

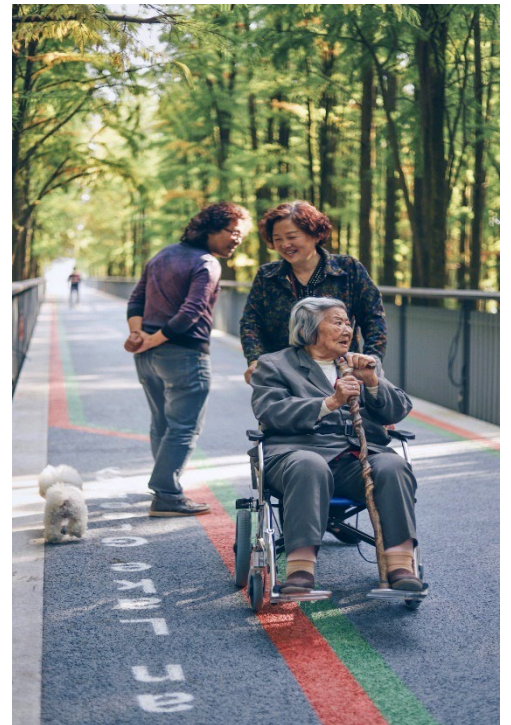


HOME AND
COMMUNITY-
BASED
SERVICES

WYOMING MEDICAID
DIVISION OF HEALTHCARE FINANCING

Home and Community-Based Services Section

SFY 2023 Annual Report



The Wyoming Department of Health, Home and Community-Based Services Section (Section) is pleased to share this annual report on the Comprehensive, Supports, and Community Choices Waivers for State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2023. This report features a review of the efforts that the Section has undertaken in the past year. We encourage people who receive services, family members, agency partners, legislators, and other members of the community to take a moment to read our annual report.

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SECTION PURPOSE

The purpose of the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Section is to provide community-based options to Wyoming citizens who are aging or have disabilities in order to live independent, meaningful, and dignified lives through access to person-centered, cost-effective services.

WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND DIVISION STRUCTURE

The Wyoming Department of Health is the Medicaid state agency that has the authority to administer the home and community-based waivers. The Section is housed under the Division of Healthcare Financing (Division), within the Department.

