

## PROFESSIONAL FAMILY TEACHING MODEL PROGRAM

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FROM PROSPECTIVE CONTRACTORS About the GoodLife Innovations PFTM Program

#### **What exactly does it mean to be an *independent contractor*?**

An independent contractor is not an employee of GoodLife Innovations, but is an independent party contracting with GoodLife Innovations to provide services. A Professional Family Teacher/independent contractor is responsible to GoodLife Innovations only to satisfy the provisions of the contract, Minimum Contractual Outcomes (MCOs), and the Shared Living Personal Preferences Agreement (SLPPA).

The person served and/or their family/guardian, the Professional Family Teacher, and GoodLife Innovations also work together to determine Minimum Contractual Outcomes (MCOs). These MCOs include both general and person-specific outcomes consistent with GoodLife Innovations's definition of "Quality of Life" for people with and without disabilities, and the MCOs will be monitored quarterly through visits to the home.

#### **How does GoodLife Innovations monitor quality outcomes?**

All Professional Family Teachers are required by contract to become certified, which requires working with a GoodLife Innovations consultant to complete a curriculum that includes training, observation and feedback during monthly visits.

#### **What and how are Professional Family Teachers paid?**

Several factors are considered when determining the amount of money paid to an Professional Family Teacher, including:

1. The *level of need* of the person to be served;
2. Whether the Professional Family Teacher will provide residential services only or residential and community based services for the person;
3. The level of behavioral support the person needs, provided by the Professional Family Teacher;
4. The level of medical support the person needs, provided by the Professional Family Teacher; and
5. The Professional Family Teacher's certification status.

In addition to the annual contract amount, the person served pays the Professional Family Teacher a monthly board and transportation fee. Also, as an independent contractor, an Professional Family Teacher's compensation may be tax-free.

#### **What expenses can an independent contractor expect to have?**

As an independent contractor, a Professional Family Teacher is required to carry the following insurance:

- General Professional liability
- Automobile Insurance
- Homeowner's or Renters Insurance
- Applicable employment taxes for all work performed in connection with the contract
- Computer, internet, emergency kit, etc.

## **Can Professional Family Teachers provide both residential and community based day services?**

It's possible, once you have been a Professional Family Teacher for at least 6 months. The day services that the consumer participates in are chosen by the person served and their guardian and should focus on the person's interests, preferences, and vocational goals. If, after a minimum of 6 months, a Professional Family Teacher would like to provide community based day services and is able to meet the person's preferences and goals, the Professional Family Teaching Placement Committee (or the PFT Director) and the person's Support Team will review these and approve how community based services are provided. In some cases, depending on the consumer's needs and the Professional Family Teachers commitments, partial community based services may be provided by the PFT in the 1<sup>st</sup> 6 months. This is reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

## **What respite is available for Professional Family Teachers to prevent "burnout?"**

If the Professional Family Teachers provide residential services only, they are responsible for the person served during mornings, evenings, weekends, days the person is sick, and for days that day services are not provided. However, GoodLife Innovations requires that respite for Professional Family Teachers be part of the contract, and during contract development, a pre-specified amount of respite will be agreed upon. There are two types of respite:

1. Paid supports - generally staff employed by the Professional Family Teachers, or staff coverage arranged through GoodLife Innovations for a fee; and
2. Natural supports - people within Professional Family Teachers' network and the network of the person served (e.g., family or friends of the Professional Family Teacher or person served). The Professional Family Teacher must provide them with individualized orientation/training. Other Professional Family Teachers can also be used to provide support.

## **How is the determination made as to whom will be served in the Professional Family Teacher's home?**

GoodLife Innovations requires that a Professional Family Teacher know and have developed a relationship with the prospective person served for a minimum of six months prior to placement. This expectation can be exempted by the PFTM Director on a case by case basis.

In many cases, Professional Family Teachers have worked for GoodLife Innovations in other capacities and already have established relationships with persons who could benefit from a small, family-style living environment. When such GoodLife Innovations staff members decide that a Professional Family Teaching lifestyle is right for them, and a person they've served in another capacity is willing to make the same commitment to this lifestyle, the person's Core Team begins can begin the process of determining the appropriateness of such a living arrangement for all parties.

## **What are other requirements for becoming a Professional Family Teacher?**

In addition to a relationship with the person to be served, requirements include passing a placement study, home check, meeting minimum training standards, willingness to become certified within 18 months of contract, and successfully passing thorough background checks and screenings (including a general physical exam, drug screening, criminal history check, and checks for any history of abuse, neglect or exploitation).

## **Besides respite, what supports are available for Professional Family Teachers?**

As an independent contractor, a Professional Family Teacher does not report to a "manager" or "supervisor" at GoodLife Innovations, and it is the Professional Family Teacher who is responsible for the management and coordination of services that are delivered in their home and for the Minimum Contractual Outcomes agreed upon by all parties. However, GoodLife Innovations does provide Targeted Case Management services, which are required, and other supports that Professional Family Teachers may access, including:

- Behavioral consulting services
- GoodLife Innovations's Health and Wellness Clinic
- Professional Family Teacher Co-op

## **What is the Professional Family Teacher Co-op?**

GoodLife Innovations is developing a Professional Family Teacher Cooperative that will provide structured support to enhance the ability of family teachers to support people with developmental disabilities *and* tend to the needs of their own families, including:

- Structured and non-structured social and educational opportunities so Professional Family Teachers can network and learn from each other or from invited speakers about ways to improve the quality of their chosen lifestyle;
- A “shelf of supports,” from which Professional Family Teachers can purchase what they need (i.e., pre-packaged insurance options);
- A system of natural, no-cost or low-cost respite/relief through a collective of family teachers who “trade” respite among themselves, and a volunteer support group of family members and advocates of persons served;
- Fee-based respite services to augment natural respite support methods; and
- A website to foster the sharing of information.