



## MEDICAID WAIVER PROGRAMS

### PART II - HOME- AND COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES MEDICAID WAIVERS FOR ADULTS

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Colorado currently administers 11 Home- and Community-Based Services Medicaid (HCBS) Waivers. This *issue brief* discusses the six waivers available to adults. An issue brief entitled *Medicaid Waiver Programs Part I – Home- and Community-Based Services Medicaid Waivers for Children* discusses the five waivers available to children.

#### Background

Health First Colorado, Colorado's Medicaid program, is a joint federal and state public health insurance program that provides health insurance coverage to low-income individuals who meet income and other eligibility requirements. Each state administers its own Medicaid program, and the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) monitors state programs and sets quality, funding, benefit, and eligibility standards. Colorado's Medicaid program is administered by the Department of Health Care Policy and Financing.

Although federal law provides certain eligibility criteria and outlines minimum benefits, states have flexibility in the design and implementation of their Medicaid programs. States may extend Medicaid eligibility to additional persons with incomes above the income eligibility requirement, or provide coverage to optional groups. In addition to expanding the categories of individuals served under Medicaid, states can provide additional nonmandated benefits through the

implementation of a waiver. A Medicaid waiver is a detailed agreement between CMS and a state that allows the state to expand Medicaid coverage by exempting the state from specific provisions of the federal Medicaid law.

#### Home- and Community-Based Services Medicaid Waivers for Adults

HCBS waivers for adults allow states to provide home- and community-based care to adults who may otherwise be institutionalized in a nursing facility, hospital, or an intermediate care facility for individuals with intellectual disabilities (ICF/IID). A waiver applicant must meet financial, medical, and program criteria to access services under a waiver.

Applications for waivers are submitted to either a single entry point agency (SEP) or a community centered board (CCB). SEPs provide case management, care planning, and make referrals to other resources for elderly, blind, and disabled persons, and persons living with AIDS, mental illness, brain injury, or spinal cord injury. CCBs are private nonprofit organizations designated as the single entry point into Colorado's long-term service and support system for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

In addition to receiving all regular Medicaid services, HBCS waiver clients receive a variety of specialized services, such as adult day services, behavioral management, consumer direct attendant support services (CDASS),

community transition services, home modifications, and day habilitation. The client, the client's family or guardian, and the case manager collaborate to create an individualized service plan that meets the needs of the client. The services are provided by certified Medicaid providers or by a Medicaid-contracted managed care organization. The cost of the services provided cannot be more than the cost of placement in a nursing facility, hospital, or ICF/IID.

**Persons with Brain Injury Waiver.** This waiver provides home- and community-based alternatives to hospital or specialized nursing facility care for persons 16 years of age and older with a brain injury. Applications for this waiver may be submitted to a SEP. Services available under the waiver include: behavioral management; CDASS; home modification; mental health and substance abuse counseling; and specialized medical equipment and supplies.

**Community Mental Health Supports Waiver.** This waiver provides a home- or community-based alternative to nursing facility care for persons 18 years of age and older who are diagnosed with a major mental illness. Applications may be submitted to a SEP. Services available under the waiver include: adult day services; alternative care facilities; CDASS; respite care; and homemaker services.

**Persons Who are Elderly, Blind, and Disabled Waiver.** This waiver provides a home- or community-based alternative to nursing facility care for elderly persons 65 years of age and older with a functional impairment or blind or physically disabled persons aged 18 to 64. Applications may be submitted to a SEP. Services available under the waiver include: adult day services; alternative care facilities; community transition services; CDASS; home modifications; and personal care.

**Persons with Spinal Cord Injury Waiver.** This waiver provides home- and community-based alternatives to nursing care for persons 18 years of age and older with a spinal cord injury. Applications may be

submitted at a SEP. Services available under the waiver include: adult day services; alternative therapies, such as acupuncture, chiropractic, and massage; CDASS; home modification; and in-home support services.

**Supported Living Services Waiver.** This waiver provides supported living services to persons with developmental disabilities who are 18 years of age and older who can either live independently or who receive a high level of support from other sources, such as family, in the person's home or community. Applications may be submitted at a CCB. Services available under the waiver include: assistive technology; behavioral services; day habilitation services; dental services; and home modification.

**Persons With Developmental Disabilities Waiver.** This waiver provides persons 18 years of age and older with developmental disabilities with services and supports to allow them to continue to live in the community. Applications may be submitted to a CCB. Services available under the waiver include: behavioral services; day habilitation services; non-medical transportation; dental services; and prevocational services. As of September 2016, this adult waiver is the only one with a waiting list, with approximately 2,700 individuals on that waiting list.

#### Additional Information

- Additional information about the HCBS waivers and other programs for individuals with physical and developmental disabilities may be found at: <http://tiny.cc/gc75fy>.
- Additional information about SEPs may be found at: <http://tiny.cc/4d75fy>.
- Additional information about CCBs may be found at: <http://tiny.cc/tf75fy>