Figure 1
Wyoming Department of Health Simple Organizational Chart

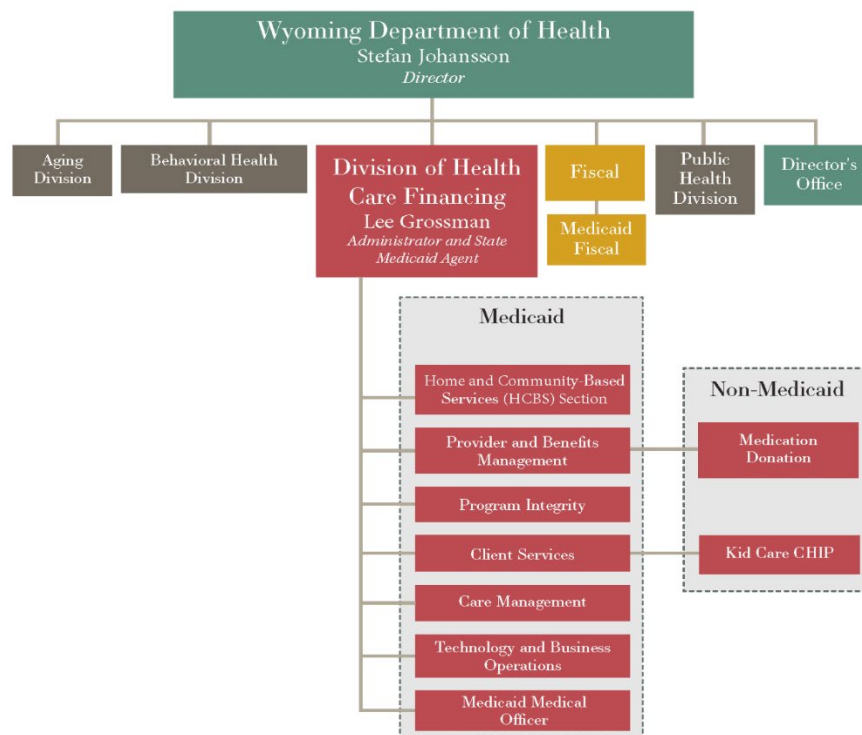
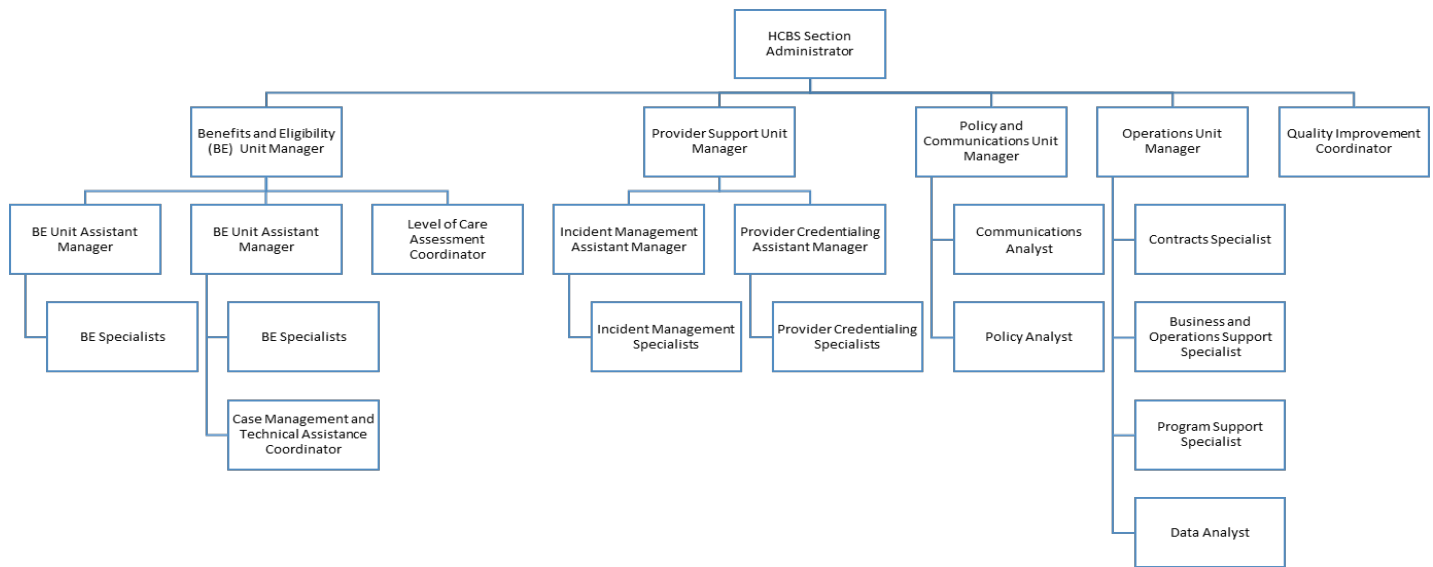


Figure 2
HCBS Section Organizational Chart



SECTION AT A GLANCE

The Section is responsible for planning, coordinating, administering, monitoring, and evaluating state and federally funded HCBS for people who 1) are aged 65 or older; 2) have been diagnosed with a disability as determined by the Social Security Administration; 3) have an intellectual or developmental disability (IDD); or 4) have an acquired brain injury (ABI). The Section administers the Community Choices Waiver (CCW), and the Comprehensive and Supports Waiver (DD Waiver) programs, offers technical assistance and training for various stakeholders, assures program monitoring and standards compliance, and implements continuous quality improvement strategies.

Benefits and Eligibility Unit

The Benefits and Eligibility Unit is comprised of twelve (12) full-time employees who are responsible for assuring that DD Waiver and CCW participants have current and complete plans of care and that participant budgets are funded according to Section policy. This Unit is also responsible for ensuring initial and continuing clinical eligibility requirements are met for waiver services, providing technical assistance to case managers when developing plans of care, and facilitating access to HCBS for waiver participants in emergency situations.

Operations Unit

The Operations Unit is comprised of five (5) full-time employees who are responsible for providing business and operational support to the Section. This Unit is responsible for providing input, management, and oversight of all contracts, procurements, and contractual activities that support the Section, processing internal and external data requests, HCBS systems management, and administrative and program support. The Unit also provides an initial point of contact for Wyoming Integrated Next Generation System (WINGS) and Division procurements, implementations, and system integrations to identify any potential impacts to HCBS programs and systems.

Policy and Communications Unit

The Policy and Communications (PAC) Unit is comprised of three (3) full-time employees who are responsible for assuring that federal and Wyoming governing authorities align with Division and Section rule, policies, and practices. In addition to drafting waiver amendments and renewals, rules, and processes, the PAC Unit is responsible for sending communications to external stakeholders, maintaining the Section website and document library, and developing provider and case manager trainings.

