



# ***Personal Choices***

***Offering Consumers Choice and Flexibility***

# Consumer-Directed Care in Alabama

**Alabama first state to make consumer-directed (also known as self-directed) care for Medicaid home and community-based services a permanent part of its State Plan.**

**Alabama worked closely with Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to ensure successful completion of the application.**



# DRA 2005

**The state plan option is available to states under the Deficit Reduction Act (DRA) of 2005, Section 6087 or 1915(j)**

- 1915 (j) is specific to self-directed care, such as the Personal Choices program, to offer consumers more control in managing their daily lives**



# Program Value

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- **Budget-neutral**
- **Offers consumer satisfaction and enhanced quality of life**
- **Reduces unmet care needs, and**
- **Increases access to authorized services**



# Expected Consumer Outcomes

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- **Increased access to paid personal care**
- **Increased satisfaction with services**
- **Increased overall quality of life**
- **More of consumers' day-to-day needs met**
- **Decreased stress on families and informal caregivers**



# Expected Outcomes for the State

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**Making consumer-directed care a permanent part of the State Plan will relieve Alabama of the intensive and repeated waiver renewal process.**



# Program Validity

**Personal Choices program based on “Cash and Counseling” model.**

**Model tested over the past decade in Arkansas, Florida, and New Jersey in partnership with Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and CMS.**



# ***Cash and Counseling* Model Results**

**The positive results of the extensive and carefully controlled research design have been well documented.**

**CMS and Congress have encouraged states to make self-directed services more available as an option for people receiving home and community-based services.**





# Do Consumers Really Want to Manage Their Services?

A 2002 AARP survey of people over 50 also found that more than 75% preferred to be involved in the management of their own services.

The U.S. Administration on Aging has made increased choice and control a key element in its *Choices for Independence* campaign.





# Personal Choices Program

- **Allows participants of two of Alabama's HCBS Waivers to self-direct certain services**
- **Up to 700 older adults and people with disabilities in seven west Alabama eligible to participate**
- **Program to begin August 1, 2007**



# Working Together for Consumers

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- **Administering Agency**  
**Alabama Medicaid Agency**
- **Operating Agency**  
**Alabama Department of Senior Services**  
**in partnership with Alabama Department**  
**of Rehabilitative Services**



# Program Design

**Program offers consumers more choice, flexibility and control in managing their daily lives.**

**Self-direction means:**

- **The consumer decides who provides their care**
- **The consumer decides when the care is needed**
- **The consumer decides what help they need**
- **The consumer decides how much responsibility they want**



# Eligible Individuals

- **Must currently receive personal care or personal assistance services under Elderly and Disabled (E&D) Waiver or State of Alabama Independent Living (SAIL) Waiver**
- **Live in one of the seven pilot counties**



# Fraud and Abuse

- **No evidence to show that program will increase fraud and abuse over the present system**
- ***Personal Choices* program designed to prevent fraud and abuse**
- **“Counseling” system plays a crucial role in working with the consumer to prevent fraud and abuse**



# Preventing Fraud and Abuse

- **Clear definition of goods and services that may and may not be purchased**
- **Close review of budgets to ensure that only authorized goods are included, and**
- **Review of workers' time sheets and participants' check requests before payment to ensure consistency with the budget plan**





# Personal Choices Information

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Personal Choices program information is available at [www.medicaid.alabama.gov](http://www.medicaid.alabama.gov)



**One's philosophy is not in best  
expressed in words;  
it is expressed in the choices one  
makes ...  
and the choices we make  
are ultimately our responsibility.**

**Eleanor Roosevelt**

