

# INDEPENDENT MONITORING FOR QUALITY (IM4Q) Virtual Annual Statewide Training 2026 — July 21-22, 2026

Partnered with and funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) through the Institute on Disabilities at Temple University

## AGENDA— Tuesday July 21

### 9:00-9:15 WELCOME

### 9:15-9:30 OPENING REMARKS

- Valerie A. Arkoosh - Secretary, PA Department of Human Services

### 9:30-10:45 KEYNOTE ADDRESS

#### **All Of Me: Discovering Resilience Through Self-Acceptance**

- Madison Tevlin | Accessibility and Inclusion Advocate | Famed Content Creator Advocate | Model & Actor

Madison Tevlin has dedicated her work to dismantling the stigmas associated with Down syndrome, proving that it does not define her capabilities. Taking inspiration from her personal experiences, Madison shares with audiences around the world the notion that it starts with YOU! Discover how being your authentic self will lead you to become better leaders and collaborators.

### 10:45-11:00 BREAK (15 MIN)

### 11:00-12:15 WORKSHOP #1

#### **A. The Power and Potency of Social Capital**

Professionals and families in the disability support space struggle to ensure that children and adults with disabilities have opportunities. This session will explore the importance of social capital, starting with the traditional approaches to education and human services and illustrating why they have not been as successful as we would like. Using an interactive format, this presentation will explore what we know about social capital, and the impact it has on our lives. Participants will leave energized with clear tools and strategies for people to build more relationships.

#### **Presenter**

- Al Condeluci, PhD, Pittsburgh, PA

#### **B. Connecting the Dots: From the Survey to an Everyday Life**

Considerations can lead to meaningful change directly impacting the lives of individuals receiving services. This panel will discuss the successful collaborative efforts of moving one young man from a skilled nursing facility to his own home in the community.

#### **Presenters**

- Amy Austin, Amy Fisser and Ian Gebhard – The Arc Lancaster Lebanon
- Renee Zink – Lancaster County BHDS

#### **C. The Value of Sports, Recreation, and Leisure for a Good Life**

Sports, recreation, and leisure play a critical role in supporting a good life, yet they are often overlooked for people with disabilities. This panel will explore the impact of movement and inclusive recreation through real-life stories, existing



College of Education  
and Human Development

Institute on Disabilities

programs, and strategies implemented by Administrative Entities (AE) and ODP, including initiatives such as Move Your Way. Attendees will leave with practical ideas to expand opportunities in their own communities.

#### **Presenters**

- Lee Rader – Philadelphia County AE
- Joseph Hart – Office of Developmental Programs
- Kimberly Booz – Chester County
- Bryce Wooten – Self-Advocate/Public Speaker/Life Coach
- Lauren M. Foell – Montgomery County AE
- Kristin Rodriguez -- Berks County AE

#### **D. Interview Best Practices: Balancing Dignity, Respect and Collaboration**

This session focuses on strategies to address issues that may arise during IM4Q interviews that can impact participant privacy and the accuracy of truthful information. Emphasis is placed on creating a safe and supportive interview environment—whether conducted in person or via Zoom—that allows the participant to feel comfortable, confident, and able to share their honest perceptions of supports and services without influence or pressure. We will highlight best practices for ensuring the interview remains participant-focused while still respecting the collaboration and roles of those who provide supports. Attendees will learn how to recognize and respectfully address challenges as they arise during the interview process, including concerns related to privacy, outside influence, validity of information and disruptions.

#### **Presenter**

- Kelli Powers – Chatham University IM4Q Program

### 12:15-1:15 LUNCH

### 1:15-2:30 WORKSHOP #2

#### **A. Creating an Inclusive and Supportive Workplace for IM4Q Monitors**

We will be discussing the experiences of people with disabilities who work as IM4Q Monitors, highlighting the value they bring to the role and the impact meaningful employment has on their lives. Panelists will share personal perspectives about what the job means to them, workplace accommodations that have supported their success, and strategies programs have implemented to create inclusive and supportive work environments. Participants will gain insight into

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practical approaches for fostering accessibility, promoting independence, and ensuring people with disabilities have an opportunity to succeed as IM4Q Monitors.

