

PROGRAMS IN TEXAS OFFERING FAMILY SUPPORTS AND SERVICES

I. MEDICAID

Medicaid was established in 1967 under the Social Security Act. It provides medical assistance for low-income families and many individuals with disabilities, including children. Approximately 60% of those on Medicaid in Texas are children. Medicaid is an “entitlement program,” meaning that if you meet the eligibility requirements, the state must provide certain services within federal guidelines.

The Texas Medicaid program is administered through the Health and Human Services Commission. Information on eligibility criteria and the application process can be obtained on-line at <http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us/help/index.html>, by calling 211, or by contacting your local Department of Aging and Disability Services Office (formerly Department of Human Services Office). To find the office nearest you, visit <http://www.dads.state.tx.us/services/contact.cfm>

Medicaid offers two types of facility entitlement service, Nursing Facility(NF) and Intermediate Care Facilities for Persons with Mental Retardation(ICF/MR)

Intermediate Care Facilities for Persons with Mental Retardation (ICF/MR) Program

This program provides residential and habilitation services to people with mental retardation and/or a related condition. A **related condition** is a disability, other than mental retardation, that originated before age 22 and that affects the ability to function in daily life.

To apply for services, contact your local mental retardation authority.

To learn more, visit the following web site:

<http://www.dads.state.tx.us/services/faqs-fact/icfmr.html>

II. MEDICAID FUNDED WAIVER PROGRAMS

The Medicaid program is an enormously important source of money to pay for services and supports for people with developmental disabilities. About \$3 of every \$4 that states spend for developmental disabilities services comes by way of Medicaid. Once, Medicaid dollars only paid for institutional

services. Today, Medicaid allows more diverse services and supports for individuals in the community, by "waiving" the need to get those same services in an institution.

Texas currently has seven different Medicaid funded waiver programs designed to allow Medicaid funds to be available to provide individuals with disabilities the opportunity to receive supports and services in their community as an alternative to institutional care. These waivers are administered through the Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS). Medicaid waiver services can be especially helpful to families caring for children with disabilities. Services can include nursing care, attendant care, respite, home modifications, medical equipment and supplies, therapies, service coordination, pre-vocational services, community living supports, assistive technology, and more. In addition to the services provided through the waiver program, a child who is in a Medicaid funded waiver program also has access to Medicaid healthcare benefits.

Medicaid funded waivers, however, are not entitlements. This means that the number of individuals that can receive Medicaid funded waiver services depends on the willingness of the state legislature to fund these services. When the Texas Legislature meets every two years, they appropriate funding for a certain number of waiver "slots." The "slots" appropriated translate into the number of people who will receive services. The number of "slots" funded, historically, has been well under the number of individuals and families requesting those services. Consequently, waiver waiting/interest lists are used to provide services as they become available on a first-come, first-serve basis. To be eligible for Medicaid funded waiver services, children and adults must meet both financial eligibility requirements as well as functional eligibility requirements. In all but one of the eight waiver programs (Texas Home Living Waiver), financial eligibility for children is based on the child's income rather than the family income, making it possible for many struggling families to obtain services that enable them to keep their child at home and prevent institutionalization.

Due to the existence of extensive waiting/interest lists for Medicaid waiver services, it is important for families to place their child's name on the waiting lists for all programs for which their child may be eligible as soon as possible. Eligibility assessments will not be done until a waiver slot becomes available, which may be several years. As it is often impossible to know what children may need in the future, it is better to have your child's name on the list(s) so the option for services in the future remains available. Putting your child's name on a waiver waiting list does not obligate you to accept those services in the future. It simply makes the option of supports and services available in the future. The following is a list of Texas Medicaid funded waiver programs. Additional information can be obtained by visiting the web site listed under each program.

Medicaid Funded Waiver Description

1. Home and Community-based Services Program (HCS)

HCS provides individualized services and supports to persons with mental retardation who are living with their family, in their own home or in other community settings, such as small group homes.

To learn more, visit the following web site:

<http://www.dads.state.tx.us/services/faqs-fact/hcs.html>

2. Community Living and Support Services (CLASS) waiver

CLASS provides home- and community-based services to people with related conditions as a cost-effective alternative to placement in an intermediate care facility for persons with mental retardation or a related condition (ICF-MR/RC).

To apply for services, call toll-free to 1-877-438-5658 to have a person placed on the interest list. To learn more, visit the following web site:

<http://www.dads.state.tx.us/services/faqs-fact/class.html>

3. Medically Dependent Children's Program (MDCP)

MDCP provides services to support families caring for children and young adults who are medically dependent and to encourage de-institutionalization of children in nursing facilities.

To apply for services, call 1-877-438-5658 to have the child's or young adult's name placed on the MDCP interest list. To learn more, visit the following web site:

<http://www.dads.state.tx.us/services/faqs-fact/mdcp.html>

4. Community Based Alternatives (CBA)

CBA provides home- and community-based services to people who are elderly and to adults with disabilities as a cost-effective alternative to living in a nursing home.

