



CMS NEWS

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Contact: CMS Media Relations Group
(202) 690-6145

Health care law helps Iowa residents receive care in their communities

Iowa will receive resources made available by the Affordable Care Act – the health care law – to help seniors and people with disabilities live in their communities, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) announced today. These resources will help ensure Iowa residents can choose to live at home rather than in a nursing home or other facility.

The Iowa award, projected at \$61.8 million, is a vital component of a broad State-based approach to expand community-based care provided by the Affordable Care Act’s Balancing Incentive Program.

“The health care law is giving many seniors and people with disabilities the freedom to continue to live in their homes and communities, rather than in a nursing home,” said Marilyn Tavenner, CMS acting administrator. “We are pleased that Iowa is one of many States working to expand community services and supports.”

While federal Medicaid law requires States to pay for institutional care for the elderly or persons with disabilities who may need assistance with their activities of daily living, Medicaid coverage for home or community-based services is optional. And while all States have opted to provide such coverage, consumer demand frequently exceeds the State’s available resources.

The health care law offers States additional resources through an increase in their federal Medicaid matching rates for home and community-based services, if a State commits to increasing access to these services. A total of \$3 billion is available to States under the Affordable Care Act’s Balancing Incentive Program.

The Administration strongly supports ensuring that people with Medicaid can get the support they need to continue to live in their communities. While most Medicaid dollars for long-term services and supports still go to institutions, the national percentage of Medicaid spending on home and community-based services has more than doubled from 20 percent in 1995 to 43 percent in 2009.

States are eligible for the Balancing Incentive Program if less than 50 percent of their total long-term care spending goes toward home and community-based services. The enhanced Medicaid payments must be spent increasing the availability of home and community-based services for Medicaid beneficiaries with long-term needs. The Iowa Department of Human Services Balancing Incentive Program, in partnership with community organizations throughout the State, plans to further develop the systems of community-based care that serve seniors and individuals with behavioral health needs, physical disabilities, and intellectual disabilities.

For more information on the Balancing Incentive Program please visit:

<http://www.medicaid.gov/Medicaid-CHIP-Program-Information/By-Topics/Long-Term-Services-and-Support/Balancing/Balancing-Incentive-Program.html>

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