

THE MEDICAID WAIVER REVIEW

NEWS FROM KENTUCKY'S 1915(C) HOME AND COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES WAIVER PROGRAMS

SUMMER/FALL 2022

A Milestone Move: Kentucky Transitions Helps 800 Clients

Kentucky Transitions provides one-time funding and transition planning for individuals who want to move out of nursing homes and into the community.

Ask any Kentucky Transitions staff member what they love about their job, and you'll hear it over and over...

"Seeing the individuals get to leave the nursing facility and enter their own space is really special... You can tell just by the look on their face what it means to them to have their life back," says Transition Coordinator Cara Duggan.

"...The opportunity to watch the excitement about regaining their independence is priceless," says Housing Supervisor Sharon Wheatley.

"I am honored to be a part of their nursing facility discharge and move-in day. Most are so excited to see their new apartment, furnishings, food, and supplies. Helping set up their 'new home' is so satisfying," says Quality Assurance Analyst Teresa Leliaert

...it's all about the people they serve.

Kentucky Transitions helps individuals move out of nursing facilities and into their own homes by funding the transition and providing support during the transition process. This small but important program is celebrating a big milestone. In August 2022, Kentucky Transitions completed the program's 800th transition.

The Department for Medicaid Services (DMS) developed Kentucky Transitions in 2008 using funds from the Money Follows the Person (MFP) demonstration grant offered by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The grant is designed to help states reduce the amount of Medicaid dollars spent on institutional care and increase the use of community-based services. Kentucky Transitions employs a staff of six people: a Project Director, two Transition Coordinators, a Housing Coordinator, and a Housing Supervisor, and a Quality Assurance Analyst. The staff works together with the goal of helping individuals live more independently. Most employees have been with the program for more than a decade.

"Kentucky Transitions is a wonderful program with staff that are willing to go above and beyond to assist clients in the transition process," says Transition Coordinator Tracey Price.

Other staff members agree, saying it feels like family.

"We have a great, dedicated team and we work well together," says Housing Coordinator Tina Hurd.

"It's a small team, but everyone on it is so committed and motivated to move as many people as possible and help as many people in the state as they can," says Duggan.

Kentucky Transitions identifies potential program participants through referrals from nursing facilities, family and friends, or even the individuals themselves. Individuals must have lived in a nursing facility for at least sixty days, be Medicaid-eligible, have been receiving Medicaid services for at least one day, and be able to live safely in the community safely with support and services. Once a referral is received, a Transition Coordinator visits the individual to assess whether they are appropriate for the program. If an individual is deemed eligible, the Transition Coordinator helps them plan the move into their own home. This includes figuring out how to best meet the individual's medical, personal care, and social needs. Support can be provided by natural support such as family and friends, community resources, and/or through DMS' Home and Community Based or Acquired Brain Injury Long-Term Care waivers, if eligible.

"Being able to meet the client and then see them through the whole process to their move is very special," says Duggan.

"My favorite part of my job is getting to know the MFP clients, their life experience, needs, and desires for the community setting," says Price.



