Home and Community-Based Living Medicaid Waivers

Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waivers are Medicaid programs that provide services in the home for persons who would otherwise require institutional care in a hospital or nursing facility. Without waiver services being delivered in the community, some adolescents and young adults might not be able to live at home or receive needed supports in the workplace.

Waivers provide specific services over and above those in the general Medicaid adult benefits package and are targeted to persons who demonstrate the need for a high level of care. Enrollment is typically capped; once enrollment reaches a specified number or dollar threshold, waiting lists are created. The waiting lists for Florida Medicaid Waivers are often years.

There are currently 15 HCBS waivers in Florida. The largest one is for individuals with developmental disabilities ages 3 and older, administered by the Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD). APD offers a broad range of supports and services to assist persons with developmental disabilities, defined in Florida as those who have autism, cerebral palsy, Down syndrome, intellectual disabilities, Prader-Willi syndrome or certain forms of spina bifida. Services may include personal care assistance, companion services, transportation, therapy, behavioral support, skilled nursing, durable medical equipment, and supported employment services. All services require determination of medical necessity. Due to long waiting lists, it is important for families to apply early, even before services might be needed. For more information about the program and applying for services at one of APD’s 14 area offices, visit http://apdcare.org. Families should also visit the Florida Family Care Council web site at www.fccflorida.org.

Several different waiver programs are listed on the adjacent page. To apply, you must contact the operating agency; each of those agencies is listed in the chart on the next page along with general qualifying criteria for applicants. For full list of waiver programs and descriptions, see the Florida Medicaid Summary of Services at http://ahca.myflorida.com/Medicaid/pdffiles/2012-2013_Summary_of_Services_Final_121031.pdf.
Health care professionals can help assure that young people with disabilities or chronic health conditions and their families are aware of Medicaid waiver programs as a potential source of services and supports, and provide required documentation, as needed.

For more information about this topic, visit the Tool Box at [www.FloridaHATS.org](http://www.FloridaHATS.org) or contact Janet Hess at [jess@health.usf.edu](mailto:jess@health.usf.edu), (813) 259-8604