

Independence Plus: A Demonstration Program for Family or Individual Directed Community Services

This initiative expedites the ability of states to offer families with a member who requires long-term supports and services, or individuals who require long-term supports and services, greater opportunities to take charge of their own health and direct their own services. Families and individuals will exercise greater choice, control and responsibility for their services within cost neutral standards. Two template versions will be available to enable states to tailor the program to their preferences; the §1115 Demonstration Template and the 1915(c) Waiver Template. These templates further the interests of the administration, states and beneficiaries. The program builds on the experience and research from a number of pioneer states that have pre-tested these concepts.

The Goals of the Templates

1. The templates will assist states to develop programs that will permit individuals needing long-term supports and services to obtain assistance while living with their family or in their own home. This will be accomplished by:
 - Recognizing the essential role of the family or individual in the planning and purchasing of health care supports and services by providing family or individual control over an agreed resource amount.
 - Increasing family and individual satisfaction through the promotion of personal control and choice - a major theme expressed during the *New Freedom Initiative* - National Listening Session.
 - Encouraging cost effective decision-making in the purchase of supports and services.
 - Allowing eligible families and individuals to receive a cash allowance (in the §1115 Demonstration) or individual budget (in the 1915(c) Waiver) to obtain personal assistant services and related supports.
 - Promoting solutions to the problem of worker availability.
 - Providing fiscal/employer agent and supports brokerage services to support and sustain families or individuals as they direct their own services.
 - Delaying or avoiding institutional or other high cost out-of-home placement by strengthening supports to families or individuals.
2. The templates will provide states the tools, resources and guidance to create effective programs and continue the CMS commitment to create a “culture of responsiveness” by:
 - Assisting states with meeting their legal obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Supreme Court *Olmstead* decision.
 - Providing flexibility for states seeking to increase the opportunities afforded families and individuals in deciding how best to enlist or sustain home and community services.
 - Incorporating the essential elements of self direction such as person-centered planning, individual budgets, participant protections and quality assurance and improvements.
 - Providing states with streamlined and standardized application formats to reduce the administrative burden for preparing proposal submissions and to reduce the Federal review period.

Features of the Templates

- Electronic format for easier submission.
- Database platform to enable electronic tracking, sorting, querying and analyzing.
- Structured series of check boxes to facilitate completion.
- Pop-up instructions imbedded in the check boxes offering completion instructions.
- Technical Guide for developing the 1915(c) Waiver or the §1115 Demonstration applications.

Additional features of the §1115 Demonstration include simplified/streamlined budget neutrality model and sample terms and conditions.