

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
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
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
Ohio Department of Aging
Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug
Addiction Services
Ohio Department of Development
Ohio Department of Mental Health
Ohio Department of Mental Retardation
and Developmental Disabilities
Ohio Department of Transportation
Ohio Dietetic Association
Ohio Health Care Association
Ohio Hospice & Palliative Care
Organization
Ohio Hospital Association
Ohio Housing Authority Conference
Ohio Housing Authority Finance
Ohio Jewish Communities
Ohio Job and Family Services Directors
Association
Ohio Legal Rights Services
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
Rehabilitation Service Commission
RHC, Inc.
Sarah Care Adult Day Services
Service Employees International Union
- SEIU 1199
The Ability Center
The Advocate of Not-For-Profit Services
for Ohioans (AOPHA)
The Success Group
Wright State University - School of
Medicine

And, all consumers and families who
have participated

HOME Choice Program Earns National Recognition

A unique partnership between the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) and the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA) is garnering national acclaim for helping Ohioans move out of long-term care facilities and back into the community. At a recent U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Fair Housing Policy conference, Ohio was singled out for its efforts to help those in long-term care facilities move back into their communities and homes.

The ODJFS and CMHA partnership is part of the statewide HOME Choice program, which helps elderly or Ohioans with disabilities in long-term care facilities locate housing, set up their new home, and connect to necessary community services. The partnership has already helped 18 individuals transition to the community and is currently helping seven more move into a home.



Pictured with the HUD award are ODJFS Housing Administrator Brock Robertson; Ohio Medicaid Director Tracy Plouck; ODJFS Director Douglas E. Lumpkin; HOME Choice Project Director Erika Robbins; Chief, Bureau of Long-Term Care Services and Supports Sara Abbott.

"The partnership between ODJFS and CMHA helps Cuyahoga County residents who live in long-term care facilities who are interested in living at home find affordable and accessible housing," said ODJFS Director Douglas Lumpkin. "Partnerships like this are an integral part of the HOME Choice program, which has given hundreds of Ohioans the opportunity to move out of long-term care facilities and back into the community."

HUD is showcasing the partnership between ODJFS and CMHA as an example of how agencies can collaborate to assist people with disabilities to return to the community. The federal agency recently invited both ODJFS and CMHA to speak at the bi-annual HUD Fair Housing Policy conference. In addition, John Transvina, HUD assistant secretary of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity, presented ODJFS and CMHA with an award at the HUD Fair Housing Policy Conference in New Orleans on July 22.

Information about HOME Choice can be found at <http://jfs.ohio.gov/OHP/consumers/homechoice.stm>.

Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act Provides Opportunities for Ohio

On March 23, President Barack Obama signed into law the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act (PPACA) of 2010. These two sets of health care reforms aim to expand health care coverage to millions of Americans and will require many changes to health insurance products and the regulations that govern them.

Key provisions that are scheduled to take effect in 2010 are:

- Creation of a national high-risk pool program for people with pre-existing conditions that cannot buy insurance on their own
- Tax credits for small businesses that obtain health coverage for their workers
- Assistance for Medicare beneficiaries with high drug costs who get hit by the drug benefit's coverage gap — or "donut hole" — and continues through 2014, when the major reforms to expand access to health coverage are fully implemented
- Extension of the Money Follows the Person Rebalancing Demonstration to 2016.

The state of Ohio is analyzing the legislation and determining next steps so Ohio takes advantage of all of the opportunities that will benefit Ohioans. ODJFS has designated state team leads for every provision of the bill and look forward to working with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as further guidance and regulations are crafted.

Please visit the following Web site for regular updates on this important legislation:

<http://www.healthcarereform.ohio.gov/Pages/default.aspx>.

HOME Choice Success Stories

Shon Connors

HOME Choice consumer Shon Connors was featured in a *Coshocton Tribune* article on March 14, 2010, which chronicled his happiness of living on his own. The following is an excerpt from the article.

Independence Important to Residents with Disabilities

The novelty of having his own place hasn't worn off yet for Shon Connors.

The 39-year-old moved into an apartment at Riverside Towers eight months ago after living in an intermediate care facility for 13 years and sharing a room with someone else.