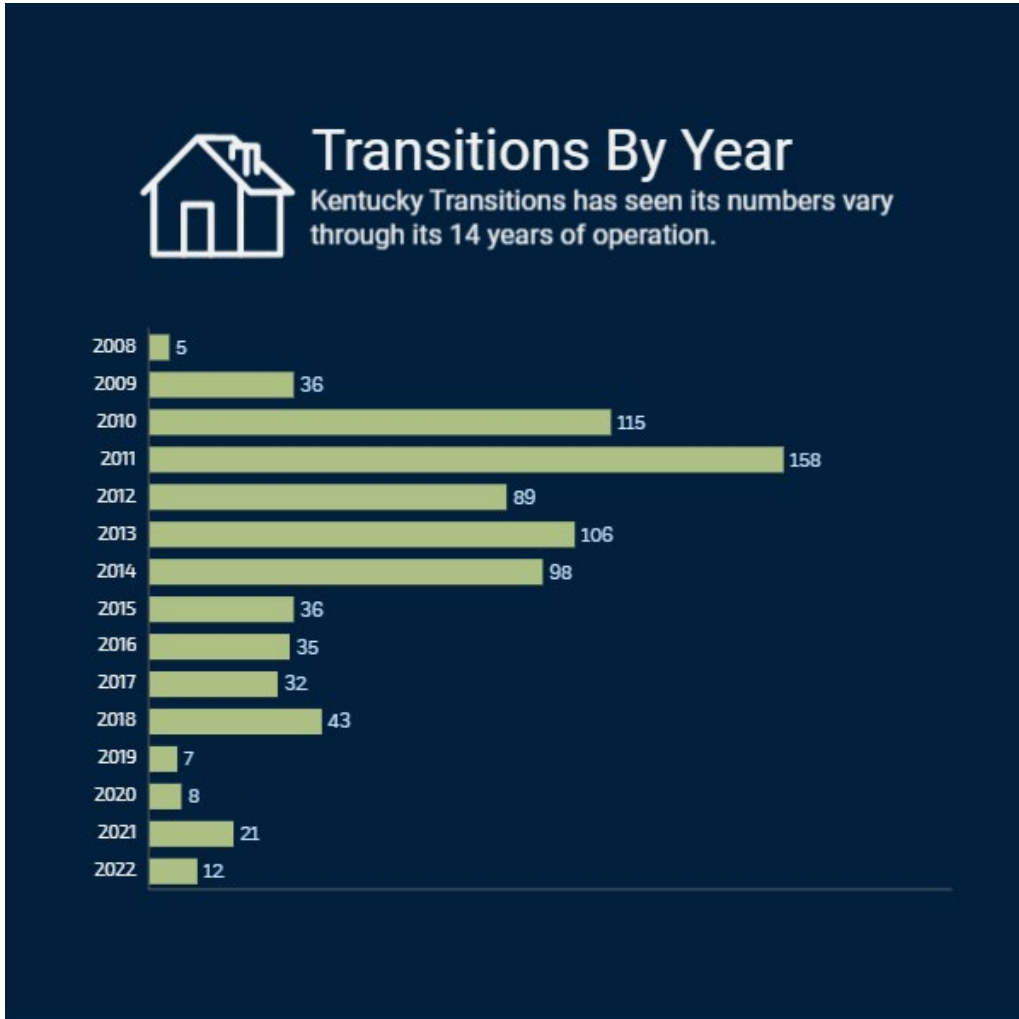
From The Archives

Find out how one Kentucky woman benefitted from Kentucky Transitions after five years in a nursing home.

[Read Ms. Pointdexter's Story](#)

(Credit: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development)

NEWS FROM KENTUCKY'S 1915(C) HCBS WAIVER PROGRAMS



Housing often proves to be the most challenging part of the transition process as there is a shortage of accessible and affordable places available. This is where Kentucky Transitions' Housing Supervisor and Housing Coordinator come in.

"...One of the main barriers is finding subsidized housing for people. There are not enough HUD housing to house people in the US. The waiting lists are long. Some maybe up to a year and a half or longer. Other barriers are, if someone has a criminal record, such as a felony, that person may never be able to get HUD housing depending on the crime. Also, if you had an eviction from HUD, you will not be accepted for any subsidized housing," says Hurd.

Hurd and Wheatley develop relationships with agencies across the state and use all the resources they can to solve these issues. Breaking through those barriers is rewarding for everyone involved in the process.

"...When the client finally gets an apartment and hearing their voice on the phone when I tell them that they are the next one up for an apartment after getting details from the apartment managers. This client may have been waiting for months for an apartment," says Hurd. "To see how happy they are and to see their face when they enter their new home is priceless."

The journey from the nursing home to the client's new

home can have other bumps. Health setbacks, lack of family or natural supports, financial struggles, background checks, and a shortage of available service providers sometimes slows or stops transitions altogether.

"Meeting clients who are so motivated to get out and then have a medical setback that prevents them from moving is really hard," says Duggan.

Due to the nature of their work, Kentucky Transitions staff often return to communities where former clients live. It's a chance to see, firsthand, the difference the program makes for individuals who have successfully moved out of a nursing home.

"Meeting our previous participants... and talking to them. They were all thriving and vocalized how much they enjoy living in the community," says Leliaert.

"To hear that they have been living out in the community after a year or so is so rewarding and encouraging," says Hurd.

More support will soon be available to individuals after transition. In early 2022, CMS expanded the supplemental services a transition program can offer to include short-term housing assistance and food assistance. CMS also increased MFP funding. This allows transition programs to shift from offering one-time assistance to offering extra support once the client moves into the community. Kentucky Transitions is currently taking the necessary steps to make these options available in the Commonwealth.

What Waiver Services Mean to Me



Todd Gregory receives services through the Acquired Brain Injury - Long Term Care waiver.

Participant Update: Todd Gregory

In March 2022, DMS issued a special edition of the Medicaid Waiver Review in honor of Acquired Brain Injury Awareness month. Readers met Todd Gregory, an acquired brain injury survivor and participant in the ABI LTC waiver, with a passion for helping others and spreading brain injury awareness. This year, Todd partnered with the Brain Injury Association of Kentucky to provide helmets to kids in his community. Read more about Todd's efforts in the [Georgetown News-Graphic!](#)



Calling All Waiver Participants!

The "What Waiver Services Mean to Me" feature will return in our next newsletter. In the meantime, we want to hear from YOU!

