****

**Massachusetts Strategy for Supporting Home and Community Based Services using American**

**Rescue Plan (ARP) Funding *31 March 2021***

**American Rescue Plan: Home and Community Based, and Behavioral Health Services**

## On March 11, 2021, President Biden signed into law the American Rescue Plan.

## A portion of American Rescue Plan (Section 9817) provides additional support for Medicaid home and community-based services during the COVID-19 emergency by providing a 10% increase in federal funding for a one-year period from April 1, 2021 to March 31, 2022.

## The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) have not yet provided details on how the funding will be distributed or the allowable criteria. While there are many outstanding questions, the Commonwealth wanted to share the following:

## This is an exciting opportunity to further support home and community services and the Commonwealth will work to access as much federal funding as possible.

## The enhanced federal funding is time-limited and non-recurring. Enhanced funding will not be provided beyond March 2022. This is important to consider when developing implementation plans.

## Although the funding period starts on April 1st, this ***is not*** the date by which states must implement a plan. States will not lose money if plans are not implemented April 1st.

## All states are awaiting further guidance from CMS before finalizing or implementing plans.

## The Commonwealth will issue a Request For Information (RFI) to gather broad feedback and ideas from the community on how to best utilize the enhanced funding. This information will be used to help develop a strategic plan.

It is important to note that Section 9817 is only one aspect of the American Rescue Plan that may impact programs and services for older adults and individuals with disabilities. The Commonwealth is awaiting clarification and guidance from other federal agencies in addition to CMS, such as the Administration for Community Living, which may provide an even greater opportunity to strengthen HCBS programs overall.