

Person-Centered Access to Long-Term Services and Supports

7 Other Federal Programs to Consider with Community-Based Long-Term Services and Supports



Introduction

These slides contain content adapted from the Administration for Community Living's Person Centered Counseling Training Program. The content includes text and narration from online courses. To view original content or for more information, please visit nwd.acl.gov or contact NoWrongDoor@acl.hhs.gov.

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Welcome! (1/2)

You have already learned about some of the large, federally funded programs like Medicaid and Medicare. These are not the only federally (or publicly) funded options for people. Depending on where someone lives, they may be able to access other federally funded programs. Most of these programs are entitlement programs. People must meet certain criteria in order to access the services, however once they do, they should have access to the program. As a Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professional, you should have a basic understanding of these programs. You should know what they can do for people and who might be eligible.

Welcome! (2/2)

Learning Objective

After completing this lesson: You will be able to support people in accessing a variety of federally funded programs (beyond Medicaid and Medicare) that can be useful in meeting their LTSS needs and person-centered goals.

Understanding Federally Funded Programs (1/2)

The federal government administers many programs for Home and Community Based Services (HCBS). These programs can help people with long-term support needs. However, there are still gaps that make it difficult for people to achieve their person-centered goals. They may need more support in order to obtain and maintain housing and basic income. They may not be using any HCBS funding but still need support for employment or nutrition. In order to access federal programs, people usually must demonstrate financial and/or medical need. They may be asked to provide personal information, such as income, type of disability, veteran status, or age, to show that they are eligible for services. Funding for these programs generally goes through state or local government agencies.

Understanding Federally Funded Programs (2/2)

This lesson does not cover every possible federally supported program in your local area. Nor does it provide specific local access and requirements. It is meant to give you an overview that should be combined with your local databases and resources to help you best consider these programs and their meaning to individual situations.

Your Role in Supporting People Who Want to Access Federally Funded Programs

Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professionals are responsible for supporting people who want to access long-term services and supports (LTSS) resources. In order to do this, they must use person-centered discovery. Knowing what the person wants will help guide the process. Some people will want to explore federally funded programs. However, not everyone will be interested in (or eligible for) them. Let the person-centered discovery and planning processes guide your approach to this.

Social Security Administration – Disability Benefits

Besides providing retirement benefits to workers, the Social Security Administration (SSA) supports adults (and some children) with disabilities or chronic health problems. The SSA pays disability benefits primarily through two programs. One is the Social Security Disability Insurance program (SSDI). The other is the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) program. There are many subtle differences between SSDI and SSI but both are based on income and disability. People eligible for these two programs may be eligible for other income-based programs and may not need to fill out a separate application. Please note that there are other benefits through SSA that may apply to people. These are the programs that focus on disability. You may want to learn more about support for retirees, survivors, or other programs that are part of SSA as well.

Special Education (1/3)

Special education refers to the education of students with disabilities (birth – 21). Many federal and state laws require early intervention for children and youth with disabilities. Public school districts receive guidance from the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) regarding the education of students with disabilities.

Special Education (2/2)

IDEA includes these steps in providing services to children and youth:

- Identification
- Evaluation
- Eligibility determination
- Planning (Individualized Education Program [IEP])
- Services provided
- Progress measured
- IEP review
- Re-evaluation at least every three years

Special Education (3/3)

Not all children with disabilities need IDEA supports. These students may benefit from Section 504 (of the Rehabilitation Act) accommodations. Section 504 accommodations provide students with some additional support for improved outcomes and a better educational experience. Students with needs in other areas (e.g. healthcare, mental healthcare, independent living skills, foster care, or other LTSS) may need to access programs outside of the school system. Counties or state offices are often the primary starting point for many of these services.

Veteran's Affairs – Benefits for Veterans (1/2)

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) offers a variety of programs for veterans and their families. For example, the VA offers assistance with vocational rehabilitation, employment, independent living, life insurance coverage, pensions, mortgages, and home loans. The VA also financially supports veterans who have service-related disabilities or very limited income. Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professionals can provide significant support to veterans who wish to access federally funded programs for their long-term service and supports (LTSS) needs. The application processes can be time consuming and confusing.

Veteran's Affairs – Benefits for Veterans (2/2)

Here are some things a PCC professional can do to support people:

- Get to know your state's Department of Veterans Affairs. Visit the website (or visit in person) to learn more about LTSS resources for veterans
- Learn about the services offered through the Veteran's Affairs (VA) Medical Centers, such as Veterans Directed Home and Community Based Services (VD-HCBS)
- Assist people in advocating for services. Find out how services are funded in a variety of settings, such as in-home care, nursing homes, and assisted living
- Develop relationships with benefit counselors and veterans' services specialists
- Support people with immediate plans as they wait for eligibility determinations

Housing Assistance

Housing continues to be one of the most challenging issues faced by people with limited income. Housing is a complex issue that includes proactively engaging in community planning. Person-Centered Counseling professionals should be knowledgeable about the housing support options available and help connect people if it meets their goals and preferences. Some support for housing can come from federal programs.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

Applying for SNAP can be done at the local or state level. Rules and regulations may vary from state to state. Eligibility is based on an individual's or family's resources, income, tax deductions, and employment. There are special rules for older adults, people with disabilities, and certain immigrant populations. Every state has contacts for the SNAP program. Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professionals will want to have good information regarding contacts and eligibility. It is important to note that SNAP is not the only federally funded program that provides nutrition services. For example, Meals on Wheels may be another good option for people who do not want to prepare their own meals.