Provider Support Unit

The Provider Support Unit is comprised of twelve (12) full-time employees who are responsible for assuring that providers of waiver services comply with Medicaid Rules. This Unit is divided into two distinct teams. The Provider Credentialing Team is responsible for enrolling and certifying providers, conducting on-site visits related to provider certification, and ensuring that providers continue to follow federal requirements related to HCBS settings. The Incident Management Team is responsible for reviewing and responding to complaints, reviewing and investigating incidents, and determining and reporting an analysis of root causes related to critical incidents.

HOME AND COMMUNITY-BASED WAIVERS

The CCW and DD Waiver programs are offered through the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Home and Community Based Waiver Program under Section 1915(c) of the Social Security Act. Under the Act, states can develop HCBS to meet the needs of people who prefer to receive long-term care services and supports in their homes and communities as opposed to an institutional setting. According to Medicaid.gov, there are over 300 active HCBS waiver programs nationwide.

In order for Wyoming to offer services through the CCW and DD Waiver programs, Wyoming must demonstrate the following:

- The cost of providing waiver services does not exceed the cost of providing services in an institution;
- Participant health and welfare is protected;
- Adequate and reasonable provider standards to meet the needs of participants are implemented, and;
- Services follow an individualized and person-centered plan of care.

The CCW and DD Waiver programs represent Wyoming's commitment to funding services so that eligible participants can actively participate in the community, be competitively employed, and live as independently as possible according to their own choices and preferences. The CCW and DD Waiver programs require a person-centered approach to determining the needs of participants, which are specifically outlined in the participant's plan of care.

Services funded through the CCW and DD Waiver programs:

- Support participants to develop and change their plan of care;
- Provide resources and training to assist participants, families, and providers in learning the service system; and
- Offer participants the opportunity to hire, terminate, and train their own staff through the participant-directed service delivery option.

The CCW program supports participants who are aged 65 or older or who have been diagnosed with a disability as determined by the Social Security Administration. Participants on the CCW do not have an individual cost limit for their waiver services; instead, their budget is based on their needs, as determined through a series of participant assessments.

The DD Waiver programs support participants with IDD from birth through the lifespan, and eligible participants with an ABI who are aged 21 and older. On the Supports Waiver, participants have a capitated budget amount that they use to purchase services. The Comprehensive Waiver offers expanded supports, such as 24-hour residential support. Each participant on the Comprehensive Waiver receives an individual budget amount (IBA) based on their assessed level of need.

PEOPLE SERVED

Before qualifying for CCW or DD Waiver services, an individual must meet specific residency, financial, and level of care eligibility criteria. Individuals must also meet the criteria for institutional level of care as described below:

- Individuals with IDD – level of care criteria for an intermediate care facility for individuals with IDD.
- Individuals with an ABI – level of care criteria for a nursing facility.
- Individuals over the age of 65, or a disability as determined by the Social Security Administration – level of care criteria for a nursing facility.

Demographics

The follow charts outline the demographics of CCW and DD Waiver participants as of June 30, 2023.

