



DIVISION OF DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

OIFA Member Update - December 2022

In-Person Planning Meetings

The flexibility to hold planning meetings virtually has been in place since April 2020. This was put in place to ensure member, family, and DDD staff health and safety. Masks and vaccines are now widely available to help prevent people from getting COVID-19. Treatments to help people who get COVID-19 avoid hospitalization are also available.

Planning meetings are the core of the work DDD does in helping its members live self-directed, healthy, and meaningful lives. The personal connection developed between a Support Coordinator and member is key to helping each member achieve their goals and live the life they want to live. In-person planning meetings are necessary to ensure Support Coordinators can truly assess each member's health and well-being in their living environment. This includes seeing their entire living situation to ensure they have what they need to meet their essential needs and are free from abuse, neglect, or exploitation. This is difficult to do through a virtual medium.

The federal government has continued to extend the federal COVID-19 public health emergency. The Secretary of Health and Human Services extended the COVID-19 federal public health emergency (PHE) in October 2022 until January 2023. AHCCCS has a [page on its website](#) with details about the impact of the end of the PHE. This includes resuming enrollment and renewal processes. It also includes the end of flexibilities granted during the PHE. The Division is making plans to unwind those flexibilities and return to normal operations. This includes a return to in-person planning meetings.

Beginning April 1, 2023, Support Coordinators will resume in-person planning meetings. This will align with the Division's policies. Members and families should work with their Support Coordinator if any mitigation strategies should be used at meetings after April 1, 2023. Additional information about other unwinding flexibilities will be communicated as it becomes available.

All members with AHCCCS Complete Care or DDD Health Plans should ensure their contact information is correct. This can be done online at healtharizonaplus.gov or by calling Health-e-Arizona Plus at 1-855-432-7587, Monday through Friday 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Parents as Paid Caregivers for Their Minor Children

Parents as paid caregivers for their minor children is a flexibility that was implemented at the start of the federal COVID-19 PHE. This reduced the number of people members had to be in contact with from outside their homes. This flexibility is set to expire at the end of the COVID-19 PHE. However, this flexibility was included in the AHCCCS American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) spending plan. This plan was approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Under ARPA funding, this flexibility will be available through September 30, 2024. The ARPA plan will take effect when the federal COVID-19 PHE expires. The COVID-19 PHE is currently set to expire in January 2023 meaning the PHE flexibilities may end on March 31, 2023. If that happens, the ARPA flexibility will begin on April 1, 2023.

Parents will not be allowed to provide more than 40 hours of total paid care per ALTCS member in any given week after the federal COVID-19 PHE expires. This applies even if they are employed by multiple agencies. The member may be assessed for more than 40 hours based on their needs. However, any hours greater than 40 must be provided by a non-parent direct support professional. Each ALTCS member who is under the age of 18 can receive paid care from a parent for up to 40 hours a week. In cases where two parents are paid caregivers, they can provide up to 40 hours of combined services per week per ALTCS member.

AHCCCS has updated its [FAQ related to the parents as paid caregivers for their minor children](#) flexibility.

AHCCCS Person-Centered Service Plan Policy Public Comment

The Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) has published Medical Policy Manual 1620-10 AHCCCS Person-Centered Service Plan for public comment. This policy applies to people enrolled in the Arizona Long Term Care System (ALTCS), in both the Developmental Disabilities (DD) and Elderly and Physically Disabled (EPD) programs.

The policy is available for review at <https://bit.ly/ahcccs-1620-10-pc>. Members and families can submit their comments directly to AHCCCS via [online submission](#) on their website. AHCCCS is accepting public comments until December 22, 2022, at 5:00 p.m.

Get A Flu Shot

Flu is a contagious respiratory illness. It is caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and sometimes the lungs. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. Anyone can get the flu. Serious problems related to flu can happen at any age. Flu symptoms are similar to COVID-19 symptoms. People who have flu often feel some or all of these symptoms:

- Fever or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue (tiredness)
- Vomiting and diarrhea (this is more common in children than adults)

The best way to prevent the flu is to get the [flu vaccine](#) according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Flu vaccine (or flu shot) has been shown to reduce flu related illnesses and the risk of serious flu complications. The flu vaccine is recommended for everyone over 6 months of age. You can also do the following to help slow the spread of germs:

- Stay away from people who are sick.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes.
- Wash your hands often.

The flu and COVID-19 are not the same disease. The flu vaccine does not prevent severe illness from COVID-19. Talk to your doctor about getting the flu vaccine. Also talk to them about the COVID-19 vaccine if you have not yet gotten it.

Flu shots are available to ALTCS members at no cost. You can call your DDD Health Plan or the DDD Tribal Health Program for more information about where to get a flu shot.

- Mercy Care: 1-800-624-3879
- UnitedHealthcare Community Plan: 1-800-348-4058
- DDD Tribal Health Program: 1-844-770-9500 option 7 (TTY/TDD 711)

AHCCCS Electronic Visit Verification (EVV)

Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) tracks and monitors timely service delivery and access to care for members. EVV applies to all providers of these services, including paid family direct care workers. EVV is a federal requirement and is a mandatory program. All individuals who receive services from AHCCCS must participate.

