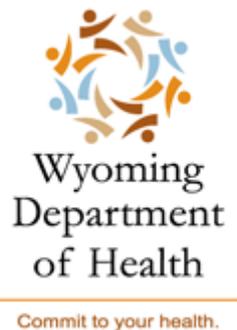


AoA Older Americans Month 2008 Program Champion



Project: Project OUT

Organization: State of Wyoming, Department of Health, Aging Division

Project Description

Wyoming's Project OUT provides a viable option for its aged and disabled population to avoid nursing home placement so seniors can remain living in the community for as long as possible.

Project OUT was conceived as a result of the 1999 Olmstead Decision whereby states were required to develop a plan to allow the disabled population to live in the least restrictive yet safe environment. Project OUT is a short-term Medicaid/state funded intervention/assistance program that helps consumers overcome the barriers to independent living by providing targeted case management and a limited financial resource to assist with the actual costs of transferring out of a nursing home and into an independent living arrangement. Project OUT also helps divert those individuals at risk of being placed in a nursing home by providing or linking consumers to services and supports allowing them to continue living in the community. This is accomplished by providing moving or storage expenses, rental and/or utility deposits, household items, furniture, personal alert systems, grab bars and other assistive devices as well as limited transportation services during the transition or diversion process. Project OUT provides links to community long-term care programs (caregiver support, home health agencies, Medicaid waiver, etc.) that can provide the continuing services and supports that will enable consumers to live independently.

Project OUT is a fiscally responsible program. As of Fiscal Year 2006-2007 the total savings in Wyoming Medicaid dollars as a result of Project OUT transitions and diversions was estimated at over \$5.5 million dollars. Not only does this program save taxpayers money, it allows the most vulnerable citizens (the aged and disabled) to remain at home with their possessions while maintaining family and social contacts or to return

home and live independently within the community.

Project OUT is a continually evolving program and the state of Wyoming is striving to provide the best service, information, and assistance to the citizens of Wyoming.

Together the State of Wyoming's Aging Division, Medicaid, Project OUT Providers, Ombudsman, Wyoming Department of Family Services, Wyoming Department of Transportation, physicians, and discharge planners, as well as the aged and disabled population are accomplishing the goal of making sure every Wyoming citizen has the opportunity to live safely in the least restrictive environment possible.

For more information on Project OUT contact Debbie Holdridge at (307) 777-5048 or via e-mail at debbie.holdridge@health.wyo.gov.