

Montana Health Care Programs MESSENGER

What is the Montana Big Sky Waiver?

Big Sky Waiver (BSW) Overview

The Montana Big Sky Waiver (BSW) allows people, who would otherwise be institutionalized, to live in their own home and community. This program targets the needs of individuals with physical disabilities, and/or the elderly.

Individuals who receive services from the BSW are called members. Each member works with their Case Management Team (CMT) to individually develop a service plan to successfully meet the identified needs.

Since BSW is not an entitlement program, there may be a waitlist for potential members. An available opening for services will be offered to the disabled and/or elderly individual determined most in need and most likely to benefit from the available services. Children with physical or other health disabilities may receive services under BSW.

BSW provides case management to help members manage their services, as well as training, advocacy, and support for families. The CMT consists of a nurse and social worker who provide a holistic approach to care planning. They use the person-centered planning approach to look at an individual's medical and psycho-social needs and then develop a plan of care based on the person's needs and choices. The goal of person-centered planning is to increase member choice, participation, and independence, while ensuring their health and safety.



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How do I qualify for BSW?

- Be financially eligible for standard Medicaid.
- Be elderly (65 years or older) or meet the Social Security Administration's physical disability criteria.
- Have a need(s) which can only be met through BSW services.
- Be determined appropriate for the BSW program given the individual's current needs and risks, or services available through the program.
- Require the level of care of a nursing facility.

How can I access services from BSW?

To make a referral to BSW, contact Mountain Pacific Quality Health at 1-800-219-7035.

Eligibility specialists at your local OPA office can determine Medicaid eligibility or contact the Montana Public Assistance Helpline at 1-888-706-1535.

You can find more information here:
<https://dphhs.mt.gov/SLTC/csb/index>.

Diabetes Self-Management Education & Support

Helping patients to THRIVE with diabetes!

What is DSMES?

Diabetes self-management education and support (DSMES) services are a covered benefit through most health plans providing individuals an evidence-based foundation to gain the knowledge, skills, tools, and support to manage their diabetes throughout their lifetime. This foundation helps these individuals to navigate daily self-care with confidence. DSMES programs must go through a rigorous process to become nationally accredited or recognized. Additionally, DSMES is part of the American Diabetes Association (ADA) 2024 Standards of Care in Diabetes.

How is DSMES Offered?

DSMES services are offered in an individual or group session and can be delivered in person or via telehealth. To learn more about Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support services and its benefit to the patient and provider click [here](#).

Ways to Boost your Mental Health

By DPHHS Children's Mental Health Bureau [Children's Mental Health \(mt.gov\)](https://dphhs.mt.gov/SLTC/csb/index)

Taking care of our mental health after school is out, is just as important. Here are some tips for families and caregivers to have fun while boosting mental health for everyone.



1. Get outside and enjoy Montana's great summer weather with plenty of sun and fresh air. Sun light increases Vitamin D in our bodies which is a mood booster. Just be sure to use sunscreen.

IDEAS: Instead of playing video games inside, meet friends for outdoor games or go on a picnic.

2. Indoor ideas for when you can't go outside. Look for fun inside activities that relax and lead to time with family or friends. For example, reading has been shown to reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression. IDEAS: Read, plan a family fun night with games or a movie, do crafts, check out activities at your local library and in your community.

DSMES is offered by a Diabetes Care and Education Specialist who is an experienced healthcare professional such as a registered nurse, registered dietitian, or pharmacist, who have expertise in cardiometabolic conditions, including diabetes care and education. They collaboratively work to design a self-management plan tailored to the patient's lifestyle, culture, and barriers to self-care, including social determinants of health (SDOH). An important part of the healthcare team, Diabetes Care and Education Specialists are considered healthcare provider extenders and are positioned to help:

- reduce readmissions and encourage long-term self-management,
- lower healthcare costs,
- improve quality measures and health outcomes,
- improve productivity and performance within the health system,
- reduce health-related costs for the patient and improve quality of life.

4 Key Times to Refer to DSMES

There are 4 key times to refer patients to DSMES, according to the [consensus report](#) from multiple diabetes and health care professional organizations:

1. At diagnosis
2. Annually or when not meeting treatment goals
3. When complicating factors arise - new medication, new health, or co-condition, etc.
4. During transitions in life or care – changes in provider, insurance, living situation, etc.

