



Approved Revision to the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funded Initiative for Family Support & Innovation to Community Participation Support (CPS) Services

ODP Announcement 23-078

AUDIENCE:

All interested stakeholders

PURPOSE:

To announce the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) approval of ODP's proposal to expand funding made available to Administrative Entities (AEs)/Counties to support individuals and families on the waiting list to allow for pursuit of innovative strategies to provide alternatives to Community Participation Support (CPS) services.

DISCUSSION:

Staffing shortages and the lingering impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic have led to a decrease in the availability of CPS services for some individuals.

Spending for Respite and Family Support Services made available to individuals on the waiting list through the [Home and Community Based Services \(HCBS\) Spending Plan](#) approved by CMS is lower than projected in the majority of counties. The Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) has received approval to allow AEs to repurpose unspent ARPA respite dollars to develop and fund innovative alternatives to traditional CPS.

AEs are encouraged to participate in the development of alternative CPS services that do not supplant current waiver services to help bridge the gap for individuals and families who currently cannot find a CPS provider or are at risk of being placed on a provider waiting list for CPS services. This includes individuals on the waiting list and those who are enrolled in the waivers. ODP encourages AEs to work collaboratively where there are regional needs and where regional partnership will best meet the needs of the population.

When:

CMS approval of the change to the HCBS Spending Plan is effective as of August 18 2023. Expenditures using these funds are available from the date of this communication publication through March 31, 2025. ARPA funds will no longer be distributed after October 31, 2024. ARPA funds must be spent by March 31, 2025.

Principles for Development:

- AEs are expected to engage stakeholders to understand needs and aid in

the brainstorming and development process.

- Alternative services cannot include activities and/or services currently covered through the Consolidated, Community Living, and Person/Family Directed Support (P/FDS) Waivers for individuals enrolled in one of these waivers. ARPA funds cannot be used in place of waiver services.
- Alternative services can include activities and/or services currently covered through the waivers for individuals who are on waiting list for enrollment in a waiver.
- Funding can be used for start-up needed to establish alternative services that meets the other criteria for development.
- AEs must be able to authorize or fund the service through waiver/base dollars once the pilot period/ARPA dollars are no longer available. ODP will consider potential modifications to service definitions for scalable alternatives to CPS.
- Alternative services must align and comply with applicable 55 Pa. Code Chapter 6100 regulations. AEs will be required to submit an innovative project proposal parallel to the requirements in § 6100.44 for projects/proposals exceeding \$49,999. ODP will consider regulatory waivers if necessary to implement innovative models.

- Alternative services must support involvement in integrated community activities, exploring new experiences and interests, developing friendships and contribution to the community.

Suggested Options for AEs to Explore:

- Private industry partnerships
- Interest/industry specific arrangements such as: arts, theatre, fitness, community service, etc. that are inclusive for all community members
- Peer resource center with support or drop-in centers
- Ways to develop employment opportunities or ways to build social capital
- Building peer networks
- Exploration of culture, civil rights, and self-advocacy
- Leveraging the Community of Practice for Supporting Families Regional Collaboratives
- AEs will continue to have access to the family driven support services (FDSS)/Respite ARPA funds and may continue to utilize available funds per communication [ODP Announcement 22-019 UPDATE](#).

Instructions for submission:

The ARPA FDSS Question Pro Survey has been updated to capture information on CPS Innovation Projects. The updated survey can be accessed [HERE](#). The survey will ask the following questions:

- Anticipated total budget for proposal
- Description of target population
- Area of interest
- Number of individuals anticipated to be served
- Location where innovative services will be provided
- Transportation provision
- Describe how the program will maximize community involvement

CONTACT:

Questions about this communication should be directed to respective regional CPS leads.

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