If you are interested in sharing your story and how waiver services have helped you, we'd love to feature you in the newsletter. You can contact us at MedicaidPublicComment@ky.gov for details on how to participate and share your story. We hope to hear from as many participants across all of Kentucky's 1915(c) HCBS waiver programs as possible!

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ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE TO PROVIDERS AND PARTICIPANTS AFFECTED BY JULY FLOODING

APPENDIX K – NATURAL DISASTER OFFERS FLEXIBILITY FOR MEETING NEEDS



An aerial view of flooding in eastern Kentucky on July 29, 2022. Credit: Governor Andy Beshear's Office

There is additional assistance available to 1915(c) HCBS waiver providers and participants affected by the July 2022 flooding in eastern Kentucky. In August 2022, CMS approved an Appendix K amendment to the 1915(c) HCBS waiver programs related to flooding. Appendix K is an extra appendix of the 1915(c) HCBS waiver application that allows states to make short-term changes to their waivers due to an emergency. Appendix K – Flooding gives providers and participants the flexibility to meet needs caused by the floods. Copies of Appendix K and a summary of updates are available at the links below.

Appendix K – Flooding: <https://bit.ly/AppKEYFloods>

Appendix K – Flooding Summary: <https://bit.ly/AppKEYFloodSummary>

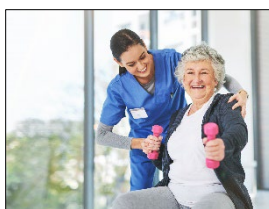
Please note that Appendix K – Natural Disaster only applies to providers and participants in the following 13 counties: Breathitt, Clay, Floyd, Johnson, Knott, Leslie, Letcher, Magoffin, Martin, Owsley, Perry, Pike, and Wolfe.

Other resources available to providers and participants affected by the natural disaster can be found in the [Flood Recovery Resources for Medicaid Members](#) and on the [Governor's Flood Resources website](#).

If you have questions or have a waiver-related need due to the flooding, you can also contact the 1915(c) Waiver Help Desk at (844) 784-5614 or 1915cWaiverHelpDesk@ky.gov.

New Program Alert: DMS begins coverage for Programs of All-Inclusive Services for the Elderly

There's a new option for Kentuckians who need support due to their age and want to continue living at home. DMS is beginning coverage for Programs of All-Inclusive Services for the Elderly or PACE. When individuals enroll in PACE, a PACE organization provides and/or coordinates all the services they need such as preventive care, management of medical conditions, therapeutic services, and social services. To enroll in PACE an individual must:



- Be age 55 or older.
- Meet nursing facility level of care.
- Be able to live safely in the community at the time of enrollment.
- Live in an area covered by a PACE organization.

Kentucky currently has two PACE organizations, Horizon PACE and Bluegrass Care Navigators, which cover 19 counties. DMS is seeking more PACE organizations to expand program availability. Information on becoming a PACE organization is available on the [DMS provider website](#). Additional details are available in [Governor Andy Beshear's announcement](#) about the program.

The Division of Community Alternatives Changes Names

The Department for Medicaid Services underwent a reorganization in July 2022. As a result, the Division of Community Alternatives is now known as the Division of Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS). In addition to the 1915(c) HCBS waiver programs, LTSS is now responsible for all Medicaid long-term care programs: Nursing Facilities, the Kentucky Level of Care System (KLOCS), Home Health and Private Duty Nursing Services, Nurse Aide Training, and PACE.

If you have questions about the 1915(c) HCBS waiver programs, you can reach us the same way you always have. Contact us by phone at (844) 784-5614 or by email at 1915cWaiverHelpDesk@ky.gov.

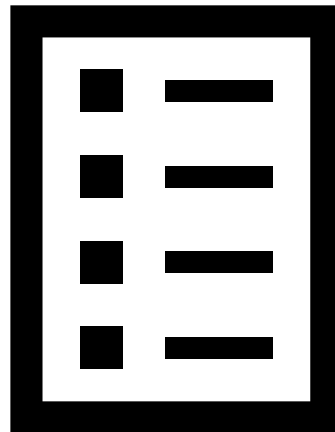
Looking for COVID-19 Information Online?

COVID-19 information for the 1915(c) HCBS waiver programs has moved from the Division of LTSS website to the [Medicaid COVID-19 Information page](#). Scroll down to the Home- and Community-based Services Waiver Information section for the links.



NEWS FROM KENTUCKY'S 1915(C) HCBS WAIVER PROGRAMS

WAIVER RENEWAL UPDATES



Supports for Community Living Public Comment

DMS is in the process of renewing the Supports for Community Living (SCL) waiver application with CMS. To continue offering waiver services, Kentucky must renew each waiver application every five years. DMS released the renewal application for public review and comment from June 24, 2022, to July 24, 2022.