Qualifications

For a patient to qualify for DSMES services, they must have the following:

- Documentation of diagnosis of type 1, type 2, or gestational diabetes **and**
 - A diagnosis must be made using either of the following criteria:
 - A1C > 6.5%
 - FPG ≥126 mg/dL on two separate occasions,
 - 2-hr PG ≥200 mg/dL during OGTT,
 - Random glucose test of > 200 mg/dL with classic symptoms of hyperglycemia
- [A written referral from the treating physician or qualified non-physician practitioner.](#)
 - A qualified non-physician practitioner includes one of the following:
 - Nurse Practitioner or Advanced Nurse Practitioner
 - Physician Assistance
 - Clinical Nurse Specialist
 - A new referral is required for follow-up visits after one year.

Ways to Boost your Mental Health Over the Summer Continued

3. Get Moving! When we exercise, our brains release positive “feel good” hormones making our moods improve. IDEAS: Go on bike rides, participate in outdoor sports, go swimming, take walks/hikes, skateboard, go horseback riding.

4. Eat Healthy Foods. Eating healthy foods not only helps young bodies grow, and also feeds our brains and improves our mood.

IDEAS: Select healthy foods together at your local farmers market, food store or food pantry, choose healthy snack alternatives like fruits and vegetables instead of junk food, drink lots of water, have children help cook meals or make snacks.

5. Spend time with family and friends. You don't have to spend money to have a great time.

Research shows children and adults with positive social ties are happier, live longer and have better mental and physical health. IDEAS: Have family game night, family dinners, and check your local newspaper for fun, free community activities.

6. Plan summer activities.

Structured activities let children learn new skills and improve resiliency supporting mental health.

IDEAS: Set routines or create a visual calendar for upcoming events like family vacations or activities you have planned.

Diabetes changes over time, and with change comes the need for continuing education. DSMES is not a ‘one-time thing,’ but is meant to be an ongoing service that helps to adjust the individual’s diabetes self-management plan.

To do your best job as a provider for your patients with diabetes, your patients need all the education and support available. “The more the better” is really true when it comes to DSMES. The evidence shows more hours of DSMES translates into better self-management and outcomes. Talk to your patients about DSMES and refer WITH PASSION!

[Providers who would like to learn more about DSMES programs in MT can find more information, locations, and contact information on the Montana Diabetes Program website](#) or by calling Marci Butcher, RD, CDCES, FADCES, MT Diabetes Program Consultant, at 406-350-2658.

For Medicaid members who qualify, Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support Services are a covered service.



What are Medicaid Community First Choice (CFC) and Personal Assistance Services (PAS) Programs?

The Medicaid Community First Choice (CFC) and Personal Assistance Services (PAS) programs are designed to provide long term personal care in a home setting to Medicaid eligible individuals in Montana. These programs enable thousands of folks who are elderly and/or individuals living with a disability to remain in their homes. The type of care that is authorized is tailored to each individual in a person-centered manner and is dependent upon an individual’s medical condition, personal care needs, and living situation. The services available include help with personal care needs; such as bathing, dressing, hygiene, grooming, toileting, eating, meal preparation, medication assistance, ambulation and exercise in addition to limited grocery shopping, housekeeping and laundry and medical escort.

Ways to Boost your Mental Health Over the Summer Continued

7. Get enough sleep. It may be easy to think because school is out, it’s okay to stay up late. But studies show that lack of sleep can lead to depression, anxiety, and impulsive behavior. It is recommended that:

- Children ages 6 to 12 years old get 9-12 hours of sleep a night.
- Teens ages 13 to 18 years old get 8-10 hours of sleep a night.
- Adults should get at least 7 hours of sleep a night.

IDEAS: Set a bedtime routine that might include a bath or shower and a bedtime story, turn off TV and electronic devices like video games, phones, and tablets two hours before bedtime. These ideas will help boost mental health but be sure to talk to your family doctor or therapist if your child is struggling with their mental health.

Sources:

“Healthy Summertime Habits for Kids.” *Community Reach Center*, 13 June 2016, <https://www.communityreachcenter.org/blog/mental-health-summertime-habits/>.

Rosenthal, Sue. “Fun Summer Activities for Kids that Encourage Mental Health.” *Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at Columbia University*, <https://blogs.cuit.columbia.edu/child-adolescent-psychiatry/2016/06/08/fun-summer-activities-for-kids-that-encourage-mental-health/>. Accessed 4 June 2021.