**Presenters**

- Shannon Ludwig, Jason Landes, Kelli Johnson, and Beverly Buzzard – The Advocacy Alliance
- Reem Pepsin – UCP Job Coach

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**Presenter**

- Al Condeluci, PhD, Pittsburgh, PA

**C. Enhancing Independence Through Remote Supports: Practical Strategies and Real-World Impact in Pennsylvania**

Remote supports are transforming the way individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities access services, increase independence, and remain connected to their communities. This presentation will explore how remote support technology can enhance health and safety, promote self-direction, support employment and community participation, and provide greater flexibility for individuals, families, providers, and support teams within Pennsylvania’s ODP system. Attendees will gain practical insight into person-centered implementation strategies, real-world applications, and outcomes that demonstrate how remote supports can improve quality of life while promoting autonomy, dignity, and choice. The session will also highlight the importance of collaboration and coordination among providers, support coordinators, families, and natural supports to ensure remote supports are successfully integrated into an individual’s overall service plan and daily life.

**Presenter**

- Heather Easley and Season Jackson – SafeinHome

**D. The Providers/IM4Q Connection - How We Can Help One Another**

This session will discuss the important relationship between IM4Q and providers. Areas of discussion will be how does IM4Q intersect with Providers; what Providers can do to support IM4Q; what was learned from a Provider survey; how Providers access IM4Q reports on people interviewed they serve; and other intersections between the two of us.

**Presenters**

- Guy Caruso – Institute on Disabilities at Temple University
- Tim Sohosky – Rehabilitation and Community Providers Association (RCPA)
- Maureen Westcott – IM4Q Steering Committee

**2:30-2:45 BREAK (15 MIN)**

**2:45-4:00 KEYNOTE PRESENTATION**

**AI for People with Disabilities: Living Everyday Lives**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a tool that can help people with disabilities be more independent, make decisions and do more things on their own. In this session, self-advocates will share how they are using AI in real life. You will see real examples, simple tips, and live demonstrations. We will also talk about how to use AI safely and avoid exploitation. We will share what we have learned from training over 500 people to use AI effectively and safely. We will also show how AI can support Independent Monitors. AI can help with note taking and organizing information.

**Presenters**

- Dr. Mark Friedman – Disability Leader | Technology Trainer | Author
- David Taylor – Speaker | Peer Mentor | Advocate
- Katie Moore – Advocate | Digital Educator | Trainer

**4:00-5:00 NETWORKING AND SOCIAL RECEPTION**

Please join us for an opportunity to network with your fellow IM4Q attendees! Play some trivia games and try your luck by spinning the wheel for prizes! Grab a beverage and have a few laughs to end our day.

**Facilitators**

- Nancy LeClair – Vision for Equality
- Kelli Powers – Chatham University

**AGENDA Wednesday July 22**

**9:15–9:30 WELCOME**

**9:30-10:00 OPENING REMARKS**

- Kristen Ahrens – Deputy Secretary, Office of Developmental Programs, PA Department of Human Services

**10:00–11:15 KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

**The Loneliness Epidemic: Why “Someone To Tell It To” Matters More Than Ever**

- Michael Gingerich – Someone To Tell It To

In this keynote, Michael explores the critical role of human connection as a form of care. Drawing from years of experience co-founding Someone To Tell It To, and from real-life experiences living for and caring for a child with intellectual and emotional disabilities will highlight how the simple, yet powerful act of listening can become a lifeline—for those in need and for those who serve them. Participants will be invited to reconsider what it means to “help.” Moving beyond fixing or advising, this session will focus on the transformative impact of presence, empathy, and creating space where people feel seen, heard, and valued. Michael will share stories, insights, and practical

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approaches that professionals, caregivers, and supporters can integrate into their daily work—without adding to their already full plates. This keynote is both an invitation and a reminder: no one is meant to carry life alone. And in a world where loneliness is rising, the ability to be “someone to tell it to” may be one of the most important skills we can offer.

