

**U.S. House and Senate Notification**  
**Wednesday, April 7, 2010**

**To: Congressional Health Staff**

**From: Amy Hall**  
**Director, Office of Legislation**  
**Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services**

**Re: HHS and HUD Partner To Allow Rental Assistance To Support Independent Living For Non-Elderly Persons With Disabilities**

Thousands of Americans living with disabilities will have community housing assistance specifically targeted to meet their needs, U.S. Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Kathleen Sebelius and U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Shaun Donovan announced today. As part of President Obama's *Year of Community Living* initiative, HHS and HUD collaborated to provide housing support for non-elderly persons with disabilities to live productive, independent lives in their communities rather than in institutional settings. HUD is offering approximately \$40 million to public housing authorities across the U.S. to fund approximately 5,300 Housing Choice Vouchers for non-elderly persons with disabilities, allowing them to live independently. HHS will use its network of state Medicaid agencies and local human service organizations to link eligible families to local housing agencies who will administer voucher distribution.

Of the 5,300 vouchers set aside as part of this program, up to 1,000 will be specifically targeted for non-elderly individuals with disabilities currently living in institutions but who could move into the community with assistance (Category II). The remaining 4,300 (Category I) can be used for this purpose also, but are targeted for use by non-elderly disabled families in the community to allow them to access affordable housing that adequately meets their needs. In addition, HUD is encouraging housing authorities to consider establishing a selection preference to make some or all of its Category I allocation available to disabled families and individuals who, without housing assistance, are at risk of institutionalization. Housing authorities have 90 days to submit their applications to HUD. HUD expects to have funding awards ready by late fall 2010.

The vouchers will augment work already being done by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) through its Medicaid Money Follows the Person (MFP) grant program. MFP assists States in their efforts to reduce reliance on institutional care, develop community-based long-term care opportunities, and transition individuals living in institutions to community living. Originally set to expire next year, the new health insurance reform law, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA), extended the MFP program through September 30, 2016 with an additional appropriation of more than \$2 billion. PPACA also shortened the time Medicaid beneficiaries residing in institutions qualify to participate in MFP from six months to three months. Now in its third year, the MFP program has made it possible for almost 6,000 people to live more independent lives by

providing necessary supports and services in the community. Currently, twenty-nine states and the District of Columbia have MFP programs.

A press release for today's announcement is available at:

[http://www.cms.gov/apps/media/press\\_releases.asp](http://www.cms.gov/apps/media/press_releases.asp). To read the full funding announcement, visit [HUD's Web site](#). More information about the Money Follows the Person program can be found at [http://www.cms.hhs.gov/CommunityServices/20\\_MFP.asp](http://www.cms.hhs.gov/CommunityServices/20_MFP.asp)

If you have any additional questions, please contact the CMS Office of Legislation. Thank you.