

INTEREST LISTS FOR LONG-TERM CARE PROGRAMS

AN ISSUE BRIEF FROM LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD STAFF

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OBJECTIVE

Interest lists are a tool used by the Legislature in making appropriation decisions about whether to expand the number of persons served in community waiver programs based on perceived need.

KEY FACTS

- ◆ Interest lists operate on a first-come, first-served basis; no prioritization of need occurs.
- ◆ When a person signs on to an interest list, no eligibility determination is made.
- ◆ Persons may sign on to multiple interest lists. As of August 31, 2012, all lists contained 154,400 names (108,825 unduplicated persons).

BUDGETARY IMPACT

The General Appropriations Act for 2012–13 provided \$2.5 billion in All Funds (\$1.1 billion in state funds) for community waiver programs. This funding level provided for 54,096 slots in fiscal year 2012 and 50,235 slots in fiscal year 2013.

STATUTORY REFERENCES

Texas Administrative Code, Title 40 Part 1, Chapters 9, 42, 45, 48, and 51

The Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) manages interest lists for several home and community-based services waiver programs that serve persons who are aging and have physical disabilities and persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities. These lists identify persons who have expressed interest in receiving services that are currently unavailable due to limitations on the number of program participants. Waiting lists differ from interest lists in that waiting lists include only people eligible for services.

PROGRAMS WITH INTEREST LISTS

DADS maintains interest lists for the following programs: 1) 1915(c) Medicaid waivers: Community Based Alternatives (CBA), Medically Dependent Children Program (MDCP), Home and Community-Based Services (HCS), Community Living Assistance Support Services (CLASS), and Deaf-Blind Multiple Disabilities (DBMD); 2) Medical assistance-only: STAR+PLUS (part of the 1115 demonstration waiver); and 3) Non-Medicaid funded services: Adult Foster Care, Consumer Managed Personal Attendant Services, Day Activity and Health Services, Emergency Response Services, Family Care, Home Delivered Meals, Residential Care, and Special Services for Persons with Disabilities. The Texas Home Living (TxHmL) waiver does not have its own interest list. Services are offered to persons on the HCS interest list in regions with the TxHmL program. According to DADS, the department expects to implement a separate TxHmL interest list in August 2013.

USING INTEREST LISTS TO IDENTIFY UNMET NEED

Duplication exists across interest lists. Because current list management policy allows persons to sign on to multiple interest lists, summing the number of persons on each interest list does not provide an accurate count of total persons interested in services. Fig. 1 shows the number of persons on each interest list as of August 31, 2012. According to DADS, the total number of persons on all lists was 154,400 and the unduplicated count was 108,825.

The lists also contain many persons who are found ineligible or decline services when they become available. This occurs because functional and financial assessments do not take place prior to list placement, and also because people sign on to lists in anticipation of future needs, given the wait for the programs, but may not have a need for services once they are available. According to DADS, as of August 31, 2012, of the 32,786 persons released or removed from the interest lists for fiscal years 2010, 2011, and 2012, 25,597 were denied/declined a slot when it was offered to them (78.1 percent). These individuals may opt to return to the interest list but receive a new interest list request date (it must be at least one day after the denial or finding of ineligibility).

The size of the interest list does not reflect unmet need, because some people on the lists receive services in other programs while they wait and, as noted, placement on the list sometimes describes anticipated need. Fig. 1 also shows the number and percentage

of persons who received services from other DADS programs and STAR+PLUS while they waited for waiver services. While it is possible the services persons receive are not as robust as the services for which they are waiting to receive, the fact that a number of persons declined services because they were receiving other services suggests that at least some of their current needs were being met. The extent to which this occurs varies by waiver and consumer, however.

As a result of performance measures added during the Eighty-second Legislative Session, DADS is required to report explanatory performance measures for each of its interest lists including the average monthly number of individuals on the interest list, the number of individuals who declined or were found ineligible for services when offered, the average monthly number of clients who were receiving other DADS services while on the interest list, and the percent of individuals who decline or are found ineligible for services of those who are offered services in a given year.

FIG. 1
SUMMARY DATA ON TEXAS LONG-TERM CARE PROGRAM INTEREST LISTS, 2012

PROGRAM	COUNT ON INTEREST LIST (AUGUST 31, 2011)	COUNT ON INTEREST LIST (AUGUST 31, 2012)	PERSONS DENIED/DECLINED SLOT WHEN OFFERED (AUG. 2011–AUG. 2012)	INDIVIDUALS RECEIVING OTHER DADS SERVICES AND STAR+PLUS (MARCH 31, 2012)
Community-based Alternatives (CBA)	30,148	11,912	15,038	6,187
STAR+PLUS (1115 Waiver)	10,741	12,490	9,882	6,008
Medically Dependent Children Program	22,063	25,668	615	1,738
Home and Community-based Services	52,676	60,196	0	14,318
Community Living Assistance and Support Services	38,258	43,607	39	9,610
Deaf Blind Multiple Disabilities	420	527	23	187
Total	154,306	154,400	25,597	38,048

NOTES: The reduction in the Community-based Alternatives interest list and increase in the STAR+PLUS interest list may be attributed to expansion of the STAR+PLUS program that occurred following the Eighty-second Legislature. The only releases or removals for HCS were due to persons in the pipeline; zero persons were denied/declined during this time. The “individuals receiving other services” column reflects unduplicated clients by program but the total may include duplication.

SOURCE: Legislative Budget Board.

USEFUL REFERENCES

- Legislative Budget Board: Government Effectiveness and Efficiency Report to the Eighty-second Legislature, “Increase Information Available on Interest Lists for Long-Term Care Programs.”
- Department of Aging and Disability Services: Website contains current and historical data on the interest lists.
<http://www.dads.state.tx.us/services/interestlist/index.html>

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