water skiing, hiking, etc., with a local organization that provides the needed adaptive equipment.
- The Arc of Opportunity has a dedicated adult foster care program that is meeting the needs and wants of the participants through caring staff members who support the families and providers. Participants and families expressed appreciation for the program and person-centered program managers who visit them regularly.

## Opportunities for Quality Improvement

The CARF survey process identifies opportunities for continuous improvement, a core concept of “aspiring to excellence.” This section of the report lists the sections of the CARF standards that were applied on the survey, including a description of the business practice area and/or the specific program(s)/service(s) surveyed and a summary of the key areas addressed in that section of the standards.

In this section of the report, a recommendation identifies any standard for which CARF determined that the organization did not meet the minimum requirements to demonstrate full conformance. All recommendations must be addressed in a QIP submitted to CARF.

In addition, consultation may be provided for areas of or specific standards where the surveyor(s) documented suggestions that the organization may consider to improve its business or service delivery practices. Note that consultation may be offered for areas of specific standards that do not have any recommendations. Such consultation does not indicate nonconformance to the standards; it is intended to offer ideas that the organization might find helpful in its ongoing quality improvement efforts. The organization is not required to address consultation.

When CARF surveyors visit an organization, their role is that of independent peer reviewers, and their goal is not only to gather and assess information to determine conformance to the standards, but also to engage in relevant and meaningful consultative dialogue. Not all consultation or suggestions discussed during the survey are noted in this report. The organization is encouraged to review any notes made during the survey and consider the consultation or suggestions that were discussed.

During the process of preparing for a CARF accreditation survey, an organization may conduct a detailed self-assessment and engage in deliberations and discussions within the organization as well as with external stakeholders as it considers ways to implement and use the standards to guide its quality improvement efforts. The organization is encouraged to review these discussions and deliberations as it considers ways to implement innovative changes and further advance its business and service delivery practices.

## **Section 1. ASPIRE to Excellence®**

### **1.A. Leadership**

#### **Description**

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 and responsibilities
- Person-centered philosophy
- Organizational guidance
- Leadership accessibility
- Cultural competency and diversity
- Corporate responsibility
- Organizational fundraising, if applicable

#### **Recommendations**

##### **1.A.6.a.(6)(e)**

##### **1.A.6.b.(2)(a)**

##### **1.A.6.b.(2)(b)**

Although many areas are addressed in the ethical codes of conduct, it is recommended that corporate responsibility efforts include written ethical codes of conduct in the area of service delivery, including witnessing of legal documents. In addition, corporate responsibility efforts should include written procedures to deal with allegations of violations of ethical codes, including timeframes that are adequate for prompt consideration and result in timely decisions.



## 1.C. Strategic Planning

### Description

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

- Environmental considerations
- Strategic plan development, implementation, and periodic review

### Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

### Consultation

- The strategic plan for 2022-2027 includes three goals with several objectives for each goal. The goals are broad, overarching statements. Progress is assessed by completion of the objectives/action plans; however, completion of an objective/action plan does not necessarily ensure progress toward the goal. The organization might consider developing metrics for each goal that are monitored to help determine whether the objective/action plan is effectively leading to progress on the overall goal.

## 1.D. Input from Persons Served and Other Stakeholders

### Description

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

- Collection of input from persons served, personnel, and other stakeholders
- Integration of input into business practices and planning

### Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

## 1.E. Legal Requirements

### Description

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

### Key Areas Addressed

- Compliance with obligations
- Response to legal action
- Confidentiality and security of records

### Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

## 1.F. Financial Planning and Management

### Description

CARF-accredited organizations strive to be financially responsible and solvent, conducting fiscal management in a manner that supports their mission, values, and 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

- Budgets
- Review of financial results and relevant factors
- Fiscal policies and procedures
- Reviews of bills for services and fee structures, if applicable
- Review/audit of financial statements
- Safeguarding funds of persons served, if applicable

### Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

## 1.G. Risk Management

### Description

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

- Risk management plan implementation and periodic review
- Adequate insurance coverage
- Media relations and social media procedures
- Reviews of contract services

### Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

## 1.H. Health and Safety

### Description

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

- Healthy and safe environment
- Competency-based training on health and safety procedures and practices
- Emergency and evacuation procedures
- Access to first aid and emergency information

- Critical incidents
- Infections and communicable diseases
- Health and safety inspections

### **Recommendations**

- 1.H.15.a.(1)**
- 1.H.15.a.(2)**
- 1.H.15.b.(1)**
- 1.H.15.b.(2)**
- 1.H.15.b.(3)**

It is recommended that comprehensive health and safety inspections be conducted at least annually by a qualified external authority and result in a written report that identifies the areas inspected, recommendations for areas needing improvement, and actions taken to respond to the recommendations. The organization has already contacted its insurance company and is working to schedule an inspection.

### **Consultation**

- The organization uses a series of exit signs and evacuation maps throughout the building. Due to the complex layout, the participants and visitors might benefit from a series of arrows to guide the exit path.

## **1.I. Workforce Development and Management**

### **Description**

CARF-accredited organizations demonstrate that they value their human resources and focus on aligning and linking human resources processes, procedures, and initiatives with the strategic objectives of the organization. Organizational effectiveness depends on the organization’s ability to develop and manage the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behavioral expectations of its workforce. The organization describes its workforce, which is often composed of a diverse blend of human resources. Effective workforce development and management promote engagement and organizational sustainability and foster an environment that promotes the provision of services that center on enhancing the lives of persons served.

### **Key Areas Addressed**

- Composition of workforce
- Ongoing workforce planning
- Verification of backgrounds/credentials/fitness for duty
- Workforce engagement and development
- Performance appraisals
- Succession planning

### **Recommendations**

There are no recommendations in this area.

### **Consultation**

- The organization is in the process of converting systems for completing performance appraisals from a performance map with three progress reviews to the ADP® system that allows for tracking progress and providing updates within the ADP system. The organization is encouraged to fully implement the new system and ensure that the policy and procedures are updated to reflect the new expectations.

## 1.J. Technology

### Description

Guided by leadership and a shared vision, CARF-accredited organizations are committed to exploring and, within their resources, acquiring and implementing technology systems and solutions that will support and enhance:

- Business processes and practices.
- Privacy and security of protected information.
- Service delivery.
- Performance management and improvement.
- Satisfaction of persons served, personnel, and other stakeholders.

### Key Areas Addressed

- Ongoing assessment of technology and data use, including input from stakeholders
- Technology and system plan implementation and periodic review
- Technology policies and procedures

### Recommendations

- 1.J.2.a.(2)
- 1.J.2.b.(1)
- 1.J.2.b.(2)
- 1.J.2.b.(3)
- 1.J.2.b.(4)
- 1.J.2.b.(5)
- 1.J.2.b.(6)
- 1.J.2.b.(7)
- 1.J.2.c.(1)
- 1.J.2.c.(2)
- 1.J.2.c.(3)
- 1.J.2.c.(4)
- 1.J.2.c.(5)
- 1.J.2.c.(6)
- 1.J.2.d.
- 1.J.2.e.
- 1.J.2.f.

The technology plan primarily addresses current use of technology and technology policy. It is recommended that the organization's implemented technology and system plan also be based on identification of gaps and opportunities in the use of technology; include goals, priorities, technology acquisition, technology maintenance, technology replacement, resources needed to accomplish the goals, and timeframes; support the business processes of the organization, protection of sensitive data, efficient operations, effective service delivery, access to services, and performance improvement; align with the organization's strategic plan; be reviewed at least annually for relevance; and be updated as needed.

