



Linking Medicare and Medicaid for you  
**Bulletin May 2022**



**Meet the MI Health Link  
Team: Beth Oswald**

Hello, I am Beth Oswald and I am the Administrative Support person for the MI Health Link Team. I came to MI Health Link in 2018 after spending 34 years as an Engineering Tech with a private oil and gas company. My main role was to make sure that we maintained compliance with the various state and federal regulatory agencies in the states where we owned and operated the oil and gas wells. This job gave me the organizational skills that allow me to support the busy schedules of the MI Health Link Team.

I am married and have one daughter who is currently studying nursing at Oakland University. We live on our family beef farm in Holt, which keeps us very busy. My husband and I love to play golf. I also enjoy cooking.

I feel very blessed to be part of the MI Health Link Team. The Team is very dedicated and committed in the work they all do. They are a great group of people!

-Beth Oswald

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## Service Animal Stipend

Integrated Care Organizations (ICOs) may provide a \$20 monthly stipend for care and maintenance of a service animal, **paid directly to the enrollee**. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) defines service animals as those that are individually trained to do work or perform tasks for people with disabilities. This benefit covers dogs and miniature horses that meet the ADA definition of service animal.

The benefit for maintenance costs of a service animal may be authorized if all of the following conditions are met:

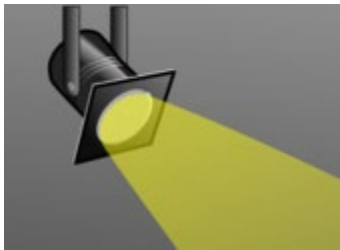
- The client is receiving personal care services.
- The client is certified as disabled due to a specific condition such as arthritis, blindness, cerebral palsy, polio, multiple sclerosis, deafness, stroke or spinal cord injury, among others.
- The service animal is trained to meet the specific needs of the client relative to his or her disability.
- The service animal does **not** have to be professionally trained, and proof of training must **not** be requested.
- The tasks performed by the service animal are for the client.

Examples of tasks performed by a service animal may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Guiding enrollees who are blind
- Alerting enrollees who are deaf

- Pulling a wheelchair
- Alerting and protecting enrollees with a seizure disorder
- Reminding enrollees with mental illness to take prescribed medications
- Calming enrollees with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) during an anxiety attack (an enrollee still needs to receive a personal care service to qualify for the monthly stipend for care and maintenance of a service animal)

Additional information and related requirements for this covered benefit can be found in section 7 of the [MI Health Link Minimum Operating Standards](#).



## **MI Health Link Service Spotlight:**

### **Assistive Technology**

Assistive technology is a service available through the MI Health Link (MHL) Home and Community Based (HCBS) waiver. Assistive technology items are used to increase, maintain, or improve an individual's functioning and promote independence. This service includes:

- Assisting the enrollee in the selection, design, purchase, lease, acquisition, application, or use of the technology item.
- Vehicle modifications to the vehicle that is the enrollee's primary method of transportation when criteria are met.
- Repairs and maintenance of assistive technology devices.

Some examples of assistive technology include, but are not limited to, van lifts, hand controls, computerized voice system, communication boards, voice activated door locks, power door mechanisms, adaptive or specialized communication devices, assistive dialing device, adaptive door opener, specialized alarm or intercom. Items like cell phones, internet service, and full-home wiring systems would be excluded from this benefit. Service standards for the Assistive Technology service available

through the MHL HCBS waiver can be found in section 19.7 of the [MHL Minimum Operating Standards](#).

MI Health Link hosted a training in July of 2021 about Assistive Technology for Integrated Care Organizations. The Michigan Disability Rights Coalition (MDRC) shared a wealth of knowledge and available resources about assistive technology and their Michigan Assistive Technology Program (MATP). The presentation materials are a great resource and can be found at [MDRC-MATP Presentation for MHL](#).

## Beneficiary Health and Welfare



**World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD)** was launched on June 15, 2006 by the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse and the World Health Organization at the United Nations. The purpose of WEAAD is to provide an opportunity for communities around the world to promote a better understanding of abuse and neglect of older people by raising awareness of the cultural, social, economic and demographic processes affecting elder abuse and neglect. In addition, WEAAD is in support of the United Nations International Plan of Action acknowledging the significance of elder abuse as a public health and human rights issue. In a society that values the just treatment of all people, WEAAD reminds us that elder abuse has implications for all of us, and so it's important to find the right solutions to it. WEAAD is a call-to-action for society's individuals, organizations, and communities to educate each other on how to identify, address and prevent abuse so we can all do our part to support everyone as we age.

