



Position Statement

WHY CONTINUE TO FUND THE CHOICES PROGRAM?

CHOICES saves money for the State of Connecticut!

If consumers understand how to make more rational long-term care choices, they will:

- access all available federally-funded benefits including the Medicare D Low-Income Subsidy and the Medicaid Savings Programs (QMB, SLMB, QI)
- use their own funds more rationally
- be less likely to need Medicaid-funded care in an institution

MAINTAIN STATE FUNDING FOR CHOICES!



When Geri Corso (left), who is a caregiver for her mother, had questions concerning Medicare she turned to the CHOICES program. Richard Memmott, Sr., (right) a certified CHOICES counselor, gave Geri all the information she needed to make the right choices. "I found myself caring for my mother and was not really sure where to turn for the answers I needed. The CHOICES program pointed me in the right direction, and allowed me to be a better provider for my mother," said Geri.

WHAT CAN LEGISLATORS DO?

RENEW

- the \$1 m. in state funding to support CHOICES that was budgeted in SFY'09

SUPPORT

- designation of Agencies on Aging and Centers for Independent Living as primary partners in implementing Aging and Disability Resource Centers in all regions of the State

THE RESULT:

- increased access to needed information & services and health care savings

CT ASSOCIATION OF AREA AGENCIES ON AGING

AASCC

(203) 785-8533

SWCAA

(203) 333-9288

NCAAA

(860) 724-6443

SENIOR RESOURCES

(860) 887-3561

WCAAA

(203) 757-5449

CHOICES provides unbiased, current and comprehensive information on health insurance, financial assistance, benefits, housing and community-based care to older adults, those with disabilities, and caregivers. This service helps people to understand and plan for their long-term care needs.

CHOICES, a partnership among DSS, the Connecticut Agencies on Aging, the Center for Medicare Advocacy, and diverse community partners, has been identified as a focal point for information & referral.

The Agencies on Aging have developed partnerships with the Connecticut Centers for Independent Living to build on **CHOICES** and to lay plans for implementing Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC's) in all regions of the state.



- **CHOICES is vital to Connecticut's efforts to "re-balance" long-term care spending.** Education of consumers regarding financial planning, the limited scope of public benefits, and available home and community-based options will be a key component of Connecticut's efforts to rationalize and rebalance its long-term care spending.
- **Consumers need streamlined access to information.** The recently released Connecticut Long-Term Care Needs Assessment endorsed creation of a statewide Single-Point of Entry (SPE) or No Wrong Door (NWD) Long-term Care Information and Referral program in Connecticut that would serve individuals across all ages and disabilities.
- **CHOICES provides a sound platform from which to expand services.** Already in place in Connecticut, and serving important information & referral and counseling functions, is the CHOICES program.
- **Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC's) are a federal priority.** In 2008, federal funding for a new pilot project entitled Choices at Home that was awarded to DSS has permitted DSS, the Agency on Aging of South Central Connecticut and the Center for Disability Rights (West Haven) to collaborate in developing the first Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) in Connecticut, which is serving the south central region. Another such grant will, in the spring of 2009, permit Western Connecticut Agency on Aging and Northwest Center for Independent Living to open an ADRC in Western Connecticut. This effort reflects a larger scale initiative among Agencies on Aging (AAA's) and Centers for Independent Living (CIL's) to use the regional emphasis and subject matter expertise of both networks to accomplish the goal of implementing ADRC's in all regions of the state.



In 2008 alone, CHOICES:

- made **36,886** contacts with individuals and caregivers to provide information and referral on Medicare, Medicaid, financial assistance, benefits, housing, adult day care and services for people with disabilities
- staffed **18** enrollment events at which countless people were screened for and connected with the Medicare Low-Income Subsidy benefit
- counseled over **5,500** individuals on the federal Medicaid Savings Programs (QMB, SLMB, QI)
- sponsored **364** outreach presentations
- provided meaningful volunteer opportunities to **371** trained counselors
- provided expert training to social services professionals to help them keep current
- used radio, cable television, billboards, local newspapers and expert materials from the Center for Medicare Advocacy and other sources to educate the public



CHOICES training in November of 2008.

