

CONSUMER ADVISORY COUNCIL REFINES FOCUS

By Rajai Saleh, Coordinator/Consultant, HOME Choice Consumer Advisory Council

The original intent of the HOME Choice Consumer Advisory Council (HCCAC) was to advise the state on the HOME Choice program, but over time the HCCAC's focus shifted to initiatives undertaken by the Ohio Olmstead Task Force. During the February HCCAC meeting held at the Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) offices, members decided to refocus on the HOME Choice program.

Members also plan to concentrate on barriers individuals face when they transition from long-term care facilities to their own homes in the community, and provide information on community resources to HOME Choice transition coordinators so that they can connect individuals to these resources when they transition.

New member Katie Frederick shared that many individuals who become visually impaired later in life are not aware of adaptive technologies available to assist them in their activities of daily living.

It is important for transition coordinators to know

and share that information with those that could benefit from it.

In addition, HCCAC members would like to have more Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM) HOME Choice staff attend meetings and provide information about their role in the program.

We recently sent a survey to members who were not at the last meeting to seek their opinion on the new direction, and we hope these changes will increase participation and give members more control over HCCAC.

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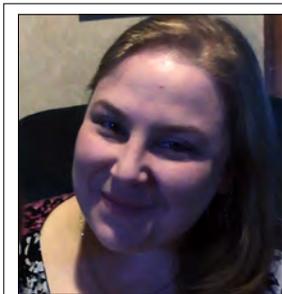
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Welcome, New HCCAC Members!

Jennifer Squires, Akron

Jennifer represents families and caregivers of youth with disabilities. Her son, Conner, was born premature and with pulmonary issues. Through the HOME Choice program, Jennifer was connected to the services and supports necessary to bring Conner home. Jennifer stays at home to care for Conner, now 18 months old, but she hopes to return to her previous job as a client service representative for a home care agency when he is older. Her goal for the HCCAC is to bring awareness to the needs of children with disabilities.



Katie Frederick, Columbus

Katie has served as the American Council of the Blind of Ohio executive director since December 2013. Her goal for the HCCAC is to ensure consumer and staff needs are met concerning advocacy and training impacting people who are blind or visually impaired.



Taking on the Housing Barrier

By Emily Van Buren and Jeannette Welsh, HOME Choice Housing Coordinators

Finding affordable, accessible housing is one of the biggest challenges for the HOME Choice program when helping to transition individuals from long-term care facilities to the community. Read on to learn more about current programs and initiatives that may help resolve this issue.



INNOVATION ACCELERATOR PROGRAM

In February 2016, Ohio joined 30 other states in the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Service's (CMS) Innovation Accelerator Program (IAP) focused on housing-related services and partnerships. The IAP was launched after CMS issued an informational bulletin on "Coverage of Housing-Related Activities and Services for Individuals with Disabilities." IAP training and technical assistance include webinars and activities to identify and promote tenancy sustaining services available to Medicaid beneficiaries. ODM and stakeholders will explore how Ohio can further support individuals receiving services and supports in community-based settings.



SSI OHIO PROJECT

ODM provides funding to the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO) to assist HOME Choice individuals and other Ohioans with disabilities access Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Income (SSDI). COHHIO provides training and technical assistance to a network of specialists throughout the state who prepare and submit applications for qualifying individuals using the SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery (better known as SOAR) methodology – a nationally recognized best practice developed to expedite the determination of benefits. Having monthly income improves an individual's ability to secure housing. [Read the fact sheet online.](#)



811 PROJECT RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

In 2015, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development awarded Ohio almost \$12 million to operate the 811 Project Rental Assistance (PRA) program. Ohio expects to subsidize approximately 485 units of affordable housing throughout the state of Ohio. The units will be developed through Ohio's Housing Tax Credit program, which is administered by the Ohio Housing Finance Agency (OHFA). HOME Choice individuals will be prioritized for these units. [Read more online.](#)