“Sleep and Mental Health.” *Harvard Health Publishing*, 18 March 2019, https://www.health.harvard.edu/newsletter_article/sleep-and-mental-health.

The CFC program also provides community integration, yard hazard removal, correspondence assistance and personal emergency response system. The Medicaid CFC/PAS Program does not pay for tasks such as household repairs or modifications, major house cleaning, pet care, banking/financial assistance or supervision.

What are my service options?

An individual can select one of two options to receive Medicaid CFC and PAS program services: Agency Based or Self-Directed.

1. Self-Directed (SD):

The Self-Directed option is available to individuals who elect to direct their own care. The individual or their Personal Representative is responsible for hiring, training, and managing their personal care attendants. Under the Self-Directed CFC/PAS program, individuals may be eligible to direct the four skilled services: bowel program, catheter care, medication assistance, and wound care. To participate in the Self-Directed CFC/PAS program, an individual must obtain authorization from his/her health care professional. The individual, or Personal Representative, must also meet capacity, which means he/she can demonstrate a thorough understanding of the program requirements and direct the service. Under the Self-Directed option, the individual assumes medical and related liability for the care delivered.

2. Agency Based (AB):

The Agency Based option is available to individuals who want a Medicaid CFC/PAS provider to be responsible for the hiring, training and managing of personal care attendants and provide a nurse supervisor to oversee their CFC/PAS services. Under the Agency Based option, the personal care attendant **cannot** perform skilled services. If a member on the Agency Based CFC/PAS program requires skilled tasks, he/she could either switch to the Self-Directed option, utilize informal supports, and/or pursue other Medicaid programs that offer skilled nursing.



How do I qualify for Medicaid Community First Choice (CFC) and Personal Assistance Services (PAS) services?

- Have a health condition that limits his/her ability to perform activities of daily living; and
 - Participate in the authorization and screening process; and
 - Be eligible for Medicaid.
- In order to qualify for the CFC program an individual must also receive a level of care determination.

For Medicaid eligibility information call: 1-888-706-1535 or visit: <https://dphhs.mt.gov/MontanaHealthcarePrograms/MemberServices>

To apply for the CFC/PAS program, contact Mountain Pacific Quality Health at: 1-800-219-7035



TELL YOUR DOCTOR

Are things not as you expected?

Expectations

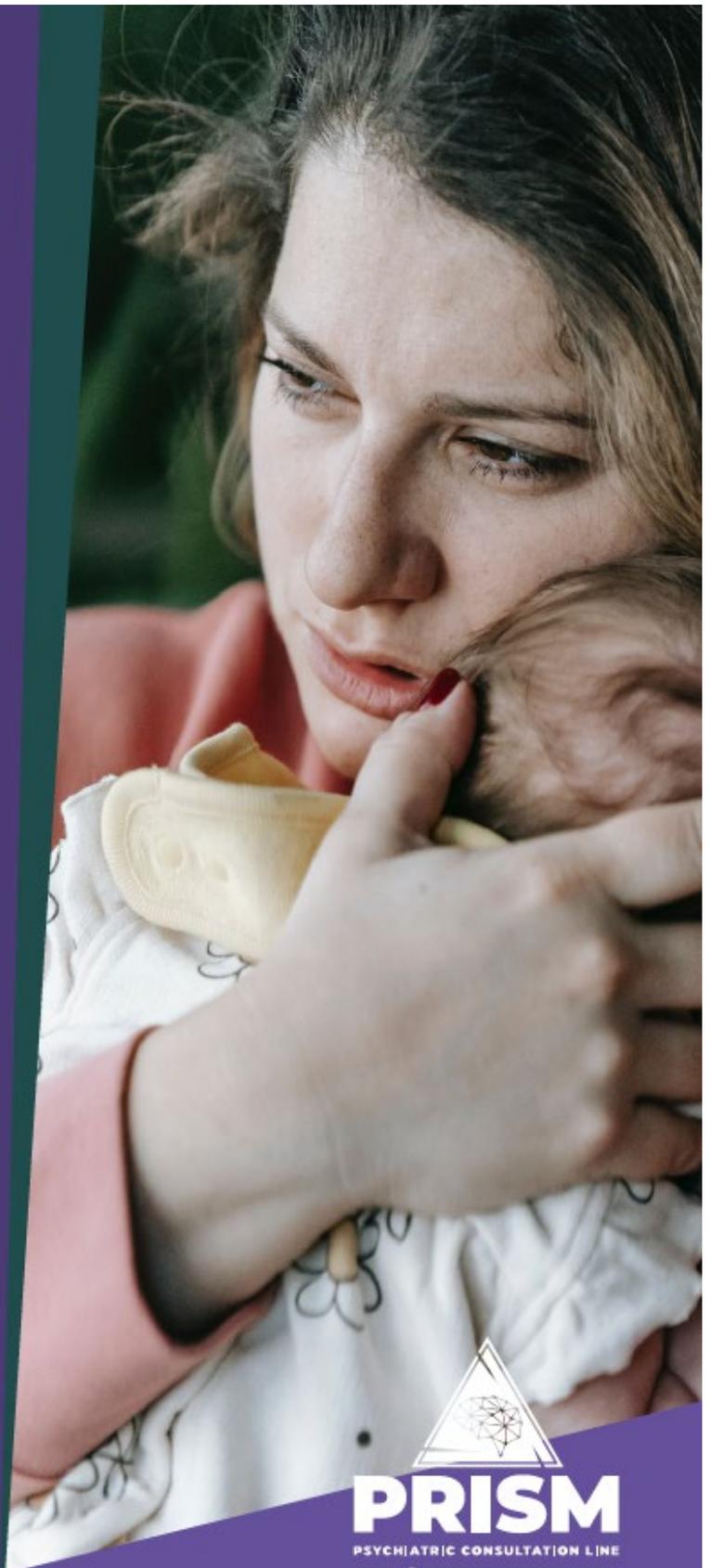
- Supported by friends and family
- Warm fuzzies while breastfeeding
- Getting your body back
- Endless love for your baby
- Sleeping when the baby sleeps