Chart 1
CCW and DD Waiver Participant Age

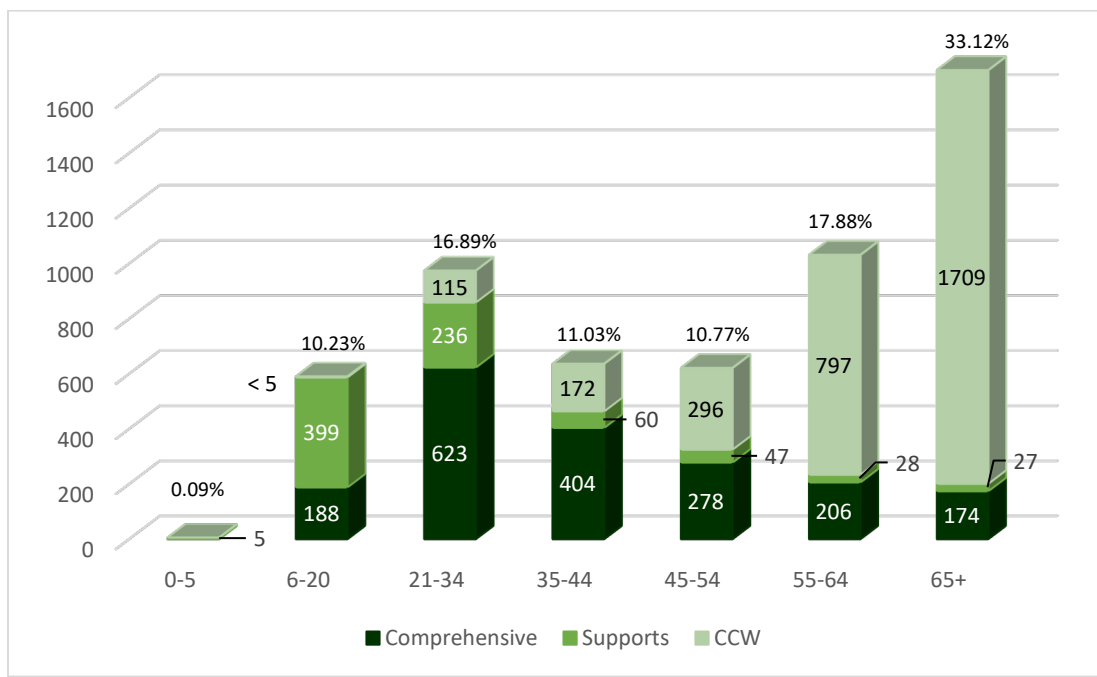


Chart 2
CCW and DD Waiver Participant Sex

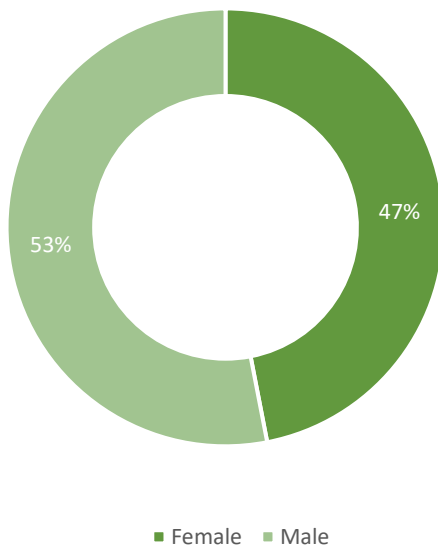
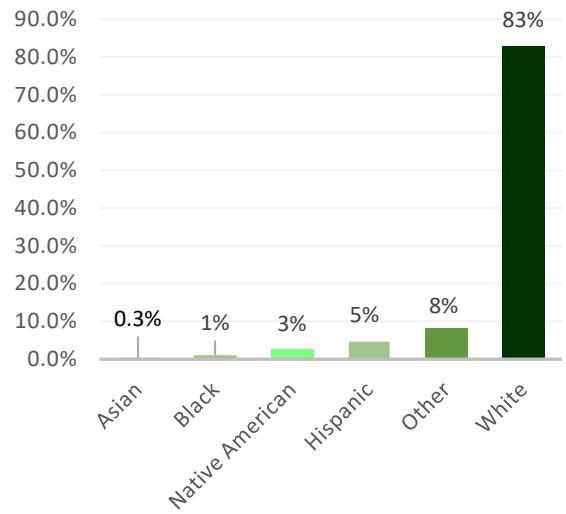


Chart 3
CCW and DD Waiver Participant Race



Waiver Participation

The number of participants served on the CCW and DD Waivers has, on average, increased over the last five years. In SFY2023, 2,675 unduplicated participants received DD Waiver services and 3,092 unduplicated participants received CCW services.