ODM SUBSIDY DEMONSTRATION

Similar to the 811 PRA program, this Demonstration seeks to develop housing through Ohio's Housing Tax Credit program. However, the units developed by this program will be fully accessible and funded by ODM. These units will be prioritized for HOME Choice individuals. [Read the fact sheet online.](#)



HOME FOR GOOD

The Home for Good program was developed to assist HOME Choice individuals with a criminal background access housing. The program, operated by Emerald Development and Economic Network (EDEN), resembles the Housing Choice Voucher (Section 8). Although this program does not provide a permanent subsidy, it can be used while tenants rehabilitate their criminal record. [Read the fact sheet online.](#)

Go online to learn about these initiatives & more:

<http://medicaid.ohio.gov/HOMEChoice>
[Choose the "Housing Information" link]

<http://medicaid.ohio.gov/HomeChoice>

Jane Black Named MFP Section Chief and HOME Choice Project Director



Jane Black was named the Money Follows the Person (MFP) Project Director in February after serving as Interim Project Director since June, 2015. She was previously the HOME Choice Operations Manager since 2010 and succeeds former Project Director Kim Donica.

As Project Director, Jane oversees the MFP Grant and serves as the bureau chief for that section. This includes HOME Choice Operations and the rest of the MFP staff: housing, outreach and education, Minimum Data Set, providers, data reporting, and contract management. Jane's hard work continues to contribute to the success of Ohio's HOME Choice Program.

Congratulations, Jane!



Ohio Takes Leadership Role in National Substance Abuse Webinar

Jane Black recently presented to other MFP states across the country regarding the impact of substance abuse in Ohio.

The webinar provided not only an introduction on the impact of substance use on individuals, including opioid use and risks, but also a facilitated discussion on the challenges MFP states have when screening for clients' substance use and obtaining needed community-based services.

Find more information about Ohio's efforts to fight opiate abuse online: <http://fightingopiateabuse.ohio.gov/>



4th Annual HOME Choice Conference

The fourth annual HOME Choice Conference will be held on **November 1, 2016**, at the Hilton Columbus Downtown.

The conference, enjoyed by more than 300 participants from across the state and the country, will again offer many opportunities to learn more about HOME Choice and barriers to transition.

New to the conference's lineup will be interactive afternoon sessions with solution-driven discussions regarding transition challenges, successes and opportunities.

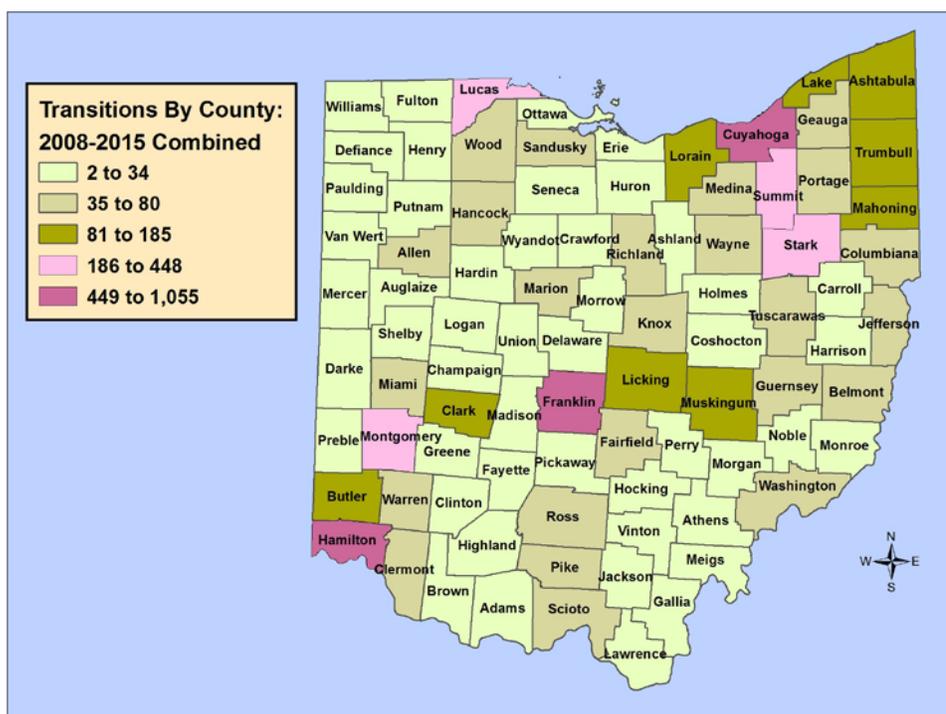
New Newsletter for Providers!