"It's awesome," he said. "Being on my own and doing whatever I want when I want. I can come home and relax, watch TV or get on my computer."

Malinda Wagner also has found an independent life suits her. She has worked at Taco Bell for 17 years and rents a little house in Coshocton.

Coshocton residents such as Connors and Wagner, who in the past would have been relegated to care facilities or be cared for by family members, have the option to become independent.

Medicaid has a waiver program that addresses different levels of care for these clients by providing them with help on meeting independent goals but at the same time offering a support system to provide for individual care.

"The whole waiver system was developed to give people the independence to live in their own homes," said Martha Richardson, director of the services and support with the Coshocton County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

The waivers are provided through Medicaid to individuals who qualify because of disability and income.

A service and support administrator connects clients such as Connors with the services they need to live independently.

A variety of resources in Coshocton County provide homemaker and personal care, day habilitation and transportation.

"I think a lot of folks in the community are surprised when they realize some of our clients don't always need a staff person with them," Richardson said. "Many of them just need drop-in services. We really do try to help people live with the least amount of restrictions as possible."

Service and support helps them navigate the system, whether it's connecting them the right in-home assistance or doctors, attorneys and the courts, she said.

Connors made many friends among his neighbors and recently was voted president of the Riverside Towers Residents Association.

He's taken up a challenging hobby on his computer, working on compiling his family tree.

A sports fan who enjoys watching football and college basketball, Connors was looking forward to today's tournament selection.

Connors was able to gain his independence with an Individual Options waiver. Individual Options are for people who require more care, as compared to Level 1 waivers, where people need a minimum of services.

He works at Hopewell Industries, and because he [uses] a wheelchair, he catches a ride to and from work with the Coshocton County Transportation Agency.

He's also joined some of the volunteer modules being run at Hopewell and was part of a recent fundraising effort to send money and supplies to Haiti.

Connors also acted as a prosecuting attorney during a law module that included a mock trial.

His home health aide picked up law books at the library.

"I had a lot of fun with that," he said. "I won the case."

Connors receives in-home assistance through Health Services of Coshocton, and someone is with him for about an hour each morning and two to three hours each evening, preparing meals, cleaning and helping him shop for groceries. Health Services also provide transportation to the grocery store or to medical appointments.

Living outside intermediate and long-term health care facilities gives developmentally disabled individuals the opportunity to choose what church they'll attend, where they'll go to work and who will take care of them if the need assistance.

"It's exciting being out on my own and I've enjoyed the past eight months," Connors said. "The best part is the privacy."

Heather Stackhouse



Heather Stackhouse

By Tiffany Tierney, Community Inclusion Coordinator/P.C.A., The Ability Center of Greater Toledo

I met with Heather on June 24th, 2010. I asked her if she could tell me about her time spent in the nursing facility.

Heather said that she was in Fair View nursing facility for two years. She explained that the first year was a tough time. She was unable to talk or walk. However, with the staff, she was able to get back on her feet again. She would like to thank Cathy Murray and Ann Mosely from the nursing facility because they had a big impact on her recovery.

"I felt that they went beyond the call of duty," Heather stated. When Heather first met the nursing home transition manager Don Smith, she had no clue her life was going to go on a new journey. "The Ability Center and Don made it possible for my wishes to be fulfilled.

"HOME Choice helped me purchase everything I would need to start out on my own," Heather said. There were some bumps along the way, but Heather has learned how to get through them and mold her life the way she would like it to be.

Now with this new journey Heather would like to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Her cherished hobby is crochet.

HOME Choice Statistics

As of press time...

- **658** consumers were enrolled
- **1,638** people have applied
- **139** agency service providers were participating
- **182** non-agency service providers were participating

The HOME Choice program accepts referrals from any source. Please help to get the word out! If you know anyone who is interested in transitioning into a community setting, please notify the ODJFS HOME Choice Intake and Care Coordination Unit toll-free at (888) 221-1560 or fax an interest form to (614) 466-6945.

Go to <http://jfs.ohio.gov/OHP/consumers/HOMEchoice.stm> for interest forms and other information.

