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## **“I Don’t Belong in a Nursing Home!”**

### Planning to Go Home

#### **My family thinks I need to be in a nursing home:**

- Your family probably wants what’s best for you – maybe they haven’t heard the good news about attendant/personal care services that are available under Medicaid in D.C.
- You don’t need to be in a nursing home to get help with “Activities of Daily Living,” such as getting in and out of bed, getting dressed, going to the bathroom, bathing, or eating – these are attendant services, and they are available to people in their own homes under Medicaid.
- You can also get help with “Instrumental Activities of Daily Living,” like taking medication, preparing meals, and keeping up with housework.
- **Whether you live at home or in a nursing home is your choice** – even if you need a little help making that choice, no one should make the choice for you. You are the expert on what you want and need.
- Get more information about your options by watching the short film, “Your Home, Your Choice” available online at [http://www.uls-dc.org/media\\_center](http://www.uls-dc.org/media_center) or by calling University Legal Services at (202) 547-0198.

#### **How much does it cost?**

- If you are on DC Medicaid or you have income up to 300% of SSI (currently \$1,911 per month), you do not pay anything for attendant services.

#### **How does it work?**

- Attendant services are provided in your home by people called personal attendants or aides.
- Attendants work for agencies, but they are assigned to work for you, and they do things the way you want them done.
- The agencies are paid by DC Medicaid for the services provided.
- If you receive Medicaid and SSI (no more than \$637 per month), you are entitled to up to 8 hours of attendant services per day and up to 1,040 hours of attendant services per year. However, your doctor can order more hours, if necessary, and request Medicaid to pay for them.
- If you are eligible for the Elderly and Physically Disabled (EPD) waiver under Medicaid, you can receive up to 16 hours of attendant services per day. You can also receive help with chores, housekeeping, and meal preparation.
- For more information about the EPD waiver, go to the D.C. Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) website at <http://www.adrcdc.org>.

**MORE**

**Who can I ask about this?**

- Ask your social worker at the nursing home.
- Call Ericka Walker at (202) 442-9054, Celestine Lara at (202) 442-5912, or Eliane Gardner at (202) 442-5817, who are with the D.C. Medicaid program.
- Go to the ADRC website listed above for more information about the long-term care services available in the District.

**What am I going to live on?**

- If you live in a nursing home now, your Social Security checks go to the nursing home, and you get about \$70 a month to spend. When you live on your own, you get to keep the whole check to spend on rent, food, and other living expenses.

**What if...**

*It's late at night and your attendant doesn't show up?*

- Agencies that provide attendant services should send a backup in those situations.

*The person working as your personal attendant is somebody that you just don't trust?*

- You can request that the agency send you another attendant.

*You fall, and you can't get up?*

- Everybody needs to be able to communicate in case of an emergency. Some people use portable or cell phones. Others use a gadget called a Personal Emergency Response System (PERS) that links you to emergency 911 for assistance.

**(This fact sheet was adapted, with gratitude, from material provided by the Topeka Independent Living Resource Center.)**