ODM launched a quarterly electronic newsletter, *Provider Connections*, in February to communicate important information and updates to HOME Choice providers.

Are you a provider who would like to receive the newsletter? Email: Home_Choice@medicaid.ohio.gov

Map: Transitions by County

This map illustrates the total number of transitions in each county, between the program's launch in 2008 and 2015.



Program Activity

Program Area	Indicator	Statistic
Program Transitions	Current Enrollments	1,455
	New Transitions in 2016	506
	Total Transitions since 2008	7,950
Current Transitions By Age Group	Children (Birth to 21)	27.8%
	Adult (Ages 22-59)	43.2%
	Elderly (Ages 60+)	29.0%
Waiver Activity: Proportion of Current Transitions	On Waivers	43.5%
	Non-Waiver	56.5%
Candidates in the Pipeline	Applications Received or Approved	252
	Applicants Assessed and in Pre-Transition Stage	1,604

New MFP Initiatives Manager Announced



Carol Schenck, formerly of HOME Choice Provider Oversight and Compliance, has been promoted to the new Money Follows the Person (MFP) Initiatives Manager position. Carol will be responsible for the oversight and on-going development of MFP Initiatives. She will supervise five staff, direct collaborative partnerships with other Medicaid policy areas and act as a liaison with stakeholders and sister agencies.

Carol brings her two years of experience working with HOME Choice/MFP and eight years of supervisory experience with PASSPORT case managers at the Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging and two years' experience as a case manager for PASSPORT and Pre-Admission Screening and Readiness Review (PASRR) to the job. She also spent many years as the program director and clinical social worker for the Alzheimer's Association of Central Ohio.

HOME Choice is pleased to welcome Carol into her new role!

HOME Choice Success Stories

In each issue, we feature the stories of Ohioans who have transitioned from long-term care facilities to their own homes.

Patty's Story: Independent and Proud

By Tiffany Tierney, Community Support Coach - The Ability Center of Greater Toledo



Patty loves Mother Nature. Before her stroke, she enjoyed working in her yard every summer, planting flowers and mowing the lawn. During the winter, she favored crocheting, working crosswords, and baking.

While working her yard on June 12, 2012, Patty had a stroke and was later in a coma, in intensive care for six weeks. When she woke up, the right side of her body was paralyzed. Patty was transferred to a nursing facility soon after and spent time in four different facilities before she was finally back in her own home.

"That time in my life was overwhelming, emotional, and remains sometimes difficult to recollect due to the stroke. As I moved from place to place, I sunk into a deep depression. I started doubting my abilities and myself. To think that living on my own again was lost to me felt like being hit with a ton of bricks."

Though difficult, she kept her own routine and the independence that she could. She tried to make her bed every day, and practiced handwriting and other exercises.

"I had to relearn all activities of daily living,

even tying my shoes. There were things I could remember and others that were a complete blank. I want to say, 'Thank you' to HOME Choice, The Ability Center, and the Ohio Home Care Waiver for helping me with the services needed for my transition back to independent living."

Becky Strieff, the Ability Center's Nursing Home Transition Coordinator, assisted Patty with grocery shopping before the transition and Tiffany Tierney, the organization's Community Support Coach assisted with community resources. "I had my own place and it was great not to worry about groceries when I left."

Patty is now enrolled on MyCare Ohio, which assists with her daily needs, such as home care services, RN and aide assistance, and the acquiring of a lift chair.

