

Medicaid provides health care to people who have a low income and who are elderly, pregnant, have a disability or is a family with children. It is the major funding source for institutional and community services for people with disabilities and the elderly. Medicaid is run by the State and pays medical and waiver service bills with State and federal tax money.

A waiver from the federal Centers on Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) allows states to waive or bend the usual rules to allow Medicaid and other services to be delivered in a different place, to people with different needs, or different income levels. States apply for a waiver and share the cost of services with the federal government.

In Maryland, the DDA and the state's Medicaid office applied to CMS for waiver to help people with developmental disabilities. For people who are eligible, this kind of waiver provides services in the community and can help people transition out of an institution like a nursing facility or the Holly or Potomac Centers. The home and community-based services waiver that DDA provides is called the Community Pathways Waiver.

Through the waiver:

1. You choose your own goals and identify the supports and services you need;
2. Your goals will make up your individual plan, that includes the services you need;
3. You will also have a budget plan that tells you how much money is available to pay for your services;
4. You are encouraged to be creative as you make and implement your plan;
5. You will have people to help you to think of ways to meet your needs in your community and how to use yours strengths to reach your goals; and
6. You are a leader for your individual plan. You are a self-advocate for the services and supports you receive.

For additional information see – [Waiver Basics](#)