

## Consumer Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. Who is a Consumer or Community Member?

A Consumer, also known as a Community Member, is a medical assistance recipient whom a managed care organization (health plan) has determined eligible to participate in the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program (CDPAP).

### 2. Who is a Personal Assistant?

A Personal Assistant is an adult who provides personal care assistance to a Consumer under their or their Designated Representative's instruction, supervision, and direction.

### 3. Who is a Designated Representative?

A Designated Representative is an adult to whom a Consumer has delegated authority to assist and perform the Consumer's responsibilities. A Designated Representative is able and willing to assist in making informed choices about the type and quality of services, including but not limited to nursing care, personal care, transportation, and respite services.

### 4. How is the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program (CDPAP) different from traditional homecare services?

In traditional homecare models, a homecare agency usually assigns consumers home health aides, LPNs, and RNs to perform different levels of service. This means that you have contact with several different people who are assigned various tasks, and each adheres to different agency guidelines. Through the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program, there is only one level of service that you have contact with: the Personal Assistant. This simplifies the process by allowing you to train only the people you feel comfortable with to do everything you need.

### 5. What are my responsibilities as the Independent @ Home Program Consumer?

Through the Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Program (CDPAP), Consumers or their Designated Representatives are empowered to become employers who are responsible for the *recruiting, interviewing, hiring, training, supervising*, and, if need be, *dismissal* of Personal Assistants. Consumers manage who gives them care and when they do it.

### 6. What are the Independent @ Home Program's responsibilities?

As a fiscal intermediary, the Independent @ Home Program is responsible for processing the payroll for each Personal Assistant you hire, handling employee benefits, monitoring the completion of annual health assessments, and providing you with the support and resources you need to keep your services running smoothly.

### 7. Who can be a Personal Assistant?

A Personal Assistant can be any adult over the age of 18 who is not legally responsible for the Consumer. In other words, a spouse or Designated Representative cannot be a Consumer's Personal Assistant. This means that family or friends, including those residing in the same house as the Consumer, can become a Personal Assistant as long as they are not legally responsible for the individual.

**8. I don't have any family members or friends to hire as my Personal Assistant. Where can I find other Personal Assistants?**

There are several places where you can find individuals looking to work as Personal Assistants. You can:

- search Facebook and other social media posts and groups, NextDoor and other neighborhood apps, senior centers, and community spaces.
- post ads at local places in the community, such as colleges, libraries, laundromats, grocery stores or places of worship.
- post an ad in the newspaper or on an online job search engine.

**9. How many Personal Assistants should I hire?**

As many as you want! However, you cannot schedule them to work at the same time or to work more than the total weekly hours authorized by the managed care organization (health plan). Also, be sure to employ backup Personal Assistants that you can call in case regular Personal Assistants take sick or personal time.

**10. What can I ask my Personal Assistant to do for me?**

Your Personal Assistant is responsible for the items that are outlined on your Plan of Care. Medicaid will only pay for the tasks completed on this outline. If you have specific questions regarding what your Personal Assistant is allowed to do, please check with your caseworker before assigning it to a Personal Assistant.

**11. I've never trained or hired my own Personal Assistant(s) before. Do you have any resources available to help me with these tasks?**

The Independent @ Home Program has a variety of training tools that can be used by both you and your Personal Assistant(s), including Relias Online Training, interactive presentations, and informational pamphlets. Please feel free to contact the Independent @ Home Program with any additional questions or concerns you have.

**12. If I am in the hospital for a few days, can my Personal Assistant still work for me?**

No, your Personal Assistant may not work for you while you are in the hospital. This is because Medicaid is paying for you to receive care in the hospital, and the state does not allow for separate entities to be paid at the same time. However, your Personal Assistant can work for you until you are admitted and after you are discharged.

**13. What do I do if I feel a Personal Assistant isn't performing the job duties we discussed?**

As an employer, you are solely responsible for training and terminating your Personal Assistants. However, we know that this may be a very difficult task. The Independent @ Home Program can help you learn to train and communicate with your Personal Assistant(s), correct problem behavior, and terminate an employee. If you do choose to terminate a Personal Assistant, please let the Independent @ Home Program know as soon as possible so appropriate paperwork can be processed.

***Have a question that isn't answered here? We can help! Give us a call at 1-800-234-2211.***