"Yes, life is different, but you cannot get discouraged," Patty said. "Remember to have a good outlook in life. I got angry a year after my stroke. That did not help my progress. I told myself I will be happy, and God kept me alive for a reason. I am proud of myself and my accomplishments and I will continue to live my life the way I want. Others can too."



I am proud of myself and my accomplishments and I will continue to live my life the way I want. Others can too.

Doris Gives Back to Children



No one would suspect that first-graders would be the beneficiaries of someone leaving a nursing facility for a home in the community. However, some lucky children are just that. Now that Doris is in her own Warrensville Heights home, she tutors at-risk first-graders at a local school, helping them learn to read. She is giving back.

Doris spent two long years in a Beechwood nursing facility in Cuyahoga County after undergoing back-to-back surgeries. She also needed kidney dialysis. Although Doris always knew she would go home, she did not know how she would do it. She relied on her faith.

"I had been praying for guidance," she remembered. "I did not believe a diagnosis could control my life." Then Maria Wolf from LEAP came along and introduced HOME Choice to Doris. She helped Doris transition to her own apartment in 2014. "I felt like my prayers had been answered," Doris said.

Although she spends several hours in dialysis three days a week, Doris's life brims with activity. She participates at the senior center and attends church and a weekly Bible study class. The class requires homework, which she tries to work on each night. Doris also volunteers for a non-partisan organization that calls people and encourages them to vote.

Then there is her tutoring. Doris volunteers for [AARP's Experience Corps](#), which is dedicated to helping children become great readers before finishing third grade. She tutors four children one-on-one, each for an hour two days a week. The school wants her to tutor three more children. Doris said she could not say no. She is passionate about this work.

"At the beginning of each class, we recite a poem: I Am Somebody. I have the students write the word *can't* on a piece of paper and then ball it up and throw it in the waste basket," Doris explained. "Using her undergraduate degrees in psychology and art therapy, Doris often has the children draw a picture and then write about it.

"When I go to get them out of their classroom, they jump up and give me a hug. That's the best part," she said.

In addition to her career as a social worker and working as a case manager for the PASSPORT waiver program, Doris has an MBA. She originally planned to use it to open up her own home health agency. "But that wasn't the way it turned out," she said.

However, she is content with her fulfilling, independent days, making a difference in children's futures, and giving back to her community.

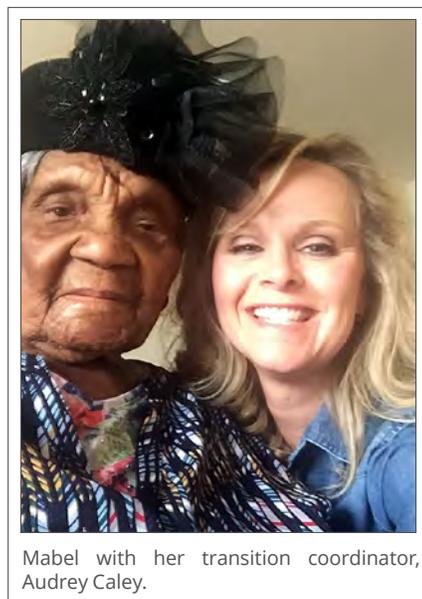


I felt like my prayers had been answered

Catching up with Mabel - Three Years Later



At 105, Mabel is still in the same apartment and thriving.



Mabel with her transition coordinator, Audrey Caley.

Three years ago, the [HOME Choice Bulletin](#) featured a remarkable centenarian named Mabel who had transitioned from a Steubenville nursing facility into her own apartment in March 2012. Four years later, at 105, Mabel is still in the same apartment and thriving.

Transition coordinator Audrey Caley, through the Ombudsman Program with Direction Home Akron-Canton Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities, helped her transition in 2013 and is still in touch with her today.

Mabel was born in Orlando, Florida, in 1910 and moved with her husband to Akron in 1944 for his job. She has never returned to Florida and does not miss it.

Mabel has three children, two of which live locally. Her daughter Brenda lives in the same building as Mabel and visits several times a week. Mabel enjoys hosting her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, and occasionally her minister, in her home.