The DDD services impacted are:

- Attendant Care
- Homemaker/Housekeeping
- Habilitation Hourly
- Home Health (Nursing)
- Respite

Qualified Vendors will help members set up their weekly schedule in EVV. A schedule helps DDD know if members are usually getting the services the way they discussed with their planning team. It is ok if some visits start or end at times a little bit different from the weekly schedule as long as the reasons for this are recorded. Members with live-in caregivers have flexibility to develop a schedule or not.

Read [AHCCCS Frequently Asked Questions for scheduling](#) for more details. Members and families should contact their Qualified Vendor Agency if they have questions about their agency's EVV system. AHCCCS has [information about EVV](#) on its website. Members, guardians, and Direct Support Professionals (DSP) should all be using EVV now.

Policy Updates

The Division is currently accepting public comments regarding Division policies. They can be found on the Division's [Policy page](#). Members and families can use this form, <https://forms.gle/4MGCsdyKTRPJna3m9>, to submit public comments. Members or families interested in being notified about policy changes can [register online](#) to receive updates.

Town Hall Meetings

DDD hosts town hall meetings for members, families and providers. You can join via the Internet or by telephone. Attendees can also ask questions. **The next town hall will be held on Thursday, January 5, 2023.** Guests from Arizona Special Olympics will present at the meeting. Visit <http://bit.ly/dddtownhall> for details to join.

Community Resources

DDD has information for local, state, and national groups that support members and their families. The DDD website has links to many of these groups that can assist with day to day tasks and other services that may not be covered by the Division. [Visit the community resources section of the DDD website to learn more.](#)

Arizona Warm Lines

Trained peer support specialists are available to provide support if you need it. These warm lines are available to all Arizonans age 18 and over. Peer support specialists have lived experience. They have been through tough times. They are trained to listen and support callers.

Area Covered	Provider	Phone Number	Hours
All Arizona Counties	NAZCARE	1-888-404-5530	4pm to 10pm Monday – Thursday 3pm to 10:30pm Friday – Sunday
Central Arizona	Crisis Response Network	602-347-1100	24 hours
Southern Arizona - Pima County	Hope, Inc	520-770-9909	8am - 10pm
Southern Arizona - All Other Counties	Hope, Inc	1-844-733-9912	8am - 10pm

The Family Involvement Center offers a warm line for family members. They offer support to family members that deal with behavioral health challenges. This service is also available at no cost.

- Statewide phone number: 1-877-568-8468
- Hours:
 - Monday - Friday: 8am - 6pm
 - Saturday - Sunday: 8am - 12pm

Crisis Services

If you, a family member, or a friend have a mental health emergency, it is important that you seek help right away. Trained crisis staff are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to help over the phone. The Crisis lines are free, confidential, and open to anyone who needs help. For medical, police and fire emergency situations, always call 911.

Statewide Crisis Hotline

- 1-844-534-4673 (1-844-534-HOPE) or text 44673 (4HOPE)

Suicide and Crisis Hotlines by County

- Maricopa County served by Mercy Care: 1-800-631-1314 or 602-222-9444
- Cochise, Graham, Greenlee, La Paz, Pima, Pinal, Santa Cruz and Yuma Counties served by Arizona Complete Health - Complete Care Plan: 1-866-495-6735
- Apache, Coconino, Gila, Mohave, Navajo and Yavapai Counties served by Health Choice Arizona: 1-877-756-4090
- Gila River and Ak-Chin Indian Communities: 1-800-259-3449
- Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community: 1-855-331-6432
- Tohono O’odham Nation: 1-844-423-8759

Especially for Teens

- Teen Life Line phone or text: 602-248-TEEN (8336)

National 24-Hour Crisis Hotlines

Phone

- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 988 or 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
- National Substance Use and Disorder Issues Referral and Treatment Hotline: 1-800-662-HELP (4357)

Text

- Text the word "HOME" to 741741

Report Fraud, Waste or Abuse

Medicaid fraud, waste and abuse (FWA) are crimes. Report fraud, waste, and abuse right away. You will not get in trouble or lose services if you report any suspected fraud, waste, or abuse.

You can report FWA to DDD by:

- Calling DDD at 1-877-822-5799
- Sending an email to dddfwa@azdes.gov
- Sending a letter to DES/DDD, Attn: Corporate Compliance Unit, 1789 W Jefferson St., Mail Drop 2HA1, Phoenix, AZ 85007
- Completing this [online form](#).

You can also report FWA to AHCCCS

- Provider Fraud
 - In Arizona: 602-417-4045
 - Outside Arizona: 1-888-ITS-NOT-OK (1-888-487-6686)
- Report Member Fraud:
 - In Arizona: 602-417-4193
 - Outside Arizona: 1-888-ITS-NOT-OK (1-888-487-6686)
- If you have questions about AHCCCS fraud, abuse of the program, or abuse of a member, email the AHCCCS Office of Inspector General (OIG) at AHCCCSFraud@azahcccs.gov.

Stay Up to Date

All old OIFA newsletters are available to view on DDD's website. Visit the [Member Services](#) page and click on the "Member Newsletters" section.

DDD is Here to Help

Please contact your Support Coordinator or the DDD Customer Service Center at 1-844-770-9500 ext. 1 (TTY/TDD 711) if you have questions.

Call the DDD Customer Service Center at 1-844-770-9500 ext. 1, TTY/TDD 711, to ask for this material in other formats. Language help is available at no cost to you.