

COLLABORATION RESULTS IN HOME FOR THREE

By Emily VanBuren, Housing Coordinator, Bureau of Long-Term Care Services - HOME Choice

"It takes a village." The common phrase applies to many aspects of life, and HOME Choice is no exception. There are many people who work together to transition each individual from a facility to community setting. For HOME Choice participant Mary, new partners collaborated to create a unique opportunity for individuals with Multiple Sclerosis (MS) to live independently.

In her adult years, MS symptoms hit Mary hard. She lost many of her physical capabilities to perform activities of daily living. Eventually, Mary was admitted to a nursing facility for care. Rather than accept the possibility of remaining in a nursing facility, she became inspired to create a shared living environment for herself and others living with MS. The home Mary envisioned would provide affordable rent, accessible housing features, and support from peers.

In 2014, she set out to make her dream home a reality. Mary found support from community partners including North Coast Community Homes (NCCH), the MS Society, Services for Independent Living, and HOME Choice.

As luck would have it, NCCH was able to secure a lakeside home that was already retrofitted with many accessibility features. Grants from local foundations and the MS Society helped fund additional renovations, including countertops, cabinets and appliances that would allow

someone with limited mobility to independently prepare meals and do laundry. Services for Independent Living staff worked as Mary's HOME Choice Transition Coordinator agency and helped arrange services for her to live in the community. In November 2015, Mary moved into the home. Shortly after, Mary's first roommate, Rosemary, joined her, and a second roommate, Jodi, followed in the spring. All three women transitioned with the HOME Choice program.

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Mary in her kitchen.

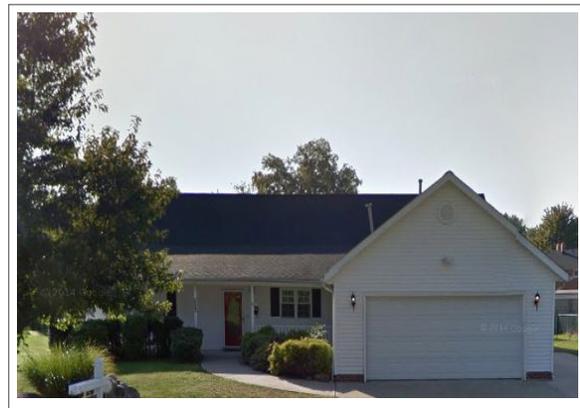
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"I feel extremely blessed and fortunate to be living in this beautiful home with Mary and Jodi," says Rosemary.

Jodi adds, "We love this experience and want this sort of living arrangement for all people with disabilities."

Indeed, Mary agrees with her roommates. "At this stage in my life, I can't imagine being in a place any better," she declares.

Mary's vision and persistence fostered an opportunity to grow the HOME Choice "village." Her story is a reminder that collaboration can address the complexities of community living and achieve new opportunities for integration.



The three friends' home

Transitions through Collaboration: Recovery Requires a Community and Access Success

By Carol Schenck, MFP Initiatives Manager, Bureau of Long-Term Care Services HOME Choice Section

With more than 9,100 transitions to date, the HOME Choice program has become synonymous with moving people out of facility setting care in Ohio. However, other programs in the state share the mission.

RECOVERY REQUIRES A COMMUNITY

Recovery Requires a Community is a program administered by the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, which targets individuals diagnosed with mental health and substance use disorders. It provides financial assistance to help them transition from nursing facilities to sustainable community living settings.

The Recovery Requires a Community program began in July 2013 and provides flexible funding to Medicaid recipients to assist with temporary housing, utilities, goods and services, and other supports that contribute to an individual's safety and sustainability in community. Although the individual does not receive funds directly, Recovery allows an agency to purchase items on the individual's behalf. Often, it is a community mental health agency or a transition coordination agency that works with the individual.

Recovery and HOME Choice complement each other. When combined, the two programs lead to improved quality of care for program participants. Throughout state fiscal year 2016, Recovery Requires a Community assisted 230 people in their transition home.

For more information on the Recovery program, visit the Ohio MHAS [website www.mha.ohio.gov/rrac](http://www.mha.ohio.gov/rrac).