### Consultation

- The organization tests restoration of data and information from the backup system annually. As the organization has moved to a primarily cloud-based system and is in the process of moving the financial software to the cloud, conducting an annual test of the business continuity plan using a tabletop exercise involving both service delivery and technology/business functions might be a valuable added tool to ensure that the organization considers the role of technology in the event of a major disaster that could destroy hardware and disrupt internet access.

## 1.K. Rights of Persons Served

### Description

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

- Policies that promote rights of persons served
- Communication of rights to persons served
- Formal complaints by persons served

### Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

## 1.L. Accessibility

### Description

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

### Key Areas Addressed

- Assessment of accessibility needs and identification of barriers
- Accessibility plan implementation and periodic review
- Requests for reasonable accommodations

### Recommendations

There are no recommendations in this area.

### Consultation

- The organization currently completes the assessment of accessibility needs through observation and input from the participants, staff members, and other stakeholders and has identified barriers to accessibility. The organization might consider the use of a checklist, especially as it relates to identifying barriers other than those outlined in the ADA checklists. The use of a checklist that addresses communication, access to services, transportation, etc., could provide guided questions for consideration and identify barriers that might not be recognized in a less formal assessment.

## 1.M. Performance Measurement and Management

### Description

CARF-accredited organizations demonstrate a culture of accountability by developing and implementing performance measurement and management plans that produce information an organization can act on to improve results for the persons served, other stakeholders, and the organization itself.

The foundation for successful performance measurement and management includes:

- Leadership accountability and support.
- Mission-driven measurement.
- A focus on results achieved for the persons served.

- Meaningful engagement of stakeholders.
- An understanding of extenuating and influencing factors that may impact performance.
- A workforce that is knowledgeable about and engaged in performance measurement and management.
- An investment in resources to implement performance measurement and management.
- Measurement and management of business functions to sustain and enhance the organization.

### **Key Areas Addressed**

- Leadership accountability for performance measurement and management
- Identification of gaps and opportunities related to performance measurement and management
- Input from stakeholders
- Performance measurement and management plan
- Identification of objectives and performance indicators for service delivery
- Identification of objectives and performance indicators for priority business functions
- Personnel training on performance measurement and management

### **Recommendations**

There are no recommendations in this area.

### **Consultation**

- The organization has three documents that cover the required elements of the performance measurement and management plan. As the plan is reviewed, the organization is encouraged to develop one comprehensive plan that guides the performance measurement process. The organization is also encouraged to ensure that the plan outlines processes specific to the collection and analysis of data as it relates to the outcomes that may not be included in the quality assurance audits.

## **1.N. Performance Improvement**

### **Description**

CARF-accredited organizations demonstrate a culture of performance improvement through their commitment to proactive and ongoing review, analysis, reflection on their results in both service delivery and business functions, and transparency. The results of performance analysis are used to identify and implement data-driven actions to improve the quality of programs and services and to inform decision making. Performance information that is accurate and understandable to the target audience is shared with persons served, personnel, and other stakeholders in accordance with their interests and needs.

### **Key Areas Addressed**

- Analysis of service delivery performance
- Analysis of business function performance
- Identification of areas needing performance improvement
- Implementation of action plans
- Use of performance information to improve program/service quality and make decisions
- Communication of performance information

### **Recommendations**

**1.N.1.f.(2)**

**1.N.1.f.(3)**

**1.N.1.f.(4)**

The analysis of results for service delivery identifies areas needing improvement with action plans for some performance measures. It is recommended that the analysis of service delivery performance be used to develop an action plan(s) to address the improvements needed, implement the action plan(s), and determine whether the actions taken accomplished the intended results.

# Section 2. Quality Individualized Services and Supports

## Description

For an organization to achieve quality services, the persons served are active participants in the planning, implementation, and ongoing review and revision of the services offered. The organization's commitment to quality and the involvement of the persons served spans the entire time that the persons served are involved with services. The service planning process is individualized, establishing goals and measurable objectives that incorporate the unique strengths, abilities, needs, and preferences of the persons served. Services are responsive to the expectations of persons served and their desired outcomes from services, and are relevant to their maximum participation in the environments of their choice.