Transition Coordinators Play Key Role to Program's Success

Many people play important roles in ensuring that HOME Choice consumers successfully transition from long-term care facilities to the community, but none more so than the transition coordinator. The position of transition coordinator was specially created for the Money Follows the Person (HOME Choice) transition program. This role is unique. Just ask one of them, and they will tell you about their rewarding and challenging job.

Transition Coordinator's Role

Transition coordinators help HOME Choice participants find qualified residences. They participate in discharge planning from institutional settings and help to develop a transition plan. For consumers who are interested in working, they link them to employment options. They help consumers make the most effective use of their "goods and services funds," and coordinate the payment of goods and services through the program's fiscal management provider. Last, but not least, they help consumers locate community resources that will support their life in the community.

Transition Coordinating in Northwest Ohio

Mike Stelzer, a certified ombudsman specialist with the Area Agency on Aging 3 in northwest Ohio, explains that his work with HOME Choice began with the training offered by the HOME Choice Intake and Care Coordination Unit in September 2008. After learning about the program, and his mission (should he accept it!), he embarked upon an education effort in the counties AAA3 serves: Allen, Auglaize, Hardin, Hancock, Mercer, Putnam and Van Wert. The area is largely rural.

Only with the Area Agency on Aging for two months (he was hired in July 2008), Mike advocated for the new position of HOME Choice transition coordinator, telling his supervisors that helping others and coordinating services was exactly what he wanted to do. They agreed, and today, he is agency's only HOME Choice transition coordinator.

Mike has worked with almost 30 consumers on HOME Choice and has helped 25 transition. He finds that the rural area in which he works is conducive for building all-important relationships in the community. Good communication is vital, he says, not only with the consumers, but also with the agencies and organizations that are involved in the consumer's transition. He makes a point to stay in touch with them all.

Advocacy visits to long-term care facilities are often the source of potential HOME Choice consumers. Or, sometimes the facilities contact him with suggestions. In either case, he follows up with the referred consumer and talks to them about as many options they can think of together. He makes friends with them.

Finding affordable, accessible housing can often be a challenge for consumers trying to transition. However, Mike says it is less of an issue in smaller towns and finds his efforts to build relationships with apartment complexes and property owners have been beneficial.

Educating doctors, and initially skeptical social workers, has been Mike's biggest challenge. Many doctors do not understand the programs available to consumers, such as HOME Choice, and need to be educated. Early on, some social workers were dubious about HOME Choice, but steady working with them has had the pleasant result of their enthusiastic endorsement of the program and they now send him referrals.

Sometimes consumers get so excited about transitioning they want to do it before their apartments are completely ready. Now Mike has a better handle on how long it takes to make a successful move, and he is skilled at encouraging consumers to hold off, impatient to move though they may be.

Most transitions have worked out well. In fact, his first HOME Choice consumer to move in October 2008 is still doing great on his own.

Mike believes the most important aspect of HOME Choice is the hope it generates. Even if consumers' transition does not work out or does not happen at all, they still have been inspired, considered options, and made their own choice.

Mike says he is pleased with the federal government's recent extension of HOME Choice. Not only is it job security for him, but also, "it is fun," he says. "I love doing it!" He enjoys seeing HOME Choice consumers' apartments for the first time and seeing them relish their independence.

"I love identifying people who don't fit in a nursing facility and helping them back into the community," says Mike.

Transition Coordinating in Cleveland

Providing HOME Choice transition coordination services in the Cleveland area is Michael Rodio, CSW, LPCC, clients rights officer of Northeast Ohio Health Services dba Connections: Health-Wellness-Advocacy. As befitting an urban area and a clientele exclusively with mental health issues, his experiences vary a little from Mike Stelzer's.

HOME Choice began as a small pilot project for Connections. From its initial group of five consumers, Michael has now helped, or is helping, 12 consumers to transition.

To find potential HOME Choice consumers, Michael reviews a list of clients in nursing facilities with mental health diagnoses. He then works with the nursing homes to make connections to the clients. Like Mike, Michael had an education task before him as well, including educating the nursing facilities. Once he gets the facilities on board, however, he is able to meet with the clients' treatment teams, an important part of the process.

