

Summary of “Rebalancing Long-Term Care Systems in New Mexico: Case Study as of December 2007”

New Mexico operates under a consumer directed model of care for long-term support. The 2004 creation of Aging and Long Term Services Department (ALTSD), a cabinet level department, has evolved over time to include seven divisions. ALTSD is a single, unified department that administers all laws and exercises all functions formerly administered by the State agency on aging, human service department, the department of health, and the children, youth and families department that relate to aging, adults with disabilities or LTC services and is responsible for designing and implementing a coordinated service delivery system. ALTSD along with two other cabinet level departments -- Health (where the programs for Developmental Disability are presently housed) and Human Services (where Medicaid is housed) –closely collaborate on LTC and related issues. As of December 2007, The Developmental Disabilities programs, including the Developmental Disabilities Waiver, remained under the jurisdiction of the Health Department for the time being, though it could move to ALTSD at some time in the future.

During the process of closing its state institutions for people with intellectual disability and related developmental disabilities in the 1990s, New Mexico established home and community-based services (HCBS) to enable consumers who might otherwise be in nursing homes, the opportunity to stay at home. By 1995, institutional care for persons with MR/DD was virtually eliminated. In 1999, the state added Personal Care Option (PCO) to its State Medicaid Plan, utilizing this vehicle to create home and community-based services options, including consumer directed HCBS services. Wages offered under this program were designed to create a living wage for persons providing the services and family members were allowed as providers in the PCO program. Largely as a result of this initiative, by 2005 New Mexico had moved to 2nd place in state LTC expenditures on HCBS as opposed to institutional care. The State has continued its initiatives to enhance consumer direction; most notably the Mi Via (my way) consumer-directed 1115 waiver plan which began in November 2006 enrolling consumers from all waiver programs (Elderly and Disabled, Developmental Disabilities, Children’s Mental Health, and AIDS) as well as people with Traumatic Brain Injuries. The New Mexico legislature also enacted Money Follows the Person legislation.