

March 6, 2013

To:

Rep. Matt Lori, Chair  
Rep. Rob VerHeulen, Vice-Chair  
Rep. Paul Muxlow  
Rep. Peter MacGregor  
Rep. Rashida Tlaib, Minority Vice-Chair  
Rep. Brandon Dillon

There are many chronic illnesses including heart disease, cancer, stroke, COPD, and diabetes to name only a few. My chronic illness is mental illness.

I have had an incredible, blessed life and career and yet I knew there was something wrong. In 2002 I could no longer maintain. I went to a place you probably can't imagine. I felt there was no hope. I am blessed because my children stood by me and helped me access the public mental health system (Summit Pointe in Battle Creek MI). It saved my life.

I am an example, as are many, many others that recovery is possible. It is possible to move forward with life and to gain/regain what matters most.

*When the Governor announced Medicaid Expansion he said:*  
This makes sense for the physical and fiscal health of Michigan.

*James Haveman, Director MDCH said:*  
We have a commitment to supporting a recovery-based public mental health system.

***I believe Medicaid Expansion is one of the essential steps to comprehensive integrated health. To me integration means mental health, physical health and fiscal health.***

Because of Governor Snyder's decision to recommend the expansion of Michigan's Medicaid program, there will be many people who will not have to .....go to a place you can't imagine.

Please approve Medicaid Expansion in my State.

Thank You for this opportunity,  
Marlene Lawrence



c Lynda Zeller  
Deputy Director

House Appropriations Subcommittee on

Community Health

March 6, 2013

**Testimony on Fiscal Year 2014 Executive Budget Recommendation: Medicaid/Mi Choice Waiver/Office of Services to the Aging**

Christine Vanlandingham, Fund & Product Development Officer Region IV Area Agency on Aging

---

**Medicaid/MI Choice Waiver Budget Testimony:**

On the campus of Western Michigan University today is a bright, optimistic 27 year-old from Jones, Michigan studying to be a psychologist specializing in spinal cord injury patients. Daniel\* is what we all hope Michigan's young adults to be – motivated, industrious, and pursuing an education with a clear career goal. Daniel is also a MI Choice Waiver client.

I'm Christine Vanlandingham with Region IV Area Agency on Aging [AAA] serving Berrien, Cass and Van Buren counties in southwest Michigan. It was through the AAA's MI Choice Waiver services that Daniel was able to return to community living after suffering a fall from a three story building. He is wheelchair dependent, cannot use his left arm and has only limited use of his right.

MI Choice waiver provides Daniel with three-hours per day of care. Personal care workers get him up and dressed each morning and prep his meals for the day. His trip to Western's Kalamazoo campus is made in a specially outfitted vehicle that allows him to drive himself to school. Daniel's mother provides his care at night and on the weekends.

At a cost of \$40.43 per day, Daniel is able to live a full life while living as independently as possible in the community. Without the MI Choice Waiver, Daniel would undoubtedly need Medicaid-funded nursing home care as family resources are not sufficient to provide for his care needs.

Daniel has been a MI Choice waiver participant for 4 ½ years. By providing Daniel's care at home through the MI Choice waiver program instead of in a nursing facility, the state of Michigan has saved \$216,000 over the past 4 ½ years. [1,642 days of MI Choice Waiver services @ \$40.43 per day vs. Nursing home care @\$172 per day]

Since the NFTi program began, Region IV AAA has transitioned 155 seniors and younger persons with disabilities in Berrien, Cass and Van Buren counties out of nursing homes and back to their homes and communities. Statewide, more than 7,000 Medicaid-funded nursing facility residents have been able to transition home at a significant savings to the state.

On average in Region IV, 50% of Waiver clients are enrolled until their death; 15% are discharged due to improved health or increased income; 6% moved out of the service area; 7% were transferred to PACE or another MI Choice waiver agent; and 22% are discharged to nursing facilities.

Of those Waiver clients discharged to nursing homes, their average length of stay on the MI Choice Waiver in Region IV is 1,150 days. This represents a cost savings of \$138,000 for each of those clients by delaying nursing home placement for an average of 3.15 years.

Expanding access to less costly and highly-effective home and community based services through the MI Choice Waiver, Nursing Facility Transition initiative, and Programs of All Inclusive Care for the Elderly [PACE] will allow Michigan to lower the cost per person, serve a broader population and address the growing need.

The Governor's recently released budget recommendation includes increased funding critical to reducing the MI Choice waiver wait list and expanding access to community based long term care services. On behalf of the seniors and younger persons with disabilities in southwest Michigan and across the state who are waiting for access to home and community based services, I respectfully ask you to support that funding level.

### **Office of Services to the Aging (OSA) Budget Testimony:**

Office of Services to the Aging (OSA) services are cost-effective preventing seniors from going on Medicaid and costing the state more money. *"These services are the glue that keeps us going,"* says Marilyn\* whose husband, Patrick\*, is a 73 year-old, diabetic, double amputee.

Patrick also suffers from MS-induced dementia and has been a Care Management service recipient since June of 2007. AAA Care Manager, Jillian, works with other local community service providers and Medicare skilled care to stitch together the care Patrick needs to be able to stay in the community.

OSA funds provide 13 hours per week of respite care to allow Marilyn to continue in her caregiving role. Cass County Council on Aging provides transportation and Medicare Skilled Care provides bath aids, and catheter care.



Patrick\*, OSA Care Management Client

It is estimated that family caregivers provide most 80% of elderly care at no cost to the state. The same is true in Patrick's case. Marilyn provides the bulk of Patrick's care but states that without the supportive service provided by OSA, she could not continue to keep Patrick in their home.

Patrick's level of care needs and their income qualify Patrick for Medicaid funded long-term care service, but their assets are slightly above Medicaid limits. Without OSA services, Patrick would spend down into Medicaid in a matter of just a few months and be dependent on Medicaid funded long-term care.

Patrick's care plan costs the state of Michigan \$29.11 per day as compared to \$172/day for Medicaid funded nursing home care. This is a cost savings of \$52,155 per year, every year or a total of \$286,850 over the past 5 ½ years since Patrick's services began.

Marilyn and Patrick are very proud individuals. They do not want to rely on Medicaid to pay for Patrick's care. OSA services allow them the dignity of contributing to the cost of Patrick's care, extending AAAs capacity to serve additional seniors.

Currently there are 70 people on the Region IV AAA Care Management and Case Coordination and Supports waiting list with an expected wait time of 9 months. Please restore the \$8.9 million in cuts to meals, community services and volunteer programs to allow these seniors and others waiting around the state to access these vital services.

Thank you.

Christine Vanlandingham  
Fund & Product Development Officer  
Region IV Area Agency on Aging  
2900 Lakeview Ave.  
St. Joseph, MI 49085  
269-983-0177

\*Client stories are shared with their permission but names have been changed to protect their privacy.