ACCESS SUCCESS

The Ohio Access Success Project is the Ohio Department of Medicaid's original transition program. Implemented in 2004, it offers financial assistance to adults transitioning from nursing facilities to community settings who receive Medicaid services but do not meet eligibility requirements for HOME Choice.

The Access Success Project provides eligible individuals with limited resources to have an unpaid agent of their choice assist with the planning, purchasing or funding arrangements approved by the Access Success Project. All expenditures must facilitate moves back to the homes of their choice.

Go online to learn about these initiatives & more:

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

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

Highlights of HOME Choice Annual Conference



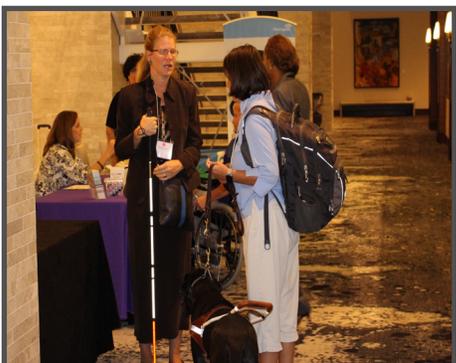
Rajai Saleh receives flowers from Edward Gibson, HOME Choice Team member.

Almost 300 people attended HOME Choice’s Fourth Annual Conference on November 1, 2016, at the Hilton Downtown Columbus. By all accounts, the theme of “Breaking Down Barriers to Community Living” struck a chord with attendees.



Morning plenary speaker Shari Cooper shares her story.

The conference was a joint effort between the HOME Choice Advisory Council, chaired by Rajai Saleh, and ODM’s HOME Choice team.



Attendees network in the exhibit hall.

At the welcome, Renee Wood, Chair, Ohio Olmstead Task Force, shared a personal experience of how sweet it is to be able to order a cup of coffee on her own in the community.



HOME Choice Community Living Specialist Yvette Weaver leads a breakout session.

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ODM Team Members from left to right: Edward Gibson, Angela Reed, Carol Schenck, Kelsey Gallagher, Jane Black, and Emily VanBuren.



Medicaid staff greet attendees as they arrive and pick up their badges.

Highlights of HOME Choice Annual Conference

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Director John McCarthy provided comments, including the facts that Ohio is now directing 67 percent of its long-term care spending to home and community-based services and that Ohio leads the nation in total transitions in 2015. At the time of the conference, more than 8,900 people have newfound independence through HOME Choice!

Morning Plenary Session presenter, Shari Cooper of Goodwill Easter Seals Miami Valley, shared her personal journey of breaking down barriers in order to lead an independent life. She said, "Everybody talks about needs. But, I had wants."

Her childhood wants included aspiring to play hopscotch, participating in Girl Scouts and competing in her school's checker club (she came in second in a national competition). When she got older, she wanted her own home and a boyfriend. She has obtained those wants. Shari has been living on her own for 14 years and has a significant other.

"Thank you, HOME Choice! I love living on my own just like anyone else!" she said.

Conference attendees furthered their education with breakout sessions such as transportation, employment, community supports for children and youth, inclusive neighborhoods, substance abuse disorders and assistive technology. Network opportunities abounded in the vendor hallway and lunch featured a moving story from Mary Namy, a HOME Choice participant, who collaborated with two other women to move into one accessible house (See story, this issue). At the conference's conclusion, attendees recapped their progress in breaking down barriers in the community.

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.



"I like having my independence best of all."

Catching up with Ron - Eight Years Later

Ron's story was featured in the HOME Choice Bulletin in 2009 just after he moved into a charming ranch-style home in Westlake, Ohio, after having lived in a long-term care facility for 10 years.

Recently, we caught up with Ron and talked with him about his life today. Ron still lives in the same quaint home. He's now employed in a position making wooden plaques and key-holders. Ron enjoys simple pleasures like sharing and preparing meals with housemates and visiting with his family and friends in his own place. As a lover of all types of music, Ron likes making CD's in his spare time and spending time working on his computer. And, he's always up for a bowling outing!

