



Name of Program: Choices At Home

Organization: Connecticut Department of Social Services, Aging Services Division

Choices At Home is a two- pronged pilot project funded by an Administration on Aging Nursing Home Diversion Modernization grant (NHDMG). It is designed to utilize flexible service dollars and a Single Entry Point system to help seniors avoid nursing home placement and spend down to Medicaid. The pilot project is comprised of two separate but key components:

- 1) The addition of a Cash and Counseling (C&C) model of service delivery through the existing Statewide Respite Care and National Family Caregiver programs. Adding a C&C component to the programs will expand the options that seniors have for when and how they receive home care services, therefore allowing them to remain at home longer; and
- 2) The Development of an Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) to serve as South Central Connecticut's Single Entry Point system. Through the development of the ADRC Connecticut is striving to provide seniors and their families with the information and resources that they need to make informed decisions about, and gain better access to existing health and long term care options in their area.

Both components of the Choices At Home project are being piloted in the South Central region of the state with the goal of developing a model that can be replicated statewide in the future.

The Choices At-Home program is targeting individuals who are at-risk of institutionalization and spend-down to Medicaid. For the C&C component of the project workgroup members developed a comprehensive assessment tool that takes into account the medical and psychological well-being of both the client and the caregiver. These factors are rated and scored from 1-10 according to a built-in priority scale. Individuals with scores of 7 or higher are considered at-risk of nursing home placement. Individuals with incomes at or below \$2,500/month and with assets not to exceed \$45,000 are considered at-risk of spend down to Medicaid. The above income/asset criteria were selected because individuals at or below this level would exhaust their income/assets within six months of entering a skilled nursing facility.

The Connecticut State Unit on Aging recognized the need to establish strong partners in order assure a successful outcome. Partners include:

- 1) The Agency on Aging of South Central CT – AASCC is administering the C&C option through the two Caregiver programs and is serving as an access point for and a partner in the development of the ADRC;
- 2) The Center for Disability Rights – CDR is the Center for Independent Living in South Central CT. They are serving as an entry point for and a key partner in the development

- of the ADRC. As part of this project AASCC and CDR have developed and signed a memorandum of understanding to establish agreements for operating the ADRC together;
- 3) University of CT Health Center, Center on Aging – Staff from UCHC are serving as the evaluators of the Choices At Home project;
 - 4) Former consumers of the two Caregiver programs.

The State Unit on Aging formed workgroups to develop each side of the Choices at Home pilot. Grant partners serve on the appropriate workgroups and much of the work of the grant is conducted through the collaborative efforts of workgroup members.

Contact: Melissa Morton, State of CT, Department of Social Services, Aging Services Division at (860) 424-5286 or by email at Melissa.morton@ct.gov