To help observe WEAAD 2022 in your community, ACL's National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA) has created a [WEAAD toolkit](#) which includes fact sheets, sample articles and proclamations, graphics, sample social media content, and more tips and tools.

We hope you will take action to raise awareness throughout your organizations and utilize the toolkit provided to protect beneficiaries and help end Elder Abuse within the communities you serve.

## Education Opportunities

### ***Ethically Handling End of Life Issues with Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia***

Oasis Senior Advisors presents an educational opportunity exploring the ethical dilemmas that arise when dealing with patients at end stage of Alzheimer's disease.

This live interactive webinar will be held Thursday June 23, 2022 2-3:15pm.

Register [here](#).

### ***Understanding and Working with Tribal Health Populations***

Quarterly training from MI Health Link coming Wednesday June 29, 2022 1:30-3:30pm. More information and details to come.



## Resource Link

### **Affordable Connectivity Program Increases Access to Phone and Internet Service**

The [Affordable Connectivity Program](#), a Federal Communications Commission (FCC) program. The new long-term benefit will help to lower the cost of broadband service for eligible households struggling to afford internet service.

The Affordable Connectivity Program provides:

- Up to \$30/month discount for broadband service;
- Up to \$75/month discount for households on qualifying Tribal lands; and
- A one-time discount of up to \$100 for a laptop, desktop computer, or tablet purchased through a participating provider if the household contributes more than \$10 but less than \$50 toward the purchase price.

The Affordable Connectivity Program is limited to one monthly service discount and one device discount per household.

### **Who is Eligible?**

A household is eligible for the Affordable Connectivity Program if the household income is at or below 200% of the [Federal Poverty Guidelines](#), or if a member of the household meets at least *one* of the criteria outlined at <https://www.fcc.gov/acp>.

### **Two-Steps to Enroll**

1. Go to [ACPBenefit.org](https://www.fcc.gov/acp) to submit an application or print out a mail-in application; and
2. Contact your preferred participating provider to select a plan and have the discount applied to your bill.

Some providers may have an alternative application that they will ask you to complete.

Eligible households must **both apply for the program and contact a participating provider to select a service plan.**

For more information and full details, visit <https://www.fcc.gov/acp> or call 877-384-2575.



## **Q & A: Your Questions About MI Health Link**

*If you have a question about the MHL program we want to hear from you. We will work to get you the information you need.\**

Please send any questions for future bulletins to [Integratedcare@michigan.gov](mailto:Integratedcare@michigan.gov)

**Q:** Can a beneficiary be enrolled in Medicaid's Freedom to Work program, and still qualify for MHL?

**A:** Yes, as long as the member meets all other eligibility requirements for MI Health Link. Click [here](#) for more detailed information.

Eligibility requirements include:

- Member must be over the age of 21
- Resides in the [program service area](#)
- Full Medicare coverage in addition to the FTW Medicaid
- Member is not enrolled in hospice services

*(Please note a beneficiary may still be required to pay their FTW premiums if enrolled in MHL with FTW even though MHL offers \$0 co-pays.)*

\*IMPORTANT: Beneficiaries with questions concerning their own enrollment or eligibility should call Michigan ENROLLS Monday through Friday, 8AM-7PM for assistance at 1-800-975-7630 or 1-888-263-5897 if they use TTY. Providers may work directly with the ICO health plan for beneficiary related inquires. In order to protect beneficiary personal identifiable information (PII) and protected health information (PHI) please refrain from sending MI Health Link this information.

## Topic Submission

If you have suggestions for topics to be addressed in future additions of the MI Health Link Bulletin, please send them to [Integratedcare@michigan.gov](mailto:Integratedcare@michigan.gov)



## Quick Links

[MI Health Link Website](#)

[CMS Financial Alignment Website](#)

[MI Health Link Minimum Operating Standards](#)

[MDHHS Medicaid Provider Manual](#)

## Previously Released MHL Bulletins

Previously released MI Health Link Bulletins can be found by visiting the [MI Health Link Website](#).

*Become a foster parent through Michigan Department of Health & Human Services foster care program.*



Questions? [Contact Us](#)

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