DMS thanks the stakeholders who took the time to review the proposed SCL waiver application and submitted comments during the formal public comment period. Stakeholder input is key to helping DMS evaluate potential updates to Kentucky's 1915(c) HCBS waiver programs. DMS thoroughly reviewed the comments received and issued a response on September 1, 2022. The public response is available online for review.

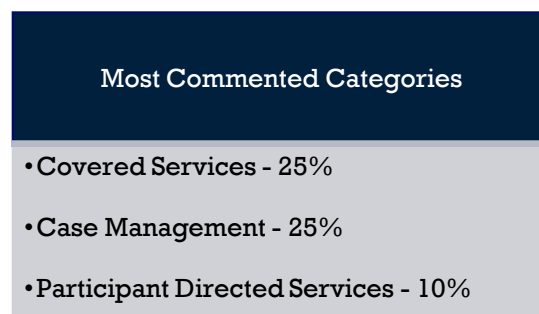
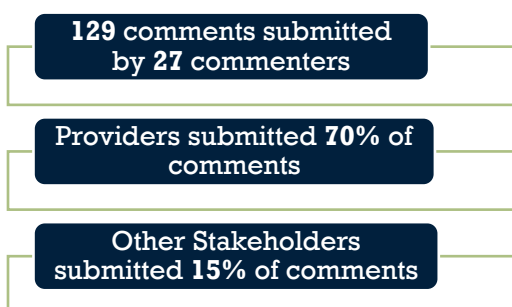
SCL Public Comment Response

<https://bit.ly/SCLPCResponse>

DMS is now in the process of making updates to the waiver application as noted in the public comment response and will submit the SCL waiver application to CMS for approval soon.

DMS is dedicated to recognizing and considering stakeholder input at any time. It is important to note that DMS is continuously accepting comments about the waiver programs. Comments submitted before June 24, 2022, and after July 24, 2022, are addressed through DMS staff interaction. Comments can be submitted to MedicaidPublicComment@ky.gov.

SCL Public Comment by the Numbers



DMS Wants to Hear from You! ABI LTC Public Comment Underway

Public comment for the renewal of the Acquired Brain Injury Long-Term Care waiver began September 2, 2022, and runs through 11:59 p.m. Eastern on October 2, 2022. The public comment period is being held as part of the renewal of the ABI LTC waiver, which expires this year. The waiver updates focused on clarifying policies, aligning the waiver application with the ABI LTC Kentucky Administrative Regulation, and assuring current waiver processes are described accurately. More details on the public comment period and how to submit a comment are available at the links below.

ABI LTC Renewal Application

<https://bit.ly/kyABILTCRenewalApp>

ABI LTC Renewal Summary of Updates

<https://bit.ly/ABILTCRenewalSummary>

ABI LTC Public Comment Notice and Instructions for submitting a comment

<https://bit.ly/ABILTCPublicCommentNotice>



NEWS FROM KENTUCKY'S 1915(C) HCBS WAIVER PROGRAMS

Other News & Notes

New Educational Opportunity for Students with Intellectual Disabilities



The University of Kentucky is preparing to welcome students with intellectual disabilities through the establishment of a Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary (CTP) Program. According to UK, the program was recently approved by the U.S. Department of Education and will be known as the College and Career Studies Program. The goal is to offer students with intellectual disabilities a fully inclusive college experience.

Similar programs already exist at Murray State University, Northern Kentucky University, and Bluegrass Community and Technical College. UK's Human Development Institute provides technical assistance to these programs and to any institution in Kentucky interested in developing a program.

You can learn more about [UK's College and Career Studies program online](https://kshep.hdiuky.org/). Additional information on inclusive higher education in Kentucky is available at <https://kshep.hdiuky.org/>.

Community Resource Spotlight: Project CARAT

Did you know 1915(c) HCBS waiver participants can use community resources to close support gaps? DMS is raising awareness of the role community resources can play in helping participants live independently in the community.

In this edition of our newsletter, we're spotlighting Project CARAT (Coordinating and Assisting the Reuse of Assistive Technology). Project CARAT accepts donated assistive technology or durable medical equipment, which is refurbished and redistributed to individuals who need it. According to Project CARAT, more than 12,000 pieces of assistive technology or durable medical equipment have been provided to more than 3,200 individuals. You can learn more about receiving assistive technology or equipment through Project CARAT or donating at <https://www.katsnet.org/services/at-reuse/>.



DMS keeps a [list of community resources online](#). **If you know of a resource that could help 1915(c) HCBS participants, please let us know by emailing MedicaidPublicComment@ky.gov.**

This newsletter is produced by the Kentucky Department for Medicaid Services, Division of Long-Term Services and Supports

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