

The Enhanced ADRC Options Counseling Program (Part A)

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 - **Special Opportunity to Expand HCBS Access for Veterans**
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Description

“The Enhanced ADRC Options Counseling Program” funded states will serve as high-performing national models for providing LTSS Options Counseling to all State residents with LTSS needs. Additionally, this funding opportunity aligns with states pursuing other health system transformation efforts such as Medicaid Balancing Incentive Program and demonstrations under the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation.

Special Opportunity to Expand HCBS Access for Veterans

The ADRCs funded under this Opportunity will also have access to a special funding opportunity—being made available by the Veterans Health Administration (VHA)—to assist veterans with disabilities and their family caregivers to access VHA-funded home and community-based services. Additional information about this opportunity is available in the [*Special Opportunity to Expand HCBS Access for Veterans*](#) document.

Finding the right services can be a daunting task for individuals and their family members. The current LTSS system involves numerous funding streams, and is administered by multiple federal, state and local agencies using complex, fragmented, and often duplicative intake, assessment and eligibility processes. There are more and more options for services and supports, in home, residential, and institutional settings. Individuals trying to access the multitude of new LTSS frequently find themselves confronted with a maze of agencies, organizations and bureaucratic requirements at a time when they may be vulnerable or in crisis. These issues frequently lead to use of the most expensive forms of care, including institutional care such as nursing homes or extended hospitalization, and can cause a person to quickly exhaust their own resources.

A high performing ADRC Options Counseling Program is designed specifically to help individuals and their family caregivers access the right services at the right time in the right setting. It will have capacity to serve people of all ages, disabilities and income levels, including individuals interested in planning for or able to pay for their LTSS needs. It will also streamline eligibility determinations for people appropriate for public LTSS programs and increase access to lower cost community-based alternatives that can help avoid institutional care and preserve personal resources. States will use their ADRC Options

Counseling Programs as a key tool for rebalancing their LTSS systems and for making their systems more person-centered, more efficient, and more supportive of community living.

Coordination with Balancing Incentive Program

Under this funding opportunity, ADRC Options Counseling Programs will meet the national performance standards and training and certification requirements. These standards and training requirements will be established by the ACL in collaboration with CMS, VHA and the funded states. The funded states are also *required* to adopt the standards established by CMS for the Balancing Incentive Program NWD/SEP structural change. ACL also *strongly encourages* states to adopt a Core Standardized Assessment as outlined in the Balancing Incentive Program structural changes. Funded local ADRC sites will also have formal partnerships with health systems and hospitals to ensure that certified ADRC Options Counselors are included on interdisciplinary care teams to help reduce hospital readmissions. This type of alignment of the health and LTSS systems can improve the ability of a state to transform its health system to a fully integrated model.

As states undergo health system transformation and LTSS rebalancing activities, development of a financially sustainable infrastructure for the ADRC Options Counseling Program model is critical to controlling the growth in public expenditures while also ensuring that citizens have ongoing coordinated access to the LTSS that best meet their needs and preferences. States will use this funding opportunity to develop and implement financially sustainable models that embed ADRC Options Counseling into their statewide LTSS systems. The ADRC Options Counseling Program provides all payers a vehicle for better coordinating assessments, service plans, eligibility determinations, data collection, and reporting for all LTSS populations.

Goals and Outcomes

The long-term outcome for Part A awarded states will be documented increases in community-living and quality of life for state residents as well as a more effective use of public resources especially as people access lower cost alternatives to institutional care. This will be accomplished by the states over a three year project period by:

1. Strengthening the capacity of the ADRC Options Counseling Program to serve people of all ages, income levels and disabilities by adopting a “No Wrong Door” approach that operationally involves a wide array of community agencies and organizations in the ADRC so it can effectively serve a broad range of populations, including at a minimum, older adults, people with disabilities of all ages, people with physical, intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD), and family caregivers.

2. Rapidly diffusing trained and certified ADRC Options Counselors throughout the funded states, and building stronger partnerships between health and LTSS systems to reduce unnecessary readmissions and promote improved health, better care and lower costs. This includes placing ADRC Options Counselors on interdisciplinary care teams and to linking individuals discharged from institutional settings to community based LTSS.

3. Developing financially sustainable ADRC models that includes revenue from multiple public programs (including Medicaid, Medicare, the Older Americans Act, the VHA and other programs) to cover expenses associated with such tasks as:
 - outreach,
 - screening/assessing individuals' need for LTSS,
 - working with individuals and their families to develop service plans,
 - linking individuals to needed services, helping individuals to use self-directed service models, and
 - assisting individuals in determining their eligibility for public programs.

4. Adopting national performance and outcome standards and aligning data collection and reporting methods across LTSS payers within a state to minimize administrative burden and support continuous quality improvement. The funded states will participate in a 6 month collaborative process with ACL, CMS, and VHA to develop a nationally directed evaluation. This National Evaluation Framework will document the impact of ADRC Options Counseling Programs on the quality of life and well-being of individuals and families, and the utilization and cost of LTSS and health care services.

State Awards

State	Federal Award
Connecticut	\$694,000
Maryland	\$700,000
Massachusetts	\$700,000
New Hampshire	\$700,000
Oregon	\$700,000
Vermont	\$700,000
Washington	\$700,000
Wisconsin	\$699,757

