

CONTRIBUTING ORGANIZATIONS

Access Center for Independent Living
Achievement Centers for Children
Advocacy and Protective Services (APSI)
American Association of Retired Persons (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 MRDD
Ohio Association of Superintendents of County Boards of MRDD
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

CMS Staff Visit Ohio

Cleveland welcomed representatives from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) – Steve Hrybyk, Sarah Fogler, April Forsythe and Gina Rodriguez, Ohio's federal HOME Choice partners – on July 15 and 16 for a firsthand look at the state's Money Follows the Person (MFP) program, HOME Choice.

The CMS staff met with Ohio stakeholders from all delivery systems on July 15. They discussed multiple topics of interest, including discharge planning, housing and advocacy. (Session materials are posted on the Money Follows the Person Web page at <http://jfs.ohio.gov/OHP/infodata/MFPGrant/info.stm>.) They then spent July 16 meeting and visiting four HOME Choice participants, two of which are highlighted in this edition of the *HOME Choice Bulletin*.

After the visit, Steve Hrybyk, Ohio's project officer at the time, sent a thank you to ODJFS, saying, *"From the CMS Team, thank you for providing us the opportunity to take part in an engaging and well-planned Money Follows the Person site visit. What we learned about HOME Choice will definitely influence our approach to legislative initiatives that strive to improve long-term care programs. Again, thank you and your staff and stakeholders for the hospitality and willingness to take part in an honest and informative dialogue."*

ODJFS thanks the **Solon Senior Center** for hosting the sessions, as well as local providers, transition coordinators, housing staff, advocates and consumers of services for participating in this important CMS site visit.

HOME Choice Success Stories

Ron Detzel

After spending 10 years in a long-term care facility, Ron Detzel was delighted when on May 1 he moved into a home of his choice thanks to the HOME Choice program. HOME Choice, with the Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities (DD) serving as the transition coordinator, enabled this life-changing experience for Ron.

Ron's new home, which he shares with three roommates, is a charming, blue ranch-style house in Westlake (Cuyahoga County). It features a private bedroom for Ron and a spacious, shady, wheelchair-accessible deck in the back. Ron loves to spend "alone" time on the deck and listen to his police scanner.

The house had been vacant for two years until the County DD Board purchased it and restored it so that four individuals could rent it. The community is pleased to have added four new friends, and neighbors stop by the cheerful blue house to bring cookies and cakes to Ron and his roommates.



Ron Detzel smiles in his new home.

Having his own bedroom is important to Ron because he enjoys having his own personal space and his own phone. Ron also relishes the freedom of being able to go out by himself, and now that he lives closer to his mother, he sees her and family friends more often than when he lived in a long-term care facility.

It was through his mother that Ron learned of HOME Choice. So far, he has used HOME Choice's transition funds, which permitted him to purchase items he needed to live on his own. Ron's case manager, Adriana Gabor, of the Cuyahoga DD Board, will ensure that he has the opportunity to participate in the many other services available through HOME Choice, such as life skills training, nutritional counseling, community support and more.

Ron says he would recommend HOME Choice to anyone wishing to move from a long-term care setting into the community!



Ron Detzel and Sarah Fogler, CMS Central Office, Baltimore, on the back deck.



Sandra Lee Dodson (left) and case manager Tanya Huggins (right) in Sandra Lee's new apartment.

Sandra Lee Dodson

Sandra Lee Dodson shared her transition story first by welcoming CMS and ODJFS staff to her lovely apartment in downtown Cleveland on July 16. Sandra Lee learned about HOME Choice from the social worker at the Candlewood Park Nursing Home, where she was living. The social worker connected her to Lisa Marn of the Services for Independent Living, a center for independent living in the Cleveland area. Sandra Lee credits the HOME Choice program for giving her a jump-start back into society.

Lisa worked with Sandra Lee to locate housing and purchase the items she needed for life in a new apartment. Lisa also worked with Sandra Lee's case manager, Tanya Huggins, at the local mental health board to assist in the move. Tanya continues to visit Sandra Lee and is helping her to coordinate benefits to further enable her successful living in the community.

Sandra Lee indicates that she very much enjoys the privacy she now has in her apartment because she had to share a room when she was in the nursing home. She values her independence and plans to seek employment soon. She used to be a nursing assistant prior to her nursing home placement.

In Her Own Words

HOME Choice helped Cheryl Mathews transition from a long-term care facility to her own home in May 2009, with The Ability Center of Greater Toledo providing transition coordination services. In completing a customer satisfaction survey, Cheryl not only gave the highest marks possible, she also wrote her own personal letter of thanks.