## 2.A. Program/Service Structure

### Description

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.

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

### Description

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 desired outcomes from services, and are relevant to their maximum participation in the environments of their choice.

The person served participates in decision making, directing, and planning that affect the person's life. Efforts to include the person served in the direction or delivery of those services/supports are evident.

### 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.

## Consultation

- Although The Arc of Opportunity uses LifeCourse tools in one area of service, it could benefit from the use of LifeCourse tools in all areas of services.

## 2.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

#### 2.C.2.d.

Although The Arc of Opportunity has a clear policy regarding the safe disposal of medication, this policy is not being followed as written. The organization is urged to ensure that it implements written procedures that address safe disposal. This could be accomplished by following the policy as written to safely dispose of medications in a sealed, impermeable container.

## 2.E. Community Services Principle Standards

### Description

An organization seeking CARF accreditation in the area of community services assists the persons and/or families served in obtaining access to the resources and services of their choice. The persons and/or families served are included in their communities to the degree they desire. This may be accomplished by direct service provision or linkages to existing opportunities and natural supports in the community.

The organization obtains information from the persons and/or families served regarding resources and services they want or require that will meet their identified needs, and offers an array of services it arranges for or provides. The organization provides the persons and/or families served with information so that they may make informed choices and decisions.

The services and supports are changed as necessary to meet the identified needs of the persons and/or families served and other stakeholders. Service designs address identified individual, family, socioeconomic, and cultural needs.

Expected results from these services may include:

- Increased or maintained inclusion in meaningful community activities.
- Increased or maintained ability to perform activities of daily living.
- Increased self-direction, self-determination, and self-reliance.
- Increased self-esteem.

### 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 4. Community Services

## Description

An organization seeking CARF accreditation in the area of 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, and self-reliance.
- Self-esteem.
- Housing opportunities.
- Community citizenship.
- Increased independence.
- Meaningful activities.
- Increased employment options.

## 4.G. Community Integration (COI)

### Description

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.
- 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.).

Some examples of the quality results desired by the different stakeholders of these services include:

- Community participation.
- Increased independence.
- Increased interdependence.
- Greater quality of life.
- Skill development.
- Slowing of decline associated with aging.
- Volunteer placement.
- Movement to employment.
- Center-based socialization activities during the day that enable persons to remain in their community residence.
- Activity alternatives to avoid or reduce time spent in more restrictive environments, such as hospitalization or nursing home care.

### **Key Areas Addressed**

- Opportunities for community participation

### **Recommendations**

There are no recommendations in this area.

## **4.J. Services Coordination (SC)**

### **Description**

Services coordination programs provide goal-oriented and individualized supports focusing on improved self-sufficiency for the persons served through assessment, planning, linkage, advocacy, coordination, and monitoring activities. Successful services coordination results in community opportunities and increased independence for the persons served. Programs may provide occasional supportive counseling and crisis intervention services, when allowed by regulatory or funding authorities.

Services coordination may be provided by an organization as part of its individual service planning and delivery, by a department or division within the organization that works with individuals who are internal and/or external to the organization, or by an organization with the sole purpose of providing community services coordination. Such programs are typically provided by qualified services coordinators or by case management teams.

Some examples of the quality results desired by the different stakeholders of these services include:

- Access to a variety of services/supports.
- Access to choices of services.
- Individualized services to meet needs.
- Persons achieving goals.
- Persons achieving independence.
- Access to vocational training.
- Persons achieving employment.
- Access to career development.

### **Key Areas Addressed**

- Goal-oriented and systematic process of advocacy
- Formation of linkages with community resources and services
- Coordination of services

### **Recommendations**

There are no recommendations in this area.

# Program(s)/Service(s) by Location

## The Arc of Opportunity

564 Main Street  
Fitchburg, MA 01420

Community Integration  
Services Coordination