The mental health system, Michael says, has its own unique needs and barriers. HOME Choice went slowly at first.

However, he likes to recall a success story: a young woman with a mental health diagnosis was a good candidate to move out on her own, but her anxiety created a barrier to living in the community. Much of her anxiety resulted from the presence of men. Michael linked her to a female mental health case worker and a female CareStar case worker, and he worked behind the scenes or in concert with the women to facilitate her transition.

A challenge arose when the HOME Choice consumer was discharged by the nursing facility into a shelter before Michael was able to arrange for an apartment. The consumer then left the shelter, and he and others scrambled to locate her. Michael says this was a unique situation for a mental health consumer. Because their disabilities are not visible, they can be discharged without assurance of a proper place to live.

Since living on her own, the HOME Choice consumer has had minor relapses but mostly progress. Her freedom, Michael explains, was an extreme positive for her. She adores her apartment with its balcony overlooking the lake.

Since that incident, however, Michael says working relationships with the nursing facility have improved greatly.

Sometimes HOME Choice is not right for a consumer. Michael cites one consumer that found he actually preferred the structure of the nursing facility, and returned. But he had the opportunity to choose. He tried one thing and found he preferred something else. This, too, is part of HOME Choice.

Front Door Stakeholder Group - Work Begins in Fall to Update Ohio's Level of Care

In 2008, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services initiated a new stakeholder group to modify the "front door" to long-term services and supports. When ODJFS uses the term "front door," it is talking about changes to how Ohioans access Medicaid benefits to meet long-term needs.

ODJFS completed the first phase of the work in December 2009 when it successfully passed new Ohio Administrative Code rules governing Pre-Admission Screening and Resident Review (PASRR), Ohio's policy that ensures appropriate placement in Ohio nursing facilities.

Now, it is beginning work on Phase 2, which involves changes to what is known as "level of care," Ohio's policy to ensure appropriate placement and Medicaid payment for services and supports through nursing facilities, ICF/MR facilities and home- and community-based waiver programs. The front door stakeholder group met on June 29 and July 12 to brainstorm potential changes to Ohio Administrative Code rules, forms and processes. Detailed work is expected to begin this fall.

Permedion (an ODJFS contractor) completed a study on the nursing facility level-of-care criteria to inform changes made by the Front Door Stakeholder Group. This study is located online at <http://jfs.ohio.gov/OHP/infodata/MFPGrant/info.stm>.

If you are interested in joining this group, please e-mail Erika Robbins at Erika.robbs@jfs.ohio.gov or call (614) 752-3738.

Changes to the Minimum Data Set and Impact on Community Living

The Minimum Data Set (MDS) is a federally mandated clinical assessment completed by nursing facilities. The nursing facility completes a comprehensive assessment of a resident's functional capabilities and needs, then submits the information electronically into a national database.

Section Q of the MDS has always focused on a resident's desire to move back into the community. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), along with multiple stakeholders, has revised section Q to include additional questions related to community placement. New regulations and guidance have been released to help states implement the new Section Q so that the data becomes a mechanism to connect potential residents with information and referral as well as transition assistance, if needed, to move back into community settings.

The Section Q changes go into effect on Oct. 1, 2010. Ohio is developing policy and operations to implement Section Q changes and likely will connect Section Q changes with the HOME Choice Transition Program.

Look to a future issue of this newsletter for additional information on Ohio's Section Q implementation. For general information on MDS changes, please visit https://www.cms.gov/NursingHomeQualityInits/01_Overview.asp#TopOfPage.

Mathematica Policy Research Report on MFP Released in June 2010

Over the course of the MFP demonstration, Mathematica Policy Research has been issuing a series of short reports under the title *The National Evaluation of the Money Follows the Person Demonstration Grant Program: Reports from the Field*. The fourth report in this series, "The Starting Point: The Balance of State Long-Term Care Systems Before the Implementation of the Money Follows the Person Demonstration" is now available for download at http://www.cms.gov/CommunityServices/20_MFP.asp or <http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/health/moneyfollowsperson.asp#pubs>.