When contacted for permission to print it, she responded with an enthusiastic "yes" and said, "It's a great program!"

Here is Cheryl's story, in her own words:

"Thank you so very much for all your help. My son and myself are very happy. I can't put into words how grateful I am. To say thank you for all that has been done for me doesn't seem to be enough. HOME Choice has done so much for me, just to name a few:

"HOME Choice has given me my life back. My faith and hope – I thought I lost forever. HOME Choice is a program I would tell anyone about that is in need or ready to make that step back to independent living again. One more thing, my case worker, Nicole Cape, is a very sweet lady who never gave up when I did.

"On my move-in day I couldn't believe it was true: I have my own apartment! So, to rate your survey all 4s just doesn't seem enough. HOME Choice and Nicole Cape, I thank you with all my heart."

Cheryl Mathews, Fremont, Ohio

Spotlight on Stakeholders

ODJFS recognizes the following stakeholders for their passion and work to improve services and supports for Ohioans in need of long-term services and supports:

- ODJFS thanks the many **stakeholders** who spent countless hours providing feedback on the revision of the pre-admission screening and resident review (PASRR) rules. The rules have now been filed with JCARR. A public hearing was held August 25.
- **Ohio's Interagency Work Group on Autism (IWGA)** is pleased to announce a status report of progress and accomplishments! Since implementing a work plan of activities in late 2008, the IWGA has identified many opportunities for state agency partners to coordinate, be creative in challenging budget times, and determine ways to join efforts in serving and supporting individuals on the autism spectrum and their families. The IWGA invites you to review the status report at <http://mrdd.ohio.gov/topics/iagautism.htm>.
- ODJFS sends many thanks to **Terry Watts** with the **Ohio Department of Mental Health** and **Angela Sausser Short**, director of the **Ohio Family and Children First Council** for their assistance in better connecting the HOME Choice transition program to persons with mental illness and children in need of transition supports. We look forward to the continued work in the months ahead!
- **The Governor's Interagency Council on Homelessness and Affordable Housing** endorsed the **Technical Assistance Collaborative (TAC)** housing report on July 15. TAC is a national non-profit organization with expertise in housing policy at the federal, state and local levels. The report includes a comprehensive analysis of key affordable housing and supportive services issues in Ohio, along with a set of recommendations for future housing priorities. The full report will be uploaded to <http://jfs.ohio.gov/OHP/infodata/MFPGrant/info.stm>.

HOME Choice Statistics

Here are the statistics for the HOME Choice program as of press time:

- 274 consumers enrolled.
- 902 people have applied.
- 51 transition coordination agencies were providing services in each of Ohio's 88 counties.
- 117 agency service providers were participating.
- 157 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. Visit <http://jfs.ohio.gov/OHP/consumers/HOMEchoice.stm> for interest forms and other information.

Housing Updates

Public Housing Authorities Stepping Up

Since the Cuyahoga County Public Housing Authority (PHA) partnered with ODJFS to provide housing vouchers to HOME Choice consumers, we have been contacted by the Akron, Lucas, Geauga and Columbiana PHAs. The Akron PHA has offered 25 vouchers to HOME Choice, and the Lucas County PHA has offered 10 to the local Ability Center.

ODJFS is pleased with these partnerships and encourages other PHAs to collaborate, as well. Please contact ODJFS Housing Coordinator Brock Robertson for more information at brock.robertson@jfs.ohio.gov or (614) 752-3577.

HUD Makes 4,000 Vouchers Available for Non-Elderly People with Disabilities

Recently the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) submitted a request for information (RFI) for a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for 4,000 housing vouchers for non-elderly people with disabilities. Included in the 4,000 are 1,000 for Money Follows the Person Demonstration Programs across the nation.

ODJFS responded to the RFI by submitting comments to HUD and hopes it will implement some of its suggestions into the NOFA. To support its suggestions, ODJFS has gathered data about HOME Choice consumers whose main barrier to transitioning to the community is finding affordable and accessible housing. ODJFS will also contact PHAs and encourage them to apply for HUD's vouchers.