Chart 4
Participants Served on CCW and DD Waivers
SFY2023

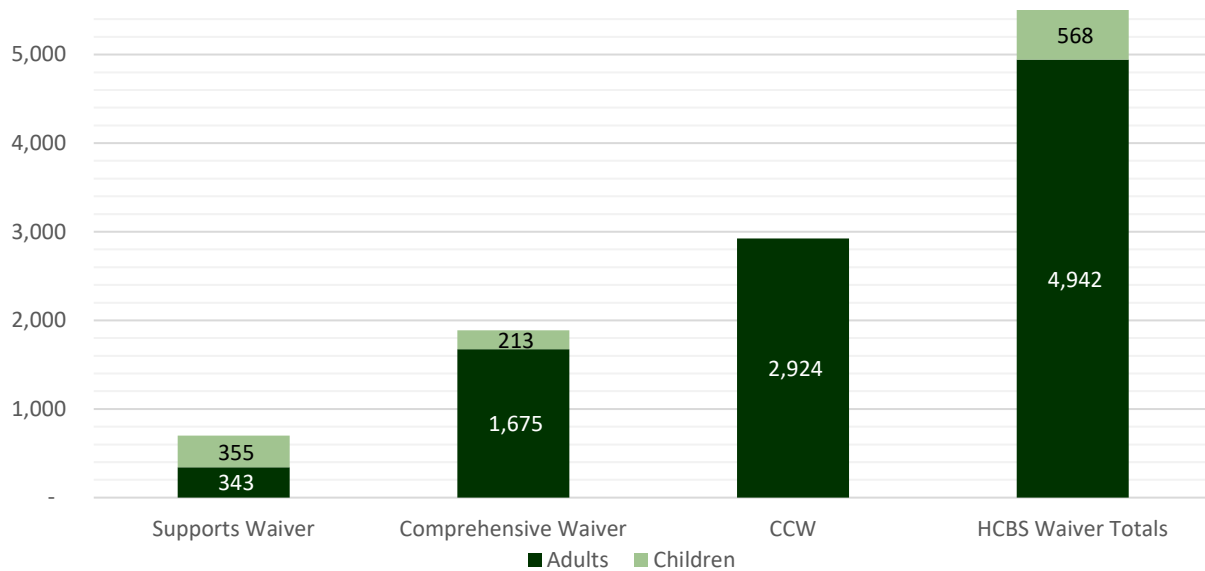
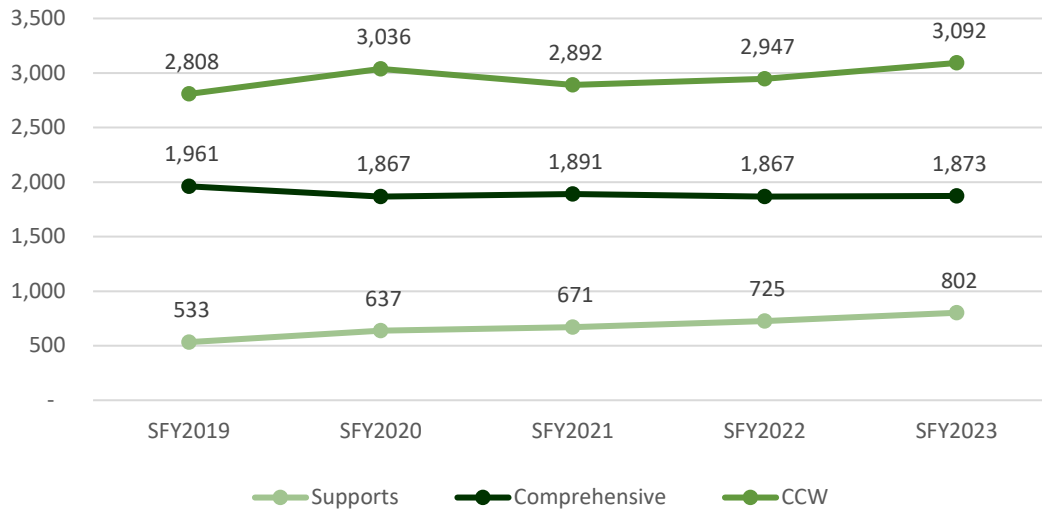


