

Medicaid Waiver Overview

The Medicaid Waiver program began in 1981, in response to the national trend toward providing Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS). In the past, Medicaid paid only for institutionally based long term care services, such as nursing facilities and group homes. The Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) waiver program is authorized in 1915(c) of the Social Security Act. The program permits a State to furnish an array of home and community-based services that assist Medicaid beneficiaries to live in the community and avoid institutionalization. The State has broad discretion to design its waiver program to address the needs of the waivers' target population. Waiver services complement and/or supplement the services that are available to participants through the Medicaid State plan and other federal, state and local public programs as well as the supports that families and communities provide.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) recognizes that the design and operational features of a waiver program will vary depending on the specific needs of the target population, the resources available to the State, service delivery system structure, State goals and objectives, and other factors. A State has the freedom to design a waiver program that is cost-effective and employs a variety of service delivery approaches, including participant direction of services.

Indiana applies for permission to offer Medicaid Waivers from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The Medicaid Waivers make use of federal Medicaid funds (plus state matching funds) for Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS), as an alternative to institutional care, under the condition that the overall cost of supporting a group of people in the home or community is no more than the institutional cost for supporting that same group of people.

The goals of Waiver services are to provide to the person meaningful and necessary services and supports, to respect the person's personal beliefs and customs, and to ensure that services are cost effective. Specifically, waivers for individuals with an intellectual/developmental disability assist a person to:

- Become integrated in the community where he/she lives and works
- Develop social relationships in the person's home and work communities
- Develop skills to make decisions about how and where the person wants to live
- Become as independent as possible

DDRS oversees the following Indiana Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services waiver programs:

- Family Supports Waiver
- Community Integration and Habilitation Waiver