



# Community Living

## FACT SHEET

AAIDD | The Arc | AUCD | NACDD | SABA | UCP

### Background

**Long Term Supports and Services:** The federal/state Medicaid program is the major - sometimes the *only* - source of funding for long term supports and services (LTSS) that many people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) rely on to live in the community. This effective and cost efficient program is a lifeline for people with I/DD, making it possible for them to live and work among their neighbors.

Many states, however, have long waiting lists for participation in such Medicaid-funded community-based supports and services. Due to medical and technological advances, people have longer life expectancies and often live with aging parents. As the population ages, the need for LTSS will increase for both people with I/DD and their caregivers.

**Housing:** Medicaid provides essential supports and services, but by law typically cannot pay for a person's rent or mortgage payment. Programs operated by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) help make housing affordable (through rent subsidies) and help create new affordable, accessible housing. These include HUD's Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities program and Housing Choice Voucher program. Despite these programs, the need for affordable, accessible housing for people with disabilities is far greater than the availability. Housing is one of the top barriers as states seek to implement *Olmstead* plans, Money Follows the Person grants, and other initiatives to help people with disabilities live in the community.

### Key Message to Congress

Congress must preserve Medicaid, Medicare, Social Security, SSI, and other vital programs for people with disabilities.

### Key Issues

**Medicaid Per Capita Caps:** There are proposals to place per capita caps on Medicaid federal spending. Such caps would put pressure on programs to reduce costs by cutting services and threaten states' ability to support or expand community-based options. These proposals could cause substantial conflict between groups with diverse needs which compete for scarce dollars.

**Medicaid Block Grant or Flexible State Allotments:** A Medicaid block grant will not control health care costs which will continue to rise as people get older, use more health care services, and as the general cost of all health care increases. Block grants or flexible state allotments would only shift costs to the states and increase out of pocket health expenses for individuals.

**Medicaid Managed LTSS:** The rush to Medicaid managed LTSS continues even though there is little to no evidence that it provides better services to people with I/DD. These efforts are a

fundamental shift in our health and LTSS system from services mostly based on need to services based on a reduced budget.

**Affordable Housing:** The ongoing effects of deficit reduction and sequestration continue to pressure HUD's affordable housing programs, limiting production of much-needed new affordable housing, and putting existing affordable housing at risk.

**LTSS Crisis:** Much more needs to be done to address the looming need for an affordable and accessible system of LTSS that complements the Medicaid program. People should not have to become impoverished in order to become eligible to receive needed LTSS.

## Recommendations

- Congress must understand that Medicaid is a lifeline to people who have I/DD and their families!
- Congress should protect the individual entitlement to Medicaid and Medicare.
- Congress should reject Medicaid reductions, caps, block grants, or flexible state allotments.
- Congress should address the nation's need for an affordable, accessible system of long term supports and services.
- Congress should provide at least \$252 million for HUD's Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities program in FY 2016.
- Congress should provide full funding for HUD's Housing Choice Voucher program in FY 2016 to ensure that all Housing Choice Vouchers can be renewed and that no tenants are displaced.
- Members of Congress should join the Bicameral, Bipartisan Assisting Caregivers Today (ACT) Caucus that was created to help bring greater attention to the needs of family caregivers and engage legislators in developing solutions to the LTSS crisis.

## Relevant Committees

House and Senate Appropriations Committees  
House and Senate Budget Committees  
House Ways and Means Committee  
House Energy and Commerce Committee  
House Financial Services Committee  
Senate Finance Committee  
Senate Banking Committee

For more information, please contact The Arc at (202) 783-2229, United Cerebral Palsy at (202) 776-0406, Association of University Centers on Disabilities at (301) 588-8252, American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities at (202) 387-1968, National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities at (202) 506-5813, or Self-Advocates Becoming Empowered at [SABEnation@gmail.com](mailto:SABEnation@gmail.com).