Chart 5
Unduplicated Participants Served on CCW and DD Waivers
SFYs 2019 – 2023

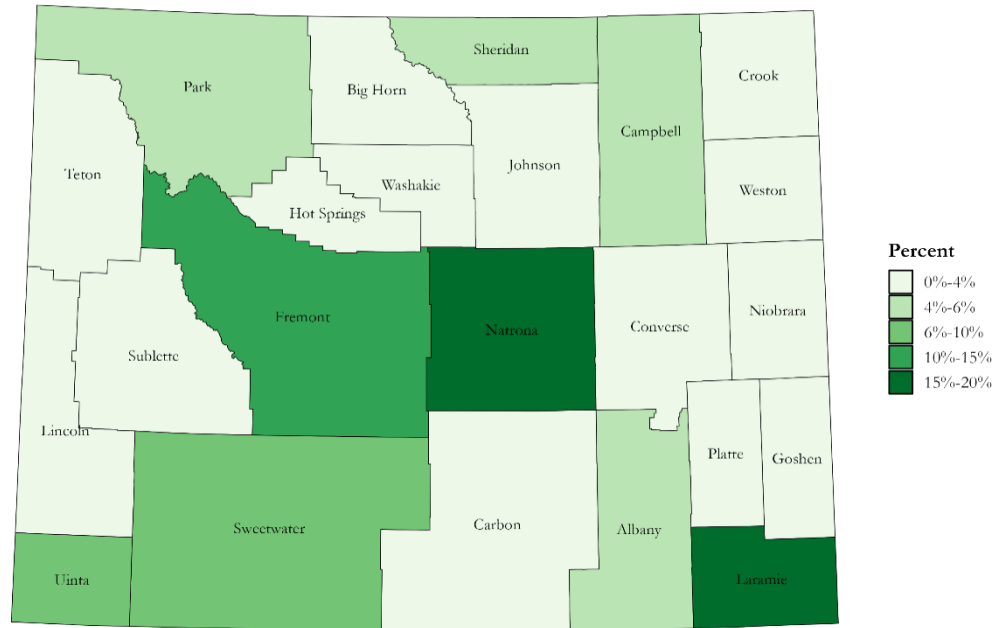


Participants reside and receive services in all 23 Wyoming counties. Many areas of Wyoming are considered to be rural or frontier, which can make service providers more difficult to find. Additionally, Wyoming’s aging population has increased their use of CCW services, and the need for these services will continue to increase. Participant-directed services are an option on the CCW and DD Waivers, and allow participants or their legally authorized representatives to act as the employer of record so they can recruit and hire their own employees. In the case of the CCW, the participant or legally authorized representative may designate other individuals to serve as the employer of record.

Table 1
Number of Participants Served on CCW and DD Waivers by County
SFY2023

County	Number of Participants			County	Number of Participants		
	CCW	DD	Total		CCW	DD	Total
Albany	186	147	333	Natrona	674	466	1140
Big Horn	71	53	124	Niobrara	8	6	14
Campbell	193	139	332	Park	153	132	285
Carbon	34	31	62	Platte	26	27	53
Converse	56	64	120	Sheridan	107	177	284
Crook	28	21	49	Sublette	9	18	27
Fremont	399	232	631	Sweetwater	151	210	361
Goshen	37	54	91	Teton	17	50	67
Hot Springs	114	43	157	Uinta	207	157	364
Johnson	42	26	68	Washakie	56	42	98
Laramie	547	556	1103	Weston	29	27	56
Lincoln	37	95	132				

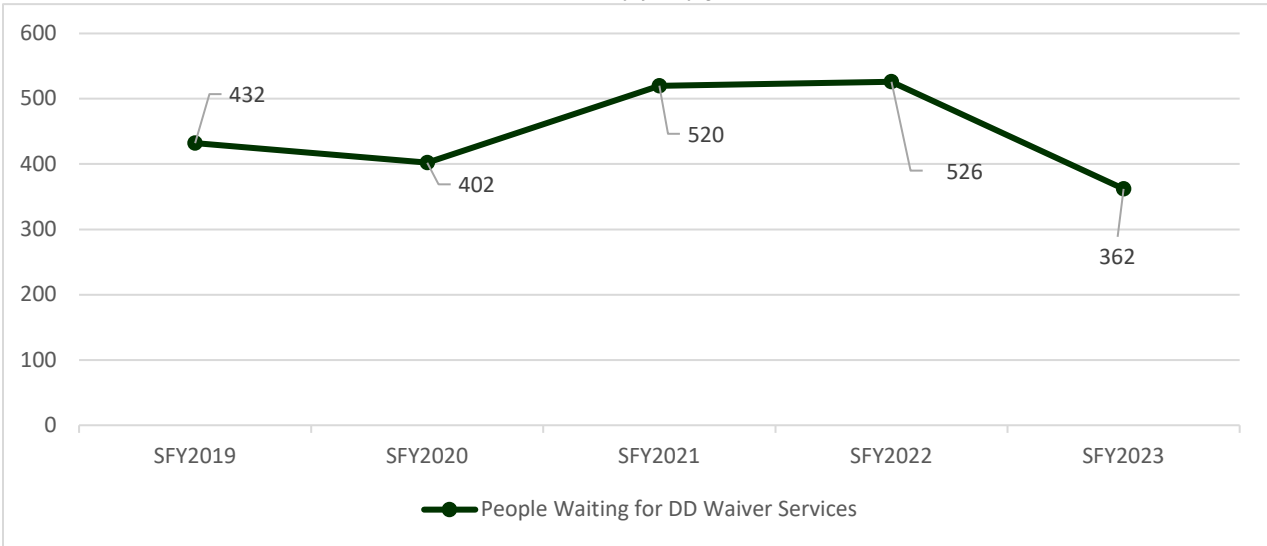
Figure 3
Percentage of Participants Served on the CCW and DD Waivers by County
SFY2023



DD Waiver Waitlist

Once an individual is determined eligible for DD Waiver services, they are placed on a waiting list until a funding opportunity becomes available. People are funded off of the waiting list on a first come, first served basis. As of June 30, 2023, there were 326 individuals waiting to receive DD Waiver services, a 31% decrease from the previous year. The number of individuals on the waitlist as decrease since June 30, 2023. In March of 2023, the Wyoming State Legislature appropriated funds to be used to allow individuals to transition from the waitlist onto the waiver. The Section began funding these individuals in July of 2023. A waiting list is not maintained for CCW services, meaning that as of the date of this report, eligible individuals receive immediate funding for services.

