

Comparing the Children's Community Options Program and Children's Long-Term Support Waivers

This fact sheet will provide an overview of the Children's Community Option Program (CCOP) and Children's Long Term Support (CLTS) Waivers and will compare and contrast the programs.

As families may know, in 2016 Wisconsin's Family Support Program was merged with the Community Options Program to become the **Children's Community Option Program (CCOP)**. Children who were on the Family Support Program will be moved to CCOP.

What is the Children's Community Options Program (CCOP)? CCOP is a state-funded program run at the county level that offers services and supports to families who have children with significant disabilities. Although each county's program is run slightly differently, programs can provide funding (up to \$3,000 per year) for services that are not covered by private insurance or Medicaid such as respite, home modifications, specialized equipment or recreational activities. To learn more go to: www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/children/fsp/index.htm (Please note: this address will change soon).

What is the CLTS Waiver? The Children's Long Term Support (CLTS) Waiver provides funding for children living with their families who need a certain level of care in one of 3 areas of disability: physical disability, developmental disability and severe emotional disability. The CLTS Waiver program allows states to use Medicaid funding in more flexible ways, through a Home and Community Based Waiver. For example, CLTS funds may be used for home modifications or other services which would not be covered with a Medicaid card. To learn more go to www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/clts/index.htm

***In the past autism spectrum disorder (ASD) treatment services were covered by the CLTS waiver. Starting in 2016, ASD treatment services are covered as a regular Medicaid card benefit rather than being covered by the CLTS waiver - go to www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/clts/waiver/autism/updates.htm*

Who is eligible for these programs? Children and youth may be eligible for the programs if they have a significant disability, are under age 21, and are living at home. According to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, "A severe disability is a physical, mental, or emotional limitation which seriously restricts the child's ability to carry out basic daily living activities such as self-care, learning, communications, mobility and self-direction." Although family income is not a basis for eligibility, cost-sharing for the CLTS waiver may be required on a sliding fee scale.

If my child is eligible will we receive services immediately or will we have to wait? Because of limited funding for both CLTS Waivers and CCOP, eligibility does not guarantee a family will receive services. This means that your child may be placed on a waiting list. Families are served on a first-come, first-served basis, although priority for services may be given to families in a crisis situation, experiencing an urgent need for supports or families who are bringing a child home from an out-of-home placement.

What are some differences between the CLTS Waivers and the CCOP?

Example 1 - Since CCOP is administered on a county level and has limited funding, most families enrolled in CCOP receive limited financial support each year. The CLTS Waiver, which has state and federal funding through Medicaid, may be able to fund larger items or services. For example, if a family needs a handicap van the CLTS waiver may be able to pay for the full cost of the van conversion.

Example 2 – CCOP may be able to provide funding for some items or therapy services if these services are included in the child’s individual service plan that would not be paid for by the CLTS Waivers. As an example, if a recreational activity such as swimming or horseback riding is part of a child’s service plan but it is not provided by a Medicaid certified provider, CCOP may be able to provide funding whereas the CLTS Waiver could not fund this activity.

What is the process for enrolling in these programs?

Step 1 - Contact your county Human Services Department and let them know you are interested in the CLTS Waivers and CCOP. An intake worker or service coordinator will talk to you about the programs to see if they might be appropriate for your family and assist you in the next steps of the application process.

PLEASE NOTE: In many counties you can go directly to ***CompassWisconsin: Threshold***. **Threshold** provides outreach, intake, application and eligibility determination for children needing long-term supports and services for families. To find out if you live in a Threshold county go to www.compasswisconsin.org

Step 2 – An application packet will be sent to you and a service coordinator will set up a home visit with you and your child. During this visit you will be asked questions about your child’s needs, abilities and your concerns. The service coordinator will then complete an assessment form called a “functional screen” to determine if your child is eligible. You may be asked to sign release-of- information forms in order for the county to get copies of your child’s medical, school or other records.

Step 3 - Once the functional screen is completed and records reviewed, you will receive a letter letting you know if your child is eligible for services. If your child is determined not to be eligible and you believe this is not correct, contact the service coordinator or your county to appeal the decision. If your child is deemed eligible, he or she will likely be put on a waiting list before services are provided. *Remember, if you move or your child’s condition changes while you are on the wait list make sure your service coordinator is notified!*

Step 4 - If your child is eligible (and not on a waiting list), a service coordinator will meet with your family and together you will develop an individual service plan. All supports available to the family are explored, including formal supports (e.g., medical, social services and educational programs) and informal supports (e.g., friends, family, neighbors and community groups).

What if I have additional questions about the CLTS Waivers or CCOP? Contact your Regional Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs. To find the Regional Center closest to you call **1.800.642.7837**.