



**The Hilltop Institute**

*analysis to advance the health of vulnerable populations*

# **Improving Care: State Legislative Role in Improving the Quality of Long-Term Services and Supports**

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**Or...**

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**Eight Things  
Legislators Should Know  
about Quality**

# #1. There are many definitions of quality

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- The best definitions focus on the total system of care and on outcomes.
- For purposes of today's discussion: In a sustainable, person-driven long-term support system, people with disabilities and chronic conditions have choice, control, and access to a full array of quality services that **assure optimal outcomes, such as independence, health, and quality of life.**

- National HCBS Quality Enterprise. June 11, 2009.

## #2. You call most of the shots on quality

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- “Medicaid is the primary payer for long-term services and supports covering a range of services including those needed by people to live independently in the community such as home health and personal care, as well as services provided in institutional settings such as nursing homes. Many of these critical services are not covered by Medicare or private insurance.”

- Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured. June 2012.  
Medicaid and Long-Term Care Services and Supports.

# #3. Defining quality is not an easy task

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## ■ Complicating Factors

- Wide Variety of Diagnostic Categories
- No Standard “Treatment Interventions”
- Personal and Social Outcomes Rather than Illness or Disease Outcomes
- Wide Range of Settings
- Wide Range of Service Provider Types and Qualifications
- Wide Range of Measurement Sets

- Adapted from Quality Improvement for HCBS Programs. Anita Yuskauskas, CMS Technical Director, HCBS Quality, Reinventing Quality Conference 2010.

## **#4. Feds provide framework within which to work...but the hard work is still up to you**

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- Over past decade or so, framework of continuous quality improvement has evolved.
- State develops quality strategy, evaluates performance, and makes improvement. Feds review evidence that it's working.
- See especially [www.nationalqualityenterprise.net](http://www.nationalqualityenterprise.net)

## **#5. There is a lot of information available about what states are doing on quality**

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- AARP State Scorecard identifies quality indicators, provides state-by-state information, and highlights state leadership

<http://www.longtermscorecard.org/>

- AHRQ State Snapshots looks at performance measures across an array of health services, including LTSS

<http://statesnapshots.ahrq.gov/snaps10/>

# #6. LTSS quality gets attention in the ACA

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- Affordable Care Act (ACA) options have implications for comparability across states.
- For example: Balancing Incentive Payment Program (BIPP) requires each participating state to use an evidence-based core standardized assessment tool that captures information in common “domains” to develop an individual service plan.
- Over time, more comparable information about individuals and their needs and preferences will be available.



# #6. LTSS quality gets attention in ACA continued

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- In BIPP, a broader definition of quality data—and thus the purpose for LTSS—is recommended.
- BIPP Guidance recommends that states gather data on and report a subset of Medicaid Adult Health Quality Measures that include things like Asthma Admission Rates, Emergency Department Visits, Hospital Readmissions, and Tobacco Cessation, among others.

- The Balancing Incentive Program: Implementation Manual. Mission Analytics Group. October 2011.

# #7. Information systems are essential to good quality

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- *LTSSMaryland* as an example
  - State of Maryland building, with Hilltop's help, a person-centered information system to support an array of community-based care functions
    - System is built around client record rather than program or set of services
    - Web-based
    - Integrating outdated separate tracking systems
    - Assessment integral part of record

## **#8. New payment and service delivery models require increased attention to quality**

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- Much of LTSS quality framework is built on a fee-for-service model
- As states consider contracting with health plans to manage LTSS and integrate care for duals, state role in assuring quality becomes more important and more difficult.

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## Fact Sheet

### *LTSSMaryland*

Maryland has worked for many years to enhance home and community-based long-term services and supports (LTSS) and increase the proportion of services provided in community-based settings. The Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DHMH) includes personal care in the Medicaid State Plan and oversees nine home and community-based services (HCBS) waivers supporting over 25,000 people. Under the leadership of DHMH and through partnerships with public agencies and private organizations, Maryland has also made significant progress in increasing transitions from institutions to the community. The state's Money Follows the Person Program has supported community transitions of more than 1100 individuals since the program's inception.

Now DHMH is leading an ambitious strategy to strengthen and better integrate the state's HCBS infrastructure, ensure equal access to home and community-based care, and continue to shift expenditures from institutions to the community. *LTSSMaryland*, a new integrated web-based information system built around individual client records, will be a key underpinning of these efforts. Through an agreement with DHMH, The Hilltop Institute is managing *LTSSMaryland's* creation and will maintain it after it is developed. Hilltop is overseeing the work of FEI, a systems design company, in constructing the system.

Built from existing robust but separate waiver tracking systems, *LTSSMaryland* is a person-centered information system supporting a broad array of community-based care functions.

# About The Hilltop Institute

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The Hilltop Institute at UMBC is a non-partisan health research organization—with an expertise in Medicaid and in improving publicly financed health care systems—dedicated to advancing the health and wellbeing of vulnerable populations. Hilltop conducts research, analysis, and evaluations on behalf of government agencies, foundations, and nonprofit organizations at the national, state, and local levels. Hilltop is committed to addressing complex issues through informed, objective, and innovative research and analysis.

[www.hilltopinstitute.org](http://www.hilltopinstitute.org)

# Contact Information

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