

Massachusetts Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Spending Plan for American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Enhanced Federal Funding

July 16 2021



On July 16, 2021, the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) submitted to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Service (CMS) its first [Quarterly Spending Plan and Narrative](#), which builds upon the [Initial Spending Plan](#) submitted on June 17, 2021.

Massachusetts is making investments in three implementation rounds that support three key pillars: (1) Workforce, (2) Access & Promotion of HCBS, and (3) Infrastructure & Technology. **The July Quarterly Spending Plan includes investments totaling approximately \$44M of the new, time-limited dollars that can be invested in Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) through March of 2024.** These investments will complement other ongoing initiatives aimed at supporting Massachusetts' long-standing commitment to rebalancing long-term services and supports and behavioral health services towards community living. Investments will additionally support the Commonwealth's focus on improving equity and access to HCBS for those with physical disabilities, intellectual and developmental disabilities, and behavioral health needs. Round 2 investments include the following:

- **Expansion of the Moving Forward Plan Community Living Waiver slots** to increase the opportunity for community living through an aggregate total of 150 new waiver slots above the waiver's current projected slot growth
- Provision of an In-Home Crisis Intervention Program **for youth** in need of at home behavioral health supports to prevent boarding or admissions to facility settings
- Investments to enhance and **improve the Pre-admission Screening and Resident Review (PASRR) process** used for all nursing facility applicants and individuals residing in nursing facilities to ensure services are provided in the least restrictive setting
- **Short-term rate enhancements to Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) organizations** to promote sustainability and expansion into new unserved and/or under-served service areas and ensure broader access to the PACE care model designed to allow participants to live safely in their homes instead of in nursing facilities.
- Funding for **intensive hospital discharge planning** in hospitals **to link members who are homeless and housing unstable to community services** and immediately **establish their HCBS service package** upon discharge
- Investments for a vendor to **develop an online self-service application** that will allow individuals to enter general information about their HCBS needs, provide an **outline of services and programs** that may address their needs and direct them to **appropriate resources**.
- Alignment and enhancement of a **Power Wheelchair Repair Loaner program** across the secretariat to allow for the provision of backup power wheelchairs when power wheelchairs need repair, as well as explore and develop partnerships with entities that can perform routine wheelchair repairs locally in the community.
- Design and development of an **Electronic Provider Directory for members with Continuous Skilled Nursing (CSN) needs** to minimize the time and frustration experienced when identifying and contacting CSN providers with specific needed availability and skills.

In October, Massachusetts will submit the next Quarterly Spending Plan which will include additional investments that strengthen the Commonwealth's ability to serve individuals in home and community-based settings. EOHHS will continue to work with its stakeholder community to finalize and scope out investments that support the three key structural pillars.