One thing that hasn't changed since we interviewed Ron seven years ago. For Ron, nothing beats spending time outside, especially on his deck. It's still Ron's favorite place to be!



Ron on his deck in 2009 with Sarah Fogler, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

Kaleb - From 3 lb 4 oz to Blossoming Baby Boy

By Dana Wilson, CareStar, HOME Choice Case Manager/Community Living Specialist

As a case manager with CareStar, one of my favorite parts of my job is working with the families of premature infants, and watching them grow and thrive in the community throughout the year on the program. Through HOME Choice, I have had the pleasure of working with a new mother, Jamie, and her adorable infant son Kaleb.

Jamie tells me she had a high-risk pregnancy from the beginning. Kaleb was born at 29 weeks weighing only 3 pounds, 4 ounces, and being just 16 inches long. As with any major hospitalization, life became complicated for Jamie and her family. While she had been working, eventually Jamie spent most of her time driving an hour each way from home to the hospital to be with her son. She and Kaleb's father spent many nights at the Ronald McDonald house before moving into each of their parents' homes to be closer to Kaleb.

This is where HOME Choice was able to make a difference for the family. With the help of transition coordinator Linda Lund, HOME Choice helped purchase some of the main items the family needed before Kaleb could be discharged home.

Many times, because of the unexpected premature birth, there is no time for a traditional baby shower. The family is so busy with medical appointments and travel to see their baby in the hospital that everything becomes a blur. The first necessary items for Kaleb were a playpen, Pack and Play, bottles, wipes, and diapers to get the family started.

As soon as I was assigned to the case, I met with little Kaleb and Jamie at her mother's house. As the case manager, I made sure that Jamie had received all the purchased items from Linda, and that Kaleb's hospital discharge went smoothly. We discussed other services like Medicaid's Help Me Grow, which offers support to



It has been rewarding to watch this family grow, and to see a new mom and dad flourish in their role as parents.

Tiffany Tierney



Jamie and Kalem

families so their infant can meet their growth goals. We discussed transportation to learn if there would be any problems getting Kaleb to and from his frequent medical appointments.

We also reviewed the HOME Choice services available to Jamie: counseling and coaching on nutrition, community support and independent living skills training. We talked about family support - Jamie is blessed to have a mother who is available to help if needed.

Finally, we discussed how HOME Choice funds could help with a deposit on a house or apartment for the new family. I contacted Linda, and we discussed Jamie's wishes for a family home. Luckily, there were enough funds to help the family with housing even after the initial purchases. Within a few weeks, Jamie had found a house not far from her parents' home and the funds were used to secure it. They were able to move within weeks, and the rest is history!

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It is so nice to see little Kaleb grow, and I must say, he is not so little anymore! He has blossomed into a healthy baby boy, and he is as cute as can be. Kaleb improved so much in the community that he did not need Help Me Grow. Jamie now works from home, which allows her to spend more time with Kaleb, and his father continues to work full time.

It has been rewarding to watch this family grow, and to see a new mom and dad flourish in their roles as parents. I am grateful to be able to help families be successful.

Ohio Leads Nation in Institution-to-Community Transitions

In 2015, Ohio transitioned 1,658 individuals from institutional settings to homes in the community, more than any other state. Ohio's HOME Choice ranks first nationally in transitioning individuals with mental illness into home-based settings and second in overall transitions completed. As of December 1, 2016, more than 9,100 people have achieved newfound independence through HOME Choice.



[Click here to Read the Report](#)

Program Activity

Program Area	Indicator	Statistic
Program Transitions	Current Enrollments	1,627
	New Transitions in 2016	1,690
	Total Transitions since 2008	9,105
Current Transitions By Age Group	Children (Birth to 21)	28.8%
	Adult (Ages 22-59)	44.4%
	Elderly (Ages 60+)	26.7%
Waiver Activity: Proportion of Current Transitions	On Waivers	42.7%
	Non-Waiver	57.3%
Candidates in the Pipeline	Applications Received or Approved	239
	Applicants Assessed and in Pre-Transition Stage	1,751



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.