



Name of Program: Choices in Living Resource Center

Name of Organization: Arkansas Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS),
Arkansas Department of Human Services
Little Rock, AR

As a 2004 Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) grantee, an original state to participate in the Cash and Counseling consumer-directed services model, and a participant in the CMS Money Follows the Person initiative, Arkansas is making it easier for consumers to learn about existing services and supports while allowing its residents access to services in the least restrictive setting. For example, in 2007, the Arkansas Governor signed into law Act 516 which establishes the Options Counseling program that will offer all Arkansans information on the array of available long term care services.

Act 516 creates the "Arkansas Options Counseling for Long-Term Care Program." The Act requires Arkansas long-term care facilities, including nursing facilities and Level II licensed assisted living facilities, to notify the Office of Long-Term Care of all admissions. The Department of Health and Human Services will provide options counseling to (1) all individuals admitted to long-term care facilities that elect to participate, (2) long-term care facility residents who apply for Medicaid, and (3) individuals who request a long-term care consultation. The consultation will include information about long-term care options and costs, factors to consider when choosing among the available options, and opportunities for maximizing the individual's independence.

As a result, the ADRC has been expanded statewide effective January 2008. The Choices in Living Resource Center will serve seniors and individuals with disabilities. The team in the resource center will help consumers make connections to services, assessments, and provide eligibility counseling for home and community based services. Streamlined access to services for individuals at high risk for nursing home admission will be provided through the "Triage Project." Assistance will be provided to initiate a Medicaid long-term care application. A Memorandum of Understanding is being developed with the Division of County Operations, the entity responsible for making financial determination for Medicaid, for expedition of applications for the Triage Project. The Resource Center toll-free number will provide immediate access to the newly developed Options Counseling program.

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