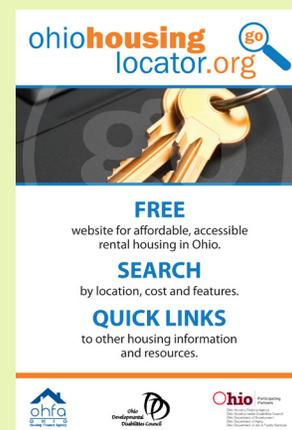
Please encourage your local PHA to apply for the HUD vouchers targeted for HOME Choice. If you have any questions, please contact ODJFS Housing Coordinator Brock Robertson at brock.robertson@jfs.ohio.gov or (614) 752-3577.

Ohio Housing Locator Posters Available

Please do not forget to use the Ohio Housing Locator (www.ohiohousinglocator.org) as a source to help find housing. The Ohio Housing Locator is a Web-based program, which helps people find affordable and accessible housing in their area.

Recently a HOME Choice consumer in Butler County used the site and found two subsidized projects that were available.

If you would like a poster promoting the Ohio Housing Locator (right), please contact Janet Hofmann at the Ohio Department of Aging at (614) 466-6366.



Update on Ohioans with Disabilities in the Workforce!

The federal Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 allows states to provide Medicaid to workers with disabilities. Historically, people with disabilities were discouraged from working because their earnings and resources made them ineligible for Medicaid health coverage. On June 30, 2007, House Bill 119 was signed into Ohio law, creating the **Medicaid Buy-In for Workers with Disabilities (MBIWD)** program. Enrollment in the MBIWD program began April 1, 2008.

To qualify for MBIWD, a person must:

- Be a U.S. citizen or meet citizenship requirements.
- Be a resident of Ohio.
- Be 16 to 64 years old.
- Have a disability as defined by the Social Security Administration (SSA) or be eligible under the MBIWD "medically improved" category.
- Be employed in paid work (includes part-time and full-time work).
- Pay a premium (if applicable).
- Meet certain financial criteria.

As of June 2009, approximately 3,307 Ohioans were enrolled in the program, with approximately 1,453 paying a premium. Although the program is successful, outreach is an ongoing goal. If you have suggestions for outreach or a success story to share, please send a message to the Money Follows the Person e-mail box at MFP@jfs.ohio.gov.

Web Site Lists Providers by Service Type and County

Transition coordinators and case managers can use the HOME Choice Web site to help find providers for their consumers. The site – <http://jfs.ohio.gov/OHP/consumers/homechoice.stm> – lists providers by service type, as well as by county. This page is updated every two weeks.

HOME Choice Looking for Providers

The HOME Choice program currently needs more:

- Social workers/counselors
- Community support coaches
- Nutritional counselors
- Independent living skills trainers
- Communication aid providers
- Service animal providers

Although the list of demonstration and service providers continues to grow, more providers are needed, and we continue to recruit them. If you are part of an association, please share our recruitment needs with your members and encourage them to apply!

It is easy for providers to enroll. Anyone interested in becoming a HOME Choice provider should visit <http://jfs.ohio.gov/OHP/consumers/homechoice.stm> to find all they need to know.

This Web site includes:

- Fact sheets, applications and reimbursement rates for each provider.
- A Provider Tool Kit with information about the HOME Choice rules, incident reporting and more.
- A list of enrolled providers for each demonstration and supplemental service.

ODJFS processes accurately completed applications within five business days. Applications with errors are returned to the sender for more (or the correct) information.

Next Conference Call Will Address “Balancing”

Balancing strategies will be the topic of the next **Transition Coordinator/Case Manager Conference Call**, scheduled for September 24. Each bimonthly call dedicates one hour to a particular topic and a second hour to an open forum, to allow for problem-solving and the sharing of best practices. The last two calls addressed “Incident Reporting and Quality under the MFP Grant” and “Strategies to Address Housing for HOME Choice Participants.”

Mark your calendars for the upcoming calls. ODJFS will e-mail reminders and agendas to all for whom it has e-mail addresses. To be added to the e-mail list, please e-mail MFP@jfs.ohio.gov and ask to be added to the list.

September 24 – Ohio Balancing Strategies – An Overview of SFY 10/11 Strategies to Expand Choice

November 19 – Workforce – Employment for People with Disabilities and Direct Support for Workforce Capacity and Strategies.

All conference calls are from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. The number for all calls is (614) 644-9301, access code 647765#.



"I really cannot say enough good things about the HOME Choice program. This is fantastic on many levels, and it has made a difference in so many people's lives thus far. The success of this program is phenomenal! You and your staff have been great to work with. The positives of this program cannot be ignored, and the clients we have helped transition are very grateful to have this opportunity to be independent (with supports) and successful in their own apartments."

– Mike Stelzer, Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, PSA-3

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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