

Are you the primary parent, spouse, sibling, or person responsible for the care of someone with a disability?

Do you worry about what will happen when you are no longer able to care for their needs?

Whether due to your advanced age or health, without your care, what will their life look like?

If you are hospitalized, who will assist them?

Who will help them when you die?

What are their own plans and goals for life?

Caregivers who are primarily responsible for a person with a developmental or intellectual disability, mental illness or a substance use disorder, may find it difficult to answer these questions. You may not be able to envision what the future holds for your family member with a disability. Thoughtful planning -- that involves the person -- helps to ensure they have the services and supports to meet their preferences and needs. Should an emergency occur, good planning can help alleviate disruptions.

The resources in this pamphlet can help you begin the planning process.

Points to consider while planning:

- Use the resources available to help with planning -- many resources are listed on the back of this brochure.
- The person and their caregiver(s) need to be actively involved in the planning process.
- Be sure that the person's preferences are part of the plan.
- A complete plan includes:
 - o Living situation
 - o Employment/Day services
 - o Finances/Legal
 - o Medical
 - o Life transitions
 - o Social and Recreational preferences
 - o Appointing an alternate family member



- The plan should address both short- and long-term needs, including emergencies, such as the illness of the caregiver.
- People's needs and preferences change over time, so review the plan periodically or when there is a transition in the person's life (i.e. medical needs, living situation, finances change).
- Explore all available resources and supports, including government programs, as well as local supports such as neighbors, church members, friends, etc.
- Local, State and Federal programs may have waiting lists; ask questions about how the list is maintained and any guidelines for updating your application.
- Seek assistance from family, friends, and peers. They may have experience or knowledge that can help.
- Consult with professionals such as:
 - o Case managers/social workers
 - o Health care providers
 - o Lawyers/financial planners
 - o Educators
 - o Advocacy groups
 - o Government agencies
- Do not hesitate to ask questions. Take notes so that you can refer to them as needed.
 - Organize. Keep copies of all correspondence, evaluations and documents. Be sure that someone knows where the information is kept.

Resources

Maryland Caregiver Support Coordinating Council

-- The purpose of the Council is to coordinate statewide planning, development, and implementation of family caregiver support services.

Web site: <http://dhr.maryland.gov/oas/mcsccl/index.php>

Mental Hygiene Administration (MHA)

-- information on public mental health services to children and adults.

Phone: 1-800-888-1965 (toll free)

Web site: <http://dhmh.maryland.gov/mha>

Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA)

-- information on services and supports to children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

Phone: 1-877-463-3464 (toll free) or 410-767-5600

Web site: <http://dda.dhmh.maryland.gov>

Alcohol and Drug Abuse Administration (ADAA)

-- maintains a resource directory for certified programs in Maryland.

Phone: 410-402-8600

Web site: <http://adaa.dhmh.maryland.gov>

Maryland Medical Programs

-- description of many of the programs and services available, with information on how and where to apply for benefits including Medicaid.

Web site: <http://mmcp.dhmh.maryland.gov/SitePages/Home.aspx>

Maryland Department of Disabilities (MDOD)

-- information and links to services including housing, employment, transportation and benefit counseling for people with disabilities.

Phone: 1-800-637-4113 (toll free)

Web site: www.mdod.state.md.us

Maryland Department of Aging (MDOA)

-- information on services and benefits for seniors.

Phone: 410-767-1100

Web site: www.aging.maryland.gov

Department of Human Resources (DHR)

-- information on services available to vulnerable children and adults, coordinated through local Departments of Social Services.

Phone: 1-800-332-6347

Web site: www.dhr.state.md.us

Maryland Division of Rehabilitation Services (DORS)

-- programs and services that help people with disabilities go to work or stay independent in their homes and communities.

Phone number: 888-554-0334 (toll free)

Web site: www.dors.state.md.us

Transitioning Youth Website for Students with Disabilities

-- The Maryland Transitioning Youth Website provides information and resources on transition planning for youth with disabilities and their families.

Web site: www.mdtransition.org

Maryland Access Point (MAP) -- A website that provides information on long-term and short-term supports and services throughout Maryland's communities.

Web site: www.marylandaccesspoint.info

Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

-- a public policy organization that advocates for the inclusion of people with developmental disabilities in all facets of community life. The Council publication *Planning Now: A Futures and Estate Planning Guide for Families of Children and Adults with Developmental Disabilities* may be obtained on their website, www.md-council.org or by calling 410-767-3670.

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The Department, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, ensures that qualified individuals with disabilities are given an opportunity to participate in and benefit from DHMH services, programs, benefits, and employment opportunities.



Planning for Life

Tips and Resources for Caregivers

Sponsored by
Maryland Caregiver Support Coordinating Council (MCSCC) and
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Martin O'Malley, Governor
Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor
Joshua M. Sharfstein, M.D., Secretary, DHMH