

Home & Community Based Services (HCBS)

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Home & Community Based Services (HCSB) by the Numbers:

- The majority of Massachusetts residents prefer to remain in their home to receive services.
- Close to 300,000 (publicly funded HCBS) individuals of all ages receive HCBS in Massachusetts.
- Other sources include private payment, long term care insurance, family resources, and other.

Funding/Costs:

- MassHealth spends almost \$5B (2019 figures) annually on HCBS
- The Legislature's role is to ensure that budgets passed have appropriate funding to support HCBS including:
 - A living wage for homecare workers
 - Programs and services that are adequately funded to provide care coordination to help individuals to move out of facilities and back into the community as well as to assist others so that they can remain in the community
 - There must be enough residential waivers available to meet the demand and the application process should be straightforward and not burdensome to apply for.
 - Lastly, the legislation must ensure that the state ensures enough funding to provide the number of low income and accessibility housing units that are needed.

Monitoring/Oversight:

- EOHHS/MassHealth
- Executive Office of Elder Affairs
- Department of Public Health
- Office of the Attorney General
- Health Policy Commission/CHIA

Learnings from the Covid-19 Pandemic:

- Isolation was a huge problem for individuals living in the community during COVID.
- The COVID crisis confirmed homecare staff to be an essential part of the healthcare delivery system. However, these staff were not prioritized with personal protection equipment (PPE) distribution or other early COVID response measures.
- Short staffing was a significant issue pre-pandemic and is now a crisis because so many have left and are leaving the workforce.
- Families are often forced to provide unpaid care causing undue hardship and burden.

Major Home & Community Based Care Issues:

- Home Care Staffing Crisis
- Care Coordination
- Residential Waiver Programs
- Lack of Availability Housing (another Sub-Committee)

Thank you for taking the time to learn about Home & Community Based Services.

For more information, contact: HCBS Workgroup Chair Meg Coffin, mcoffin@centerlw.org

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