**11:15-11:45 ODP AND IOD UPDATES**

- Lee Stephens – ODP
- Guy Caruso and Mary Kay Cunningham – IOD

**11:45–1:00 WORKSHOP #3**

**A. The Impact of the Support Coordinator: Making an Everyday Life a Reality**

This workshop will focus on the support coordinator’s role in addressing considerations and how they assure loops are closed to the satisfaction of the individual.

**Presenters**

- Javier Salazar – Delaware County Advocacy and Resource Organization

**B. Communicating with DeafBlind Individuals**

More and more DeafBlind individuals will be taking advantage of ODP services and supports in the future. Are you prepared? How do you interact with a DeafBlind person? How do they communicate? This session will provide a basic introduction to deafblindness and offer practical tips for interacting with DeafBlind individuals.

**Presenters**

- Lori Milcic – ODP Deaf Services Coordinator

**C. What is Self-Advocacy All About!**

Self advocates will discuss what self-advocacy means in their own lives and how it’s a part of a movement rather than a program. Discussion will focus on how others with disabilities can become involved as a self-advocate and help make a difference in their communities.

**Facilitator**

- Karen Plummer – Voice and Vision, Inc.

**Presenters**

- Gretchen Laudenslager, Self-Advocates United as 1
- Self-advocate, TBA

**D. A How-To on Using the IM4Q Reports**

How can the IM4Q data/reports be used in the development of quality management strategies at the AE and state levels to improve an individual’s quality of life.

**Presenters**

- Jen Taylor Eaton – Institute on Disabilities at Temple University

**KEYNOTE PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES**

- Madison Tevlin** is an acclaimed keynote speaker, a trailblazing advocate for inclusion and Down syndrome, and a celebrated content creator whose magnetic presence captivates audiences around the world. Her effortless ability to connect, inspire, and spark meaningful change has made her one of the most in-demand young voices in advocacy and entertainment today.
- Dr. Mark Friedman** is a disability leader, college professor at CUNY, and founder of MyTechForAll. He helps people with disabilities use technology to be more independent and included. Dr. Friedman has presented across the country, written many publications, and his work was featured in The New York Times. His work helps make communities more inclusive and accessible.
- David Taylor** is a speaker, author, and disability advocate. He helps people speak up for themselves and make their own choices. David served on the national board of TASH and has worked with groups that support people with disabilities. He is also a Peer Support Mentor who trains and supports others. He has helped write research about inclusion and leadership, including ways to make sure people with disabilities are heard and included.
- Katie Moore** is a disability advocate and technology trainer. She helps people with disabilities use technology and find support in their communities. Katie is a member of the Tennessee Developmental Disabilities Council and the National Self-Advocate Network. As a co-trainer with Tech for All, Katie teaches people in different states how to use technology in everyday life. Katie is a graduate of Partners in Policymaking and supports other self-advocates through mentoring and training. Her work helps people feel heard, included, and more independent.
- Michael Gingerich** is a husband, the father of three sons, and the grandfather of five. His youngest son Matthew lives with profound intellectual disability and autism. Michael is the Co-Founder and Chief Values Officer of Someone To Tell It To, a Harrisburg-based nonprofit that promotes and provides human connection through the practice of listening. He has co-authored four books, has written stories and articles for numerous publications, blogs, and co-hosts the Someone To Tell It To Podcast.

**A SPECIAL THANKS TO THE MEMBERS OF THE 2026 IM4Q ANNUAL STATEWIDE TRAINING PLANNING COMMITTEE**

- |                      |                 |
|----------------------|-----------------|
| •Amy Austin          | •Nancy LeClair  |
| •Sandra Carroll      | •Shannon Ludwig |
| •Guy Caruso          | •Kelli Powers   |
| •Mark Costello       | •Laura Sippas   |
| •Mary Kay Cunningham | •Tim Sohosky    |
| •Janet Dreitlein     | •Lee Stephens   |
| •Stephen Gensemer    |                 |

**REGISTER NOW**

for the virtual IM4Q Annual Statewide Training 2026

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER: JULY 17**

**[LINK TO REGISTRATION FORM](#)**

After submitting registration form you will receive a link to the **Registrant Agenda** that will contain live Zoom links to all the sessions.