The report, by Mathematica researchers Carol V. Irvin and Jeffrey Ballou, describes state long-term care systems and the balance between institutional and community-based care in 2005, during the baseline period before the Money Follows the Person (MFP) demonstration was implemented. Findings suggest that baseline long-term care systems varied considerably across MFP grantee states. While several states were already devoting a disproportionate share of total Medicaid long-

term expenditures to home and community services and supports, other states were not. The states that were not may experience the largest changes in their long-term care systems because of MFP.

Stay tuned for subsequent reports in the series, which will profile MFP participants, assess reinstitutionalization rates, and analyze changes in the quality of life of MFP participants.

Interagency Work Group on Autism Web Site Available

Ohio's Interagency Work Group on Autism (IWGA), facilitated by the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities, is pleased to announce its new Web site introducing the IWGA partnership of state agencies: www.autism.ohio.gov. It allows readers to follow the group's progress, and gives an opportunity to provide input toward its work. The site offers allows users to:

- Learn about autism spectrum disorders
- Keep up-to-date on emerging state initiatives
- Find public resources that can assist individuals with autism spectrum disorders and their families
- Remain informed of autism-related legislation and national news highlights
- Stay current on autism-related training and professional development opportunities.

A guiding principle of Ohio's Interagency Work Group on Autism is *"Information sharing and open communication build collective wisdom."* IWGA hopes users enjoy navigating www.autism.ohio.gov and encourages input by clicking on "Contact Us."

News of Interest to Transition Coordinators, Case Managers and SSAs

2010 Bimonthly Conference Call Schedule

Mark your calendars to participate in conference calls designed to assist transition coordinators, case managers, and services and support administrators (SSAs) in helping HOME Choice consumers transition to the community. The remaining dates for 2010 are:

- Sept. 16 – Update on Balancing
- Nov. 18. – Update on Level of Care

All conference calls are held from 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm. The first hour is dedicated to the call topic, and the second hour is an open forum with an opportunity for participants to problem-solve and learn best practices from each other.

The number for all calls is (866) 248-0561, access code *2874427*.

ODJFS will send an e-mail reminder and agenda before each call. If you would like to be added to our listserv, please contact MFP@jfs.ohio.gov.

Housing Update

Public Housing Authorities Apply for HUD Vouchers

At least 20 Ohio Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) that applied for HOME Choice-designated HUD vouchers will learn in the fall whether they will be awarded the vouchers. Once awarded, the ODJFS Housing Administrator will work with PHAs and transition coordinators to help HOME Choice consumers take advantage of them.

Work with HOME Choice Earns "Trailblazer Award"

This year's Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. "Trailblazer Award" was presented to the AAA7 Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program.

The Ombudsman Program was recognized for its hard work and dedication with HOME Choice. The Ombudsman Program serves as a Transition Coordination provider and help with discharge planning, securing housing and arranging for goods and services needed by individuals moving to the community.

The Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, under the leadership of Kaye Inoshita, RN, was recognized at the event for its tireless work and dedication to individuals who need personalized assistance with this special transition.

Congratulations to AAA7 Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program!

News of Interest to Consumers

New Waiver Provider Service Introduced: Home Care Attendant

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services has introduced a new provider service type, "Home Care Attendant Services" (HCAS), which will permit non-licensed individuals to perform specific "skilled tasks" as Ohio Home Care or Transitions Carve-Out Waiver providers. The service became available on July 1. Providers who work under this provider type must meet certain criteria and be selected by the consumer before beginning services.

The Home Care Attendant Service not only benefits the consumer, but it meets one of HOME Choice's workforce development goals for providers in the HOME choice Operational Protocol.

ODJFS held a series of Webinar trainings in April for people wanting to learn more about the service. Information can be found at www.ohiohcp.org under "News and Program Updates."

The HOME Choice Bulletin is a newsletter for stakeholders and anyone interested in Ohio's Money Follows the Person HOME Choice Transition Program. It provides updates, statistics, and other information about the status and progress of Ohio's HOME Choice Program four times a year.

Please contact mfp@jfs.ohio.gov if you have comments, information to share, or would like to be added to the *HOME Choice Bulletin* e-mail distribution list.

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.

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