
Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Selecting Friendship as A Provider of Choice

I WANT MY FAMILY MEMBER TO BE SERVED BY FRIENDSHIP COMMUNITY. MUST THEY ALSO BE ON THE COUNTY'S WAITING LIST AS WELL?

The county waiting list is the primary reference upon which publicly-funded services are offered. Friendship Community requests information on individuals who would like services from Friendship and what types of services these individuals may need. It is recommended that if a family desires Friendship's publicly-funded services, they specify that preference with the county and appropriate staff. Private-pay and charity services can be arranged without being on a county waiting list.

HOW DOES ONE MOVE FROM THE WAITING LIST TO RECEIVE SERVICES AND HOUSING?

When an opening occurs, the service provider (Friendship) informs the county of the opening. The county supports coordinators makes referrals for this opening. Friendship Community and county staff determine who among those referred is best suited for the opening. The level of need is explored as well as who might be the best match for the opening. Another way to move off the waiting list into receiving services is through expansion money made available by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

WE LIVE OUTSIDE OF LANCASTER COUNTY. SHOULD WE BECOME A LANCASTER COUNTY RESIDENT PROVIDE A BETTER OPPORTUNITY FOR OUR FAMILY MEMBER? WOULD THEY MOVE UP ON THE LIST?

Individuals must have a supports coordinator in the county that they want publicly funded services in. In order to have an open case, individuals must be residents of the county they would like to receive services in. Simply having an open case does not guarantee services. Services are based on the needs of the individual and the availability of funding to meet those needs rather than the length of time waiting for services.

WHAT SERVICES ARE TYPICALLY TRANSFERABLE FROM ONE COUNTY TO ANOTHER?

Any services that are funded through waivers (Consolidated and Person/Family Directed Support) should be able to be transferred from one county to another.

IF AN INDIVIDUAL GETS TO THE TOP OF A WAITING LIST IN ANOTHER COUNTY, ARE THEY ONLY ELIGIBLE FOR SERVICES IN THAT COUNTY?

No one "gets to the top" of a waiting list. Services are provided based on urgency of need and an appropriate fit with available services and funding. If an individual is eligible for services that are funded through waivers, the funding is transferable from one county to another.



IN THE CURRENT ECONOMIC SITUATION, IT DOES NOT LOOK PROMISING FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING AND SERVICES TO BE AVAILABLE. WHAT ARE SOME WAYS TO BE CREATIVE?

- Person-Centered Planning
- Home-based Services
- Join the ARC
- Contact Legislators

WHAT IS THE PUNS LIST AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

The PUNS list is maintained by the county office of Mental Health/Mental Retardation (MH/MR) and represents a Prioritization of Urgency of Need for Services for Persons with Mental Retardation. The PUNS list has three categories of urgency of need for services: Emergency, Critical and Planning. As an opening becomes available within the county MR system the Supports Coordinators and agency staff meet to determine who on the emergency PUNS list will be the next person served.

WHAT IS A SUPPORTS COORDINATOR AND IS IT ESSENTIAL FOR INDIVIDUALS TO HAVE ONE?

A Supports Coordinator is assigned by the county MH/MR office at the time a person enters the county MH/MR system. This person is assigned to work with individuals and families to plan, locate and/or coordinate supports and services. They will also inform you of your rights. It is imperative to have a Supports Coordinator to assist a family with navigating the MR system.