

# Respite care is important for all families!

**Recent changes** in Medicaid coverage may mean respite care is available for you and your family.

Of course, as with any Medicaid service, there are exceptions and provisions. But the many benefits of respite care make a review of the provisions well worth your time.

## WHAT IS IT?

**Respite care services** are provided to assist in maintaining a goal of living in a natural community home by temporarily relieving the unpaid primary caregiver.

Respite provides a break from the daily routine of caring for a family member with special needs.

Decisions about the type and amounts of respite should be decided during person-centered planning.

Details of this service, including how much and what kinds of respite, should be identified in the individual plan of service that is developed during person-centered planning.

## BENEFITS OF RESPITE CARE

**Respite is** most frequently identified as the primary need for families who have family members, children or adults requiring support services. Respite can be a help for your whole family....each member may benefit from the support respite care services can provide.

It may mean keeping the family member with disabilities in the home, something that is vitally important to the entire family.

Respite may also support a person with disabilities in socializing with his or her peers, becoming more a part of the community....by simply getting out of the home!

This may be a welcomed break not only for the person with disabilities and the primary caregiver, but for family members as well. It means more time with other family members and a chance to have some time to yourself, something everyone needs now and then.

## ELIGIBILITY

**Now for the provisions.** Respite care is a Medicaid covered service for persons who meet the eligibility requirements for the Community Mental Health Services Program (CMHSP).

Your family member may be eligible for respite care services even if he or she is not Medicaid enrolled. However, Medicaid enrollment entitles your family member to access the fair hearings process if respite care services are denied, suspended, reduced or terminated.

Also, your qualifying family member must meet the criteria that makes respite care services a “medical necessity.”

“Medical Necessity Criteria” is defined very broadly and does **not** mean that your family member has to be physically ill in order to receive respite care services. If you would like more detailed information about the “Medical Necessity Criteria,” you can ask your supports coordinator or log on to the Department of Community Health website:

www.michigan.gov/mdch, Medicaid Policy Bulletins, MSA Bulletin 04-03.

Just remember, the need for respite should be stated in your family member's individual plan of service and developed through a person-centered planning process.

### ONLY IN MY HOME?

**Respite care** is not limited to your home. There are many choices. The home of a friend or relative is one idea. You may be able to choose a licensed camp or other community settings with a respite care worker trained, if needed, by your family.

A licensed family foster care home may also be an option for you. Other locales include state-approved group homes or licensed respite care facilities.

Just so you know, respite cannot be provided by a parent, spouse, individual's guardian, unpaid primary care giver, or a person under 18.

It is possible your request for respite care services could be denied. In that case, if your family member is Medicaid enrolled, he or she can appeal the decision through the Medicaid fair hearing process. Your

CMHSP will provide information about this process.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION...

**Your local CMHSP** has the necessary information on respite care services and person-centered planning. If you need help in identifying how to reach your local CMHSP, you may contact the Michigan Association of Community Mental Health Boards at 800-886-6848.

You may even wish to join the DD Council's Family Support Work Group – all meetings are open to the public – and your ideas, experiences and comments would be most welcome.

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# RESPIRE CARE FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

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Family Support  
Work Group

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