

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

October 20 2021



On October 15, 2021, the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) submitted to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Service (CMS) its [second Quarterly Spending Plan and Narrative](#), building upon the [Initial Spending Plan](#) submitted on July 17th, 2021. Massachusetts is investing in three implementation rounds that support three key objectives: (1) Workforce, (2) Access & Promotion of HCBS, and (3) Technology.

The October Quarterly Spending Plan includes the third and final round of investments totaling approximately \$583M in Secretariat wide investments focused on strengthening and building the workforce, supporting families and natural caregivers, improving access, increasing access to community settings and promoting person-centeredness, choice, and equity.

With the submission of the October Quarterly Spending Plan and third round of investments, **EOHHS has committed to a total investment of \$965M across all three rounds to enhance, strengthen, and expand HCBS across MassHealth populations.** An anticipated \$525M in estimated new, time limited federal dollars that can be invested in HCBS services through March 2024 will support this significant investment.

HCBS ARPA funds provide an opportunity to target significant and impactful investments, focused on the member and improving their journey as they seek care and services needed to transition to or remain in their communities. Round 3 investments will serve to mitigate pain points, current challenges, and obstacles across the three “Home and Community First” pillars:

Pillar 1 | HCBS Workforce: sustaining and expanding the HCBS paid and unpaid workforce

- EOHHS will invest **\$426M to build, sustain, and expand the HCBS paid workforce and support the HCBS unpaid workforce** to ensure the availability of a high-quality workforce to care for and meet member needs; this includes sustaining family caregivers and natural supports.
- Rebuilding, strengthening, and supporting the HCBS workforce, both paid and unpaid, is critical for enhancing, expanding and strengthening HCBS in both the immediate and longer term
- Investments include the extension of short-term rate enhancements to support provider push to recruit during an unprecedented worker shortage, expanded respite resources programs for families and a call to care recruitment campaign among other things.

Pillar 2 | HCBS Technology: modernizing and promoting efficient systems to preserve workforce capacity and strengthen member choice

- Massachusetts will invest **\$30M in technology and infrastructure initiatives centered around larger-scale system enhancements that complement and support both the HCBS pillars of workforce and access to HCBS services.**
- Investments will modernize and promote efficiency across EOHHS agencies, as well as serve to empower members and promote provider efficiency in an effort to augment the workforce

Pillar 3 | Access to and Promotion of HCBS: Investments to reduce infrastructural barriers to support individuals living safely in their homes and communities

- Building on the total \$44M investments included in the July Quarterly spending plan, EOHHS will invest an **additional \$104M to further the Commonwealth’s longstanding goal to equitably rebalance long-term services and supports and behavioral health services towards community living by**

diverting and/or transitioning individuals away from facility-based settings. Additionally, investments will focus on ensuring those individuals seeking to transition to or maintain tenancy within their homes and communities do not face barriers or challenges in accessing services and are able to live well and safely within their home.

- Investments include through expanded member access to technology, home modification programs and wheelchair repairs as well as additional integrated cross agency supports for specialized services for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and for adults with co-occurring ASD and behavioral health diagnoses.

In addition to the broad, cross-agency investments, **\$24M of the total Round 3 investment will be targeted to support the unique needs of the specific populations served by EOHHS agencies.** These targeted funds will support specific-agency priorities aimed at having a positive and meaningful impact on the individuals that serve.

In the coming months, EOHHS will work closely with the stakeholder community to refine proposed investments throughout the development and implementation process.