News from the Wyoming Department of Health

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Wyoming Medicaid Looking at Long Term Care for Older Adults

The Wyoming Department of Health (WDH) is inviting public participation in a project focused on long term care services supported by Wyoming Medicaid. The project will review current services and begin creating a road map for their reform and redesign.

"Many people do not realize the critical role Wyoming Medicaid plays in helping older and physically disabled residents who may have limited or fixed incomes, but who need services such as nursing home care, assisted living options or home health support," said Teri Green, WDH Division of Healthcare Financing senior administrator and state Medicaid agent. "They also don't understand how fragile our provider infrastructure is for supporting these services."

As directed by the Wyoming Legislature, WDH is studying options to ensure Wyoming Medicaid clients receive needed care while also finding ways to be as responsible as possible with the program's state and federal funding. The effort also includes evaluating the criteria used for qualifying and placing clients and reviewing current reimbursements to service providers.

"We know the number of older adults in Wyoming is growing rapidly. We want to improve our long term care programs now to be ready for the influx of persons we expect to need services in the future," said Teri Green. "Our goal is to strengthen the available array of options so we can help clients stay in their homes and live independently for as long as possible."

Options being examined include:

- Helping remove obstacles that prevent residents from choosing to stay in their homes and living independently including a repeal of the cap on the number of participants in the home and community based waiver program.
- Development of an assessment tool to replace the "LT101," which is used to determine a client's medical need for long term care services.
- Redesigning nursing facility reimbursements.

Community members are invited to participate in a kick-off meeting for the Long Term Care System Redesign Project. The meeting is planned for August 13, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. in Cheyenne at Laramie County Community College in the CCI Building- Centennial Room.

Attendance is free, but registration is required. The registration deadline is Friday, August 2. Please visit https://sites.google.com/a/pubknow.com/ltc/ online to register. Those who cannot attend the meeting may provide input online at the same address and sign up to receive updates.