

Options Counseling Program

When an older person, or an adult of any age with a disability, faces the need for supportive services to help with basic activities such as personal care, household chores, transportation, nutrition or medication management, locating and evaluating options can be a challenging task. The choices are varied and can feel overwhelming:

- move in with family
- enter a nursing home
- apply to an assisted living facility
- remain at home, with help

The decision can be made more manageable with the support of a knowledgeable Options Counselor to provide information about the range of community and institutional resources available and ensure that the individual and/or family understands the options, can make an informed choice and determine the next steps to take.

Options counseling services:

- serve adults with a disability
- serve elders age 60+
- are available by telephone, in-person or email/web
- can be provided at home, at an agency, a hospital, rehabilitation or nursing facility
- are available at no cost
- provide unbiased information about long term care services and resources
- can be provided in one sitting or over a series of meetings
- ensure that the individual retains control over the process
- provide decision support
- help determine next steps to take

Options counseling is an initiative supported by the passage of the Equal Choice legislation, enacted through MGL Chapter 211 of the Acts of 2006. The service is available statewide, through 11 regional Aging and Disability Resource Consortia (ADRC), comprised of agencies from both the elder network (Aging Service Access Points) and the disability network (Independent Living Centers) and other community-based partners working in concert to ensure efficient access to long term services and supports for people regardless of age, income or disability. 11/17



Options Counseling is administered by the Executive Office of Elder Affairs and the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, in conjunction with the Aging and Disability Resource Consortia. This service represents a collaborative initiative of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Administration for Community Living (ACL) and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to provide consumer access to community-based long term services and supports through a "No Wrong Door" policy.