

Alabama one of five states chosen for “No Wrong Door” Grant

Alabama is one of five states to receive funding to make it easier for people to learn about—and access—the long term services and supports they need. The Administration for Community Living (ACL) announced in October that Alabama Medicaid would receive \$2.36 million over three years to streamline access to long term services through CARES (Centralized Alabama Recipient Eligibility System), the state’s joint eligibility system for public services and supports.

Other states or districts receiving grants for new initiatives include Colorado, the District of Columbia, Hawaii and Virginia. The grants are part of an ongoing partnership with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) to support state efforts to advance system-wide changes that make it easier for people to remain living in their own homes and communities.

“This award is significant in that over the next three years the five grantee states will set the standard for streamlining public program access for the rest of the country,” said Ginger Wettingfeld, Gateway to Community Living Project Director. She also noted that the grant will complement the technical development work of CARES which is now underway.



“While CARES handles financial eligibility, this grant will allow us to train and educate the individuals who help someone walk through all the public programs available to them with the overall goal of having the same experience regardless of which agency you start at—the Alabama Department of Senior Services, the Alabama Department of Public Health, Medicaid or the Alabama Department of Human Resources.

In “No Wrong Door” systems, multiple state and community agencies coordinate to ensure that regardless of which agency people go for help, they can access information and one-on-one counseling about the options available across all the agencies and in their communities. The goal is to enable people to make informed decisions based on the full range of available services. The No Wrong Door systems also provide assistance in accessing services, including help in completing applications for various public and private programs.

In addition, all grantees are taking concrete steps to fully incorporate a person-centered planning approach into everything they do. Person-centered planning is directed by the individual seeking services and shifts the role of agency staff from merely determining what services an individual qualifies for to assisting them in identifying and accessing a mix of paid and unpaid services based on their strengths, goals, preferences and needs.