Chart 6
Number of Individuals Waiting for DD Waiver Services
SFYs 2019 – 2023

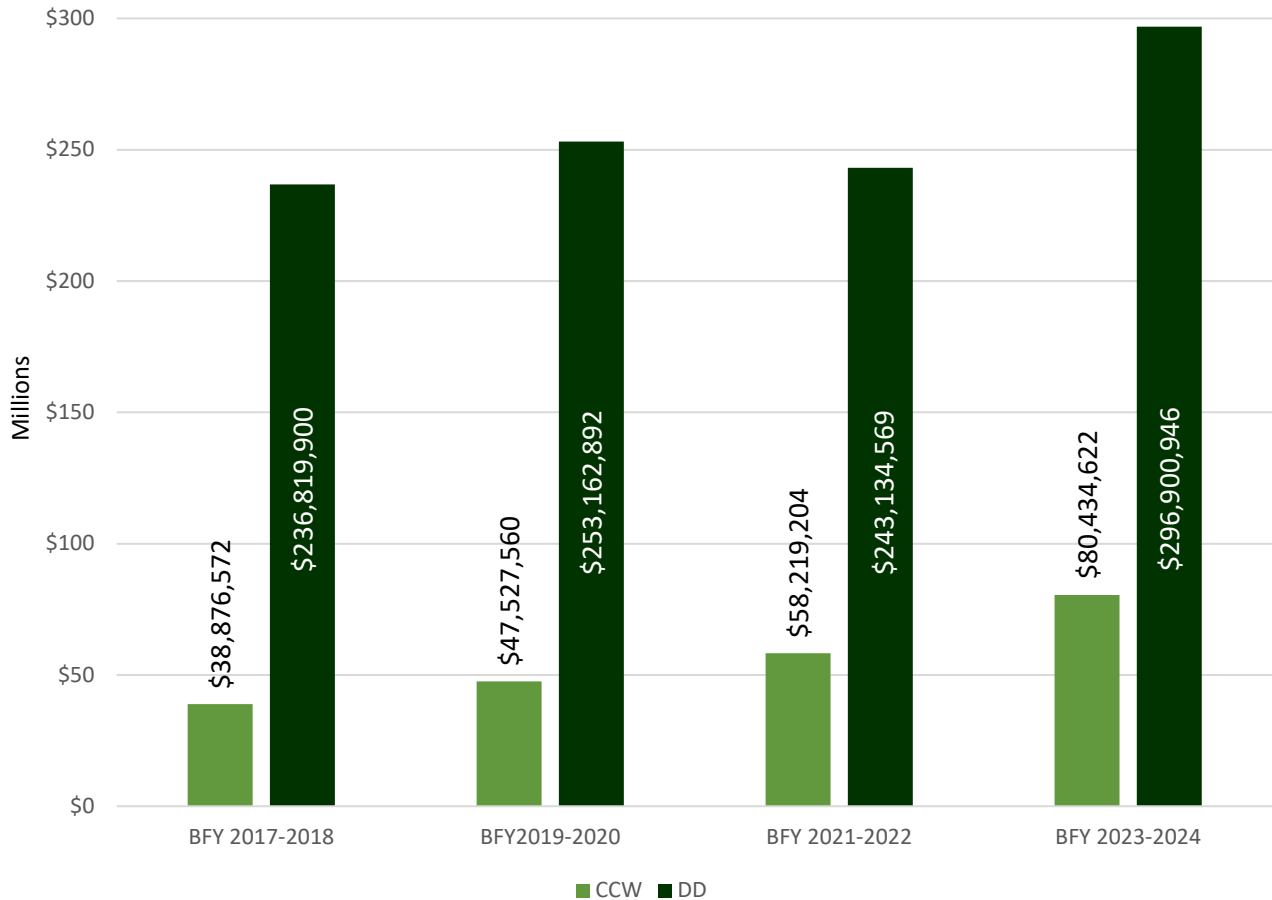


BUDGETS AND EXPENDITURES

Funding for the CCW and DD Waivers is appropriated by the Wyoming Legislature. The current rate methodologies are explained in the respective waiver applications. Pursuant to Wyoming Statute 42-4-120(g), the State must rebase provider service rates for the DD Waiver programs every two to four years. A rate study looking at the provider service rates for the DD Waiver programs is currently being conducted. The Section intends to launch a study rebasing provider services rates for CCW in the middle of 2024.