The Older Americans Act (OAA) and the Administration on Aging (AoA) (1/3)

Congress passed the Older Americans Act (OAA) in response to a lack of community-based social services for older adults. The law encourages states to learn more about aging and design communities that better supported older populations. The law also established the Administration on Community Living (ACL), formerly the Administration on Aging (AoA). The AoA offers states guidance and support on matters related to older adults. The OAA promotes the well-being of older adults (over age 60) by providing services and programs designed to help them live independently in their homes and communities.

The Older Americans Act (OAA) and the Administration on Aging (AoA) (2/3)

The OAA provides assistance with nutrition, healthcare, independent living, mental health, companionship, caregiver support (through the National Family Caregiver Support Program), chronic disease self-management, and transportation. It also provides support for protection and prevention of abuse.

The Older Americans Act (OAA) and the Administration on Aging (AoA) (3/3)

Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professionals play an important role in supporting older adults. Many older adults live in nursing homes because they are not aware of their community-based options. No matter where someone lives, you should offer to support the person to stay engaged with the community. Get to know staff members within OAA and AoA. Research all of the aging-related resources in your local area. Be prepared to connect people to activities that will improve their quality of life.

Federal Resources for Native Americans (1/3)

Person-Centered Counseling professionals who support Native Americans will want to be aware of the following offices and consider their programs when supporting someone who may be eligible. Some of these services provide direct support, but most provide indirect support to people. Keep in mind that historically, Native American programs have been underfunded. This means that a program may exist but benefits may still be difficult to obtain. Native Americans do not have to use these programs. They will still be eligible for other programs such, as Medicaid and the other programs we've discussed in this lesson.

Federal Resources for Native Americans (2/3)

- Department of Agriculture – Office of Tribal Relations
- Department of Education – Office of Indian Education
- Department of Education – White House Initiative on American Indian and Alaska Native Education
- Department of Health & Human Services – Indian Health Service
- Department of Health & Human Services – Administration for Native Americans

Federal Resources for Native Americans (3/3)

- Department of Housing & Urban Development – Office of Native American Programs and Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities
- Department of the Interior – Bureau of Indian Education
- Department of Labor – Employment & Training Administration, Indian & Native American Program
- Department of Veterans' Affairs – Office of Tribal Governmental Relations
- Administration on Aging – Title VI Supports

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) (1/2)

For someone with a limited income, utility bills and maintenance can be a hardship. The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) helps keep families safe and healthy by assisting with energy costs. This is often referred to as Energy Assistance. Some of the expenses that might be covered by LIHEAP include home energy bills, minor weather-related repairs, or minor energy-related repairs.

The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) (2/2)

Each state is responsible for providing LIHEAP assistance to people. Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professionals should understand the available options and eligibility requirements to prevent delays for people seeking help. They can also help people complete paperwork. In some states, people may be able to apply for LIHEAP directly with a PCC professional. For some people, Energy Assistance can help them afford the other supports they need and want to live in the community.

— Employment (1/3)

Employment will be very important for some people who contact you. People may want to gain financial independence or supplement income. They may be interested in job training, self-employment, unemployment, layoff, or retirement resources. Person-centered discovery will help you identify the types of jobs or resources the person might be interested in. You will most likely be able to find some local resources for helping people explore careers. There are some federally funded programs to consider as well.

— Employment (2/3)

Certain groups, such as veterans or people with disabilities, may be eligible for some population-specific employment services. You will need to investigate which programs are offered in your area. The Vocational Rehabilitation office may be a good place to start. This funding may be usefully braided with Medicaid-funded supported employment services.

Employment (3/3)

Here are a couple of websites to help you get started:

- Department of Labor: <http://www.dol.gov/dol/audience/aud-unemployed.htm#disability>
- Small Business Administration (for people who want to start their own business): www.sba.gov
- Vocational Rehabilitation for Veterans: <http://www.benefits.va.gov/vocrehab/index.asp>

It is important to keep in mind that when long-term services and supports (LTSS) options are based on financial need, people may become ineligible for some of the services and supports. You will want to be knowledgeable and share the impact that employment may have on supports. Go to the SSI section of this lesson to learn more.

Conclusion and Lesson Review (1/2)

- There are many federally funded programs that can help people with housing, health, nutrition, and income.
- Person-Centered Counseling (PCC) professionals use person-centered practices to support people in deciding whether or not to pursue federally funded programs.
- Some of the programs support people with low incomes. Others provide services for specific groups such as people with disabilities, older adults, Native Americans, or veterans.
- In order to streamline access to these programs, PCC professionals will likely need to work with gatekeepers and other specialists.
- Not everyone will want to pursue federally funded programs, even if they are eligible.

Conclusion and Lesson Review (2/2)

Learning Objective

After completing this lesson, you will be able to support people in accessing a variety of federally funded programs (beyond Medicaid and Medicare) that can be useful in meeting their LTSS needs and person-centered goals.

Reflection on Learning Objective

Directions: Review the objective(s) on this page. Write down your answers to the following questions.

1. What did you learn in this lesson that you felt was important?
2. What will you do differently because of the content in this lesson?