Reality

- ✓ Feeling more alone than ever
- ✓ Constant worry or scary thoughts
- ✓ Rage towards your partner
- ✓ Don't feel connection with baby
- ✓ Can't sleep, even when baby does

1 in 6 moms will feel this way.
You deserve to be cared for.

**Parenting is hard.
Sharing doesn't have to be.
Tell your doctor, midwife,
or nurse today.**



Home and Community Based Services (HCBS)

include helpful programs for people with different needs to stay independent and improve their lives at home and in their communities. HCBS programs give important services to eligible people that may enable them to live in their home and community instead of an institution.

What you need to know:

1. You must be eligible for Medicaid to receive HCBS.
2. Each HCBS program has different eligibility rules.
3. Except for Community First Choice, some of the programs may not be able to provide services right away, so you may be placed on a waitlist.
4. Not all HCBS programs offer the same services.
5. If eligible for a HCBS program, your plan of care will be based around your needs and choices.

Montana HCBS Programs

- Big Sky Waiver (BSW) for the Elderly and/or Individuals with Physical Disabilities
- Home and Community Based 0208 Comprehensive Waiver for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities (DD Waiver)
- Severe Disabling Mental Illness HCBS Waiver (SDMI Waiver) for individuals with a Severe Disabling Mental Illness
- Community First Choice (CFC) Plan Services for the Elderly and Individuals with Disabilities

What Are Your Next Steps?

1. Apply for Montana Medicaid
 - a. Apply for Montana Medicaid online at <http://apply.mt.gov/> or
 - b. Contact the Office of Public Assistance for questions about applications and/or eligibility by calling 1-888-706-1535; or
 - c. Send an email to hhsspapplicationcustomersupport@mt.gov to request a pdf application.
2. Let us know you are interested in receiving HCBS services.
 - a. If you are interested in BSW, SDMI or CFC, contact Mountain Pacific Quality Health by calling 1-406-443-4020 or 1-800-497-8232 to request a waiver screening; or
 - b. If you are interested in DD, contact the Developmental Disabilities Program Central Office by calling 1-406-444-2995 to request help with eligibility.



Key Contacts

Montana Healthcare Programs/Medicaid/HMK Plus Member Help Line

For questions regarding benefits or Passport to Health:

1-800-362-8312

MT Healthcare Programs

Montana Relay Service

For the deaf or hard of hearing.

1-800-253-4091 or 711

Montana Public Assistance Help Line

For eligibility questions.

1-888-706-1535

MT PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

Transportation Center

For questions regarding travel or approval. **Call before you travel, or you may not be reimbursed.**

1-800-292-7114.