To learn more, visit the following web site:

<http://www.dads.state.tx.us/services/faqs-fact/cba.html>

5. Deaf-Blind Multiple Disabilities Program (DB/MD)

DB-MD provides home and community-based services to people who are deaf-blind with multiple disabilities as a cost-effective alternative to institutional placement. The program focuses on increasing opportunities for consumers to communicate and interact with their environment.

To learn more, visit the following web site:

<http://www.dads.state.tx.us/services/faqs-fact/dbmd.html>

6. Texas Home Living (TxHmL)

This program provides selected essential services and supports to people with mental retardation who live in their family homes or their own homes.

To learn more, visit the following web site:

<http://www.dads.state.tx.us/services/faqs-fact/txhtml.html>

7. Consolidated Waiver Program (CWP)

This is a Bexar County Pilot Program serving individuals of all ages, with varying disabilities; no specific waiting list exists as referrals for these slots come from the HCS, CLASS, MDCP, DBMD, and CBA waiting lists.

To learn more, visit the following web site:

<http://www.dads.state.tx.us/services/faqs-fact/cwp.html>

III. MENTAL RETARDATION AUTHORITIES GENERAL REVENUE SERVICE

Community MHMR Centers are designated as local Mental Retardation Authorities (MRAs). The MRA serves as the point of entry for publicly funded mental retardation programs whether publicly or privately operated. In addition, MRAs provide or contract to provide an array of services for persons in the mental retardation priority population with general revenue funds.

For services and eligibility requirement, please visit the following web site:

Http://www.dads.state.tx.us/providers/community_options.pdf

Note: For FY 2012-2013, funding for MR community services has been reduced 27%. The amount is used to obtain more federal matching fund for Texas Home Living Waiver. For FY 2012-2013, funding for Texas Home Living Waiver has been increased 511%.

IV. OTHER STATE-ADMINISTERED COMMUNITY CARE PROGRAMS

In addition to Medicaid and Medicaid waiver programs, there are other state programs that offer services to children with disabilities. These programs are typically funded through state dollars or, like Medicaid programs, through a combination of state and federal dollars. These programs are referred to as “community care” programs and are intended to help individuals with disabilities remain in families and in their communities. Some family support services are available through these various programs, but

benefit levels and the types of services offered are generally more limited than in the Medicaid waiver programs.

1. In-Home and Family Support Programs

This program provides limited, direct grant benefits to people with disabilities and or their families to help them purchase services that enable them live in the community. Eligible people choose and purchase services that help them to remain in their own homes. It is available statewide to children (and adults) with both physical and cognitive disabilities. Currently, two separate programs exist – one serving those with mental retardation, and the other serving individuals with physical disabilities.

Services include attendant care, respite, transportation services and others. For more information, visit the following web site:

<http://www.dads.state.tx.us/faqs-fact/ifs.html>

Note: There is no funding for IHFS for FY 2012-13. What will happen in the future regarding IHFS is not clear.

2. Early Childhood Intervention (ECI)

ECI is a statewide program for families with children, birth to three, with disabilities and developmental delays. ECI supports families to help their children reach their potential through developmental services. Services are provided by a variety of local agencies and organizations across Texas.

ECI provides evaluations and assessments, at no cost to families, to determine eligibility and need for services. Family copayment for ECI services is determined using a sliding fee scale and is based on family size and income after allowable deductions. No child and family will be turned away because of an inability to pay. ECI is an entitlement to eligible children, therefore no waiting lists exist.

For more information and eligibility requirement, visit the following web site:

<http://www.dars.state.tx.us/ecis>

3. Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)

Texas families with uninsured children may be able to get health insurance through Children's Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP). Both programs offer health care benefits, including regular checkups and dental care.

To qualify for CHIP or Children's Medicaid, a child must be age 18 or younger, a Texas resident and a U.S citizen or legal permanent resident. The citizenship or immigration status of the parents does not affect the children's eligibility and is not reported on the application form. Any adult who lives with an

uninsured child and provides care for that child can apply. This includes parents, step-parents, grandparents, other relatives, legal guardians or adult brothers or sisters.

To apply for CHIP/Children's Medicaid or CHIP perinatal benefits, you can apply online at www.chipmedicaid.com or call toll-free 1-877-543-7669 (that's 1-877-KIDS-NOW) to apply by phone.

4. Children with Special Health Care Needs (CSHCN)

This program is administered through the Texas Department of State Health Services. It is designed to help children with special health-care needs and people of any age with cystic fibrosis.

You may apply to the CSHCN Services Program year-round, but current clients must renew their applications every six months.

To learn more, visit the following web site:

<http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/cshcn/default.shtml>

5. Primary Home Care (PHC)

This program is a personal care service provided to adults whose health problems cause them to be functionally limited in performing activities of daily living, according to a statement of medical need.

Covered services include escort, home management and personal care.

For more information and eligibility requirement, visit the following web site:

<http://www.dads.state.tx.us/services/faqs-fact/phc.html>

The information sources of the above article are obtained through *Understanding Family Support and Opening Doors to the Future* and DADS web site at www.dads.state.tx.us