She rises at 9:30 every morning and, with the help of a home health aide, she bathes, dresses and comes to the table for breakfast, ready for the day. Mabel is enrolled on PASSPORT, which provides her aide services and home-delivered meals. She said she loves all food, except Brussels sprouts!

Most Sundays, Mabel attends church in her power chair with an aide walking beside her. She returns home on her own. Mabel has many friends at church even though a lot of them are gone. She knows all the old hymns.

At the time of this writing, the Ohio primary election was approaching, and Mabel was planning to vote, but she said, "It's hard to figure out who to vote for!"

Mabel ends her day watching Wheel of Fortune and Jeopardy before going to bed. She said she is happy to be in her own home and making her own decisions.

When asked the secret to her longevity, Mabel said, "I always worked hard until I couldn't work anymore." Although Mabel does not seem to think she is extraordinary, the rest of the world does. We applaud her courage and determination to be independent.



CONTRIBUTING ORGANIZATIONS

Access Center for Independent Living
 Achievement Centers for Children
 Advocacy and Protective Services (APSI)
 AARP
 American Association of Service Coordinators
 Amerigroup
 Assistive Technology of Ohio (AT Ohio)
 Autism Society of Ohio
 Bittersweet Inc.
 Brain Injury Association of Ohio
 Brethren Care Village
 Buckeye Community Health Plan
 Cerebral Palsy Association of Ohio
 Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio
 Creative Housing Corporation
 Definitive Home Health Care
 Delaware Creative Housing
 Disability Housing Network
 Disability Rights Ohio
 Easter Seals of Ohio
 Episcopal Retirement Homes, Inc.
 Family Services Council of Ohio
 Good Samaritan Hospital
 Greater Dayton TRA
 Heritage Day Health Centers
 Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
 Heritage Health Care Services
 Housing Leadership Institute
 Leading Age Ohio

Legislative Services Commission
 Linking Employment, Abilities and Potential (LEAP)
 Long Term Care (LTC) Ombudsman Program
 Mercy Saint John's Center
 Miami Valley In-Ovations, Inc.
 National Alliance on Mental Illness of Ohio
 National Church Residences
 Ohio Academy of Nursing Homes
 Ohio Advocates
 Ohio Alliance for Direct Support Professionals
 Ohio Assisted Living Association
 Ohio Association Adult Caregivers
 Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities
 Ohio Association of County Boards of DD
 Ohio Association of Superintendents of County Boards of DD
 Ohio Board of Regents
 Ohio Association on Area Agencies on Aging
 Ohio Capitol Corporation for Housing
 Ohio Centers for Independent Living – CILS
 Ohio Conference of Community Development Organizations
 Ohio Council for Home Care and Hospice
 Ohio Department of Development
 Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services
 Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities
 Ohio Department of Transportation

Ohio Dietetic Association
 Ohio Health Care Association
 Ohio Council for Home Care
 Ohio Hospital Association
 Ohio Housing Authority Conference
 Ohio Housing Finance Authority
 Ohio Jewish Communities
 Ohio Job and Family Services Directors Association
 Ohio Office of Budget and Management
 Ohio Olmstead Task Force
 Ohio PATHS
 Ohio Provider Resource Association
 Ohio State University-Public Policy, Assistive Technology
 Ohio United Way
 Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities
 RHC, Inc.
 Sarah Care Adult Day Services
 Service Employees International Union - SEIU 1199
 Services for Independent Living
 The Ability Center
 The Success Group
 Wright State University - School of Medicine

And, all consumers and families who have participated.

HOME CHOICE VISION STATEMENT

Ohioans who need long-term services and support . . .
 Get services and supports they need in a timely manner
 In settings they want, from whom they want
 And if needs change, services and supports change accordingly.

STAY CONNECTED!

The **HOME Choice Bulletin** is a newsletter for anyone interested in Ohio's Money Follows the Person HOME Choice transition program.
 Please contact Home_choice@medicaid.ohio.gov if you have comments, information to share, or would like to be added to our e-mail list.