

Care Transitions Peer Hour – Institutional Transitions

Frequently Asked Questions

Question: Are any of these entities Local Contact Agencies for Minimum Data Set 3.0, Section Q referrals? Where would one find answers for Section Q (MDSQ) as a Center for Independent Living (CIL) staff?

Answer: All of the Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) in Georgia are designated Local Contact Agencies for the CMS Minimum Data Set Section Q. If a CIL is not a designated Local Contact Agency, it should contact the state Medicaid agency to see how they can obtain Section Q data.

Question: How do you make the connection to social workers to reach out to them? Are these hospital social workers or those in the nursing home?

Answer: The speakers discussed pre-COVID relationships they had developed with nursing facilities that they were able to maintain during COVID. These relationships were developed by working together collaboratively in identifying and transitioning individuals out of the facilities. Georgia options counselors coordinate learning sessions with nursing facility social workers to develop rapport and determine the mutual benefit of options counseling for facility residents.

Question: Are sites finding that nursing facilities are not asking residents about wanting to leave the facility, as required?

Answer: The speakers shared that compliance with asking the Section Q question of the MDS has been inconsistent.

Question: How are families providing care to family members with significant medical needs who transition from a nursing facility?

Answer: Families are providing support themselves and through other paid and unpaid individuals. Significant medical needs are generally coordinated with a primary care physician and can include a variety of medical and therapeutic support in addition to addressing support with activities of daily living. Counselors work collaboratively with Medicaid waiver program staff so that services and supplies are identified and arranged prior to the move back to the community.

Question: Please provide more information about relationships with apartments and residential buildings. Do any care transition specialists help participants fill out apartment applications? Are there any solutions to overcoming issues around other programs not keeping up with the price of housing?

Answer: The speakers shared that they have developed relationships with apartment owners and managers over time. This requires consistent and ongoing communication and ensuring that tenants pay rent on time and care for their rental units. Care transition specialists do assist with filling out rental applications. Adequate financial support for rental subsidies continues to be a challenge during COVID.

Question: Are the Options Counselors that assist care transitions licensed staff?

Answer: The four individuals from three different organizations represented on the call were all licensed clinical social workers and/or certified options counselors that require training and testing, but not licensure.

Question: How many organizations are taking a public health approach through partnerships with public health researchers and other community organizations?

Answer: Organizations operating transition programs have many partnerships with organizations that have services to support individuals leaving institutions.

Question: Could you elaborate on the funding for this?

Answer: Georgia has at least two major transitions programs. It has a Medicaid-funded program nationally known as Money Follows the Person. The CILs and AAAs receive funding from the state Medicaid agency to support institutional transitions. There is also a state-funded transitions program targeted for non-Medicaid individuals. CILs and AAAs also have funding from other programs that help support transitions such as home modifications, assistive technology and meals programs.