

COMMUNITY LIVING

Increase the Availability of Home and Community-Based Services

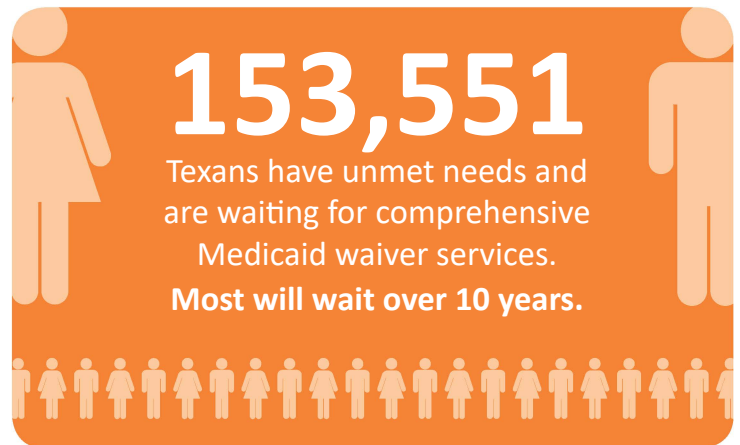
Reduce the number of people on the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) waiver interest lists by providing adequate Medicaid funding to enable appropriate placements in waiver programs. Ensuring the availability, timeliness, and quality of services and supports in integrated community settings reduces reliance on costly institutional services.

THE IMPORTANCE OF HCBS

Medicaid HCBS waivers are a lifeline for Texans with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). Medicaid HCBS waivers provide cost-effective long-term services and supports such as personal attendant services, nursing, and employment support – none of which are typically covered by private insurance. This effective and cost-efficient program allows people disabilities to live and work in their community.

All people with disabilities should have access to the services and supports when and where they need them. The state's commitment to providing quality services and supports for Texans with IDD is best served by fully embracing the numerous opportunities to keep people out of institutions and in smaller community-based options of their choice via HCBS waivers. However, Texas currently does not serve every person in need.

HCBS waivers are not only the preferred choice of most Texans with IDD but are often the less expensive option, yet 50% of the state budget for individuals with IDD went to state supported living centers (SSLCs) this past biennium and served significantly fewer people.



THE WAITING GAME

HCBS waiver availability is dependent on legislative appropriations to include more individuals or when an existing waiver recipient vacates services. Because the demand far outweighs the resources made available by the legislature, Texans with IDD are placed on interest lists until an appropriate HCBS waiver slot becomes available. In fact, Texas' HCBS program must grow 535% overall just to keep up with population growth and increased need. Most individuals will wait over 10 years to receive HCBS waiver services. Waiting without needed supports increases risk for negative health outcomes, crisis, and unnecessary institutionalization.

REBALANCING THE SYSTEM

Rebalancing the long-term services and supports system towards appropriate, permanent, integrated, community-based settings instead of more costly, congregate, institutional settings should be the focus. The state should divert allocations from institutional care whenever possible to HCBS. Efforts to ensure access to a flexible array of services that meet the client's needs when and where they need them, improved responsiveness, accountability, consumer involvement, and quality outcomes must also be made. Individuals should not be unnecessarily placed in an institution because the state has not adequately invested in community supports.

YOUR DISTRICT

Did you know that _____ of your constituents are waiting for waiver services and supports?

TCDD INVESTMENT IN TEXAS

Since 1971, TCDD has funded multiple projects throughout Texas to help more people with disabilities achieve their potential for independence, productivity, and integration into their communities by working to develop a comprehensive system of service and supports in Texas.

Health and fitness projects were recently funded in Austin, Houston, and San Antonio. These projects demonstrated how exercise and nutrition programs improve health outcomes for people with IDD. Local organizations also received training to include people with IDD in sponsored activities.

TCDD also funded community education projects about guardianship alternatives, including supported decision-making. By choosing alternatives to guardianship, people with IDD are able to make more of their own choices and be fully included in the community.

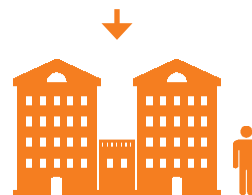
TCDD is currently funding a project for peer support specialists in SSLCs to help residents create person-centered plans, so they can develop the skills needed to become more independent.

REACHING THOSE IN NEED

Since 2007, the Texas Medicaid program has consistently been ranked as one of the worst states in the nation in serving people with IDD and their families. In 2019, Texas ranked 51st in reaching those in need and 49th in promoting independence among people with IDD, primarily due to the low level of funding and number of people in HCBS.



SSLCs
\$26,767.67
per person
per month



Community
\$4,290.08
per person
per month



In FY 17, the cost to support a person to live in an SSLC was more than **six times** the cost to support a person to live in the community.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Reduce the number of people on HCBS waiver interest lists by providing adequate Medicaid funding to enable appropriate placements in waiver programs. Divert allocations from institutional care whenever possible to HCBS.
2. Ensure the availability, timeliness, and quality of services and supports in the most integrated, person-centered setting to reduce reliance on costly institutional services.
3. Strengthen the community's capacity to support all people with disabilities to live in the most integrated, person-centered setting of their choosing.

MORE INFORMATION

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Texas Health and Human Services Commission. *Interest List Reduction*. Retrieved January 29, 2019 from <https://hhs.texas.gov/about-hhs/records-statistics/interest-list-reduction>. Texas Health and Human Services Commission. *Rider 5: Cost Comparison Report. August 2018*. Retrieved January 1, 2019 from <https://hhs.texas.gov/es/reports/2018/09/2017-cost-comparison-report-rider-5>.