

## **Division of Developmental Disabilities**

### **Closure of State Operated Group Homes, "SOGHs", at the Arizona Training Program in Coolidge, "ATPC"**

#### **1. Why is the Department of Economic Security, "Department", closing the SOGHs at ATPC?**

The Department has determined that the ATPC campus is no longer sustainable due to costs of maintaining the facilities, the difficulty in recruiting staff, and the decline in the number of members residing at the SOGHs. Therefore, the Department has made the decision to close the ATPC campus. During the same timeframe that the Department made the decision to close the ATPC campus, Arizona initiated a process to assess compliance with new rules "HCBS Rules", imposed by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, "C M S" mandating certain requirements for residential and non residential settings where Medicaid members receive long term care services and supports.

#### **2. What are the CMS HCBS Rule requirements?**

The new CMS HCBS Rules establish requirements for both residential and non-residential settings to ensure that individuals receiving services are integrated into their communities and have full access to the benefits of community living. The HCBS Rules do not apply to the Intermediate Care Facility, ICF , on the ATPC campus because it is not a Home and Community Based Service. However, the HCBS Rules do apply to the group homes on the ATPC campus. States have five years to come into compliance with the HCBS Rules. Thereafter, only settings that comply with the HCBS Rules can be paid with Medicaid dollars.

C M S identified settings that are presumed to have qualities of an institution and not to meet the compliance standards of the HCBS Rules, including settings that.

A. Are located in a building on the grounds of, or immediately adjacent to, a public institution

B. Have the effect of isolating individuals receiving Medicaid services from the broader community of individuals not receiving Medicaid services

Examples of institutional qualities exhibited by the ATPC group homes include the fact that the ICF and group homes are operationally interrelated. Furthermore, the setting is designed to provide members with multiple services and activities on site. Lastly, the member's interaction with the broader community is limited.

#### **3. Is the AHCCCS going to request "heightened scrutiny" from CMS for the SOGHs on the ATPC campus?**

No. The Department has determined that the ATPC campus is no longer sustainable due to costs of maintaining the facilities, the difficulty in recruiting staff, and the decline in the number of members residing at the SOGHs. Therefore, the Department has decided to close the entire ATPC campus, including the ICF . Accordingly, it is not worthwhile to pursue the Heightened Scrutiny Process.

C M S uses a process called "heightened scrutiny" to make a determination, based upon evidence submitted by the state, on whether or not a setting presumed institutional in nature is compliant with the HCBS Rules. The evidence submitted by states is required to include a detailed assessment of rules, policy, contracts and training requirements governing the settings' operations and staff. Additionally, the process involves an onsite evaluation and interviews with staff and members.

#### **4. How long will it take the Department to close the SOGHs at ATPC?**

The closure of the ATPC campus will occur in two phases. During the first phase, the group homes on the ATPC campus are projected to close within two to three years. The remainder of the ATPC campus will be closed in approximately five years.

#### **5. What other living options will be available for the members being transitioned out of the SOGHs at ATPC?**

There will be a variety of living options available for members transitioning out of the SOGHs at ATPC based on the preferences and needs of the members, guardians and families. These options include group homes, adult developmental homes, and moving into the family home with in home supports.

#### **6. If members want to live with their current housemates or roommates, is this an option?**

Yes. The Department will search for existing group homes or adult developmental homes with the capacity and ability to meet the roommates' preferences and needs. The Department may also develop new group home or adult developmental home settings to accommodate members who want to continue living together.

#### **7. What are the next steps to ensure a safe and smooth transition?**

The Department will conduct Person Centered Planning meetings with each member, their guardians, and any other individuals that the member or guardian want to be part of the process. Based on the member's Person Centered Plan, a residential option will be selected by the guardian and the team. Once a residential option has been selected, an individualized transition plan will be created for the member's transition. This plan will include strategies on the best way to introduce the member to the new residence and the types and frequency of visits between the member and the staff of the new residential setting in order for them to meet each other and establish a relationship. The Department will evaluate each member for consideration of additional services to help ensure a safe transition. The Department will also perform enhanced monitoring of the member at their new residence after the transition to make certain their preferences and needs are being met.

#### **8. Will members have appeal rights if there is a disagreement over new residential services?**

If the member's guardian requests a placement and or services at the Person Centered Planning meeting that the Department determines is not medically necessary or cost effective, D D D will issue a notice of action, NOA, advising the member's guardians of the member's appeal rights. The appeal process will occur if the member's guardian appeals the decision in the N O A.

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**9. If a member or guardian has questions about the closure of the SOGHs at ATPC, who do they contact?**

They may call the D D D's Family and Consumer Resources Unit at.

602, 542 0419

866, 229 5553, toll free,

**End of material.**