Waiver participants receive funding for specific waiver services, as well as Medicaid State Plan benefits such as physician, hospital, and prescription drug services. Information on appropriations related to waiver services and Medicaid benefits can be found in the following graphic.

Chart 7
Legislative Appropriations
Biennial Fiscal Years 2017/18, 2019/20, 2021/22 and 2023/2024



The BFY 2023-2024 had an increase in appropriations. The legislative appropriation increase was used for the increase in provider reimbursement rates for HCBS services.

Table 2
CCW and DD Waiver Expenditures
SFYs 2018 – 2022

Waiver Expenditures	SFY2019	SFY2020	SFY2021	SFY2022	SFY2023*
ABI	\$4,948,202	\$15,008	\$0	\$0	\$0
CCW	\$28,957,689	\$29,661,574	\$33,146,033	\$33,400,970	\$37,109,335
Comprehensive	\$94,568,471	\$113,532,461	\$114,273,065	\$108,465,328	\$116,992,552
Supports	\$5,795,651	\$6,882,850	\$8,056,846	\$8,200,858	\$10,457,616

Grand Total	\$148,078,894	\$150,076,885	\$155,475,944	\$150,067,156	\$164,559,503
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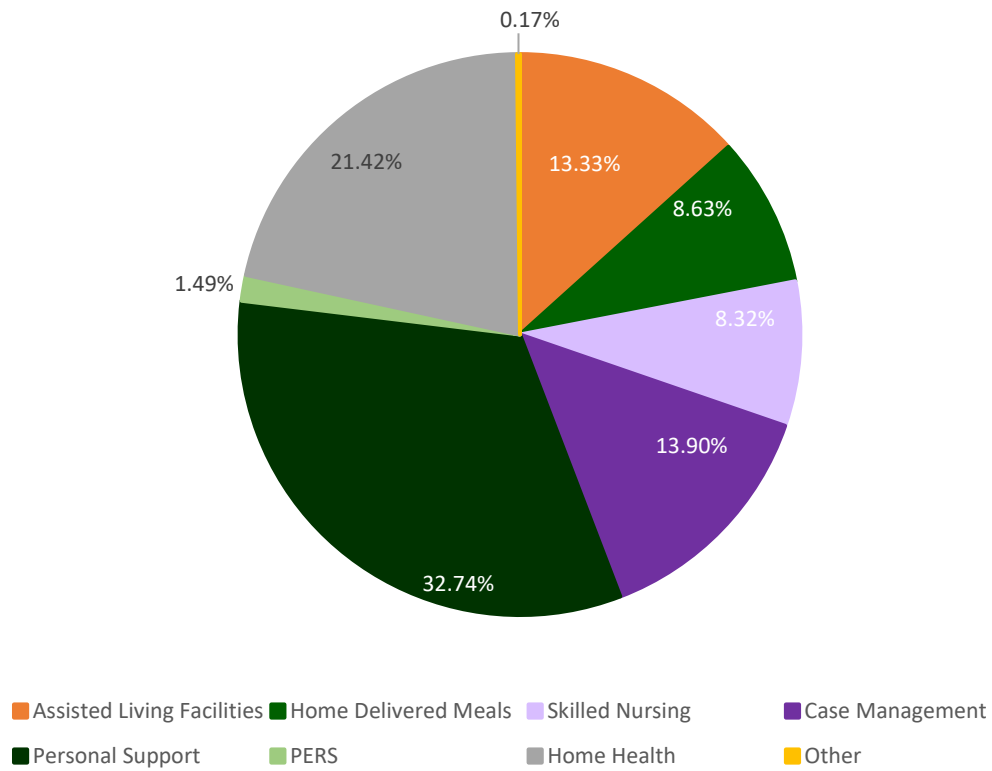
* Providers have one year from the date of service to submit a claim for payment. These numbers are anticipated to increase as providers submit claims over the next year. The ABI Waiver was discontinued as a separate waiver on April 1, 2018, and participants have been transitioned to either the Comprehensive or Supports Waiver.

CCW SERVICES

The CCW offers services that complement or supplement the services that are available through the Medicaid State Plan and other federal, state, and local public programs, as well as the supports that families and communities provide to participants. All services have specific definitions and limitations. The CCW Service Index is available on the [Service Definitions and Rates](#) page of the Section website.

Participants of the CCW are required to receive Case Management Services on a monthly basis. In SFY2023, a participant-directed service delivery option was available for Personal Support Services, but all other services were required to be delivered through an agency, most of which were required to obtain additional licensing through a state licensing board or the Wyoming Department of Health, Division of Aging.

Chart 8 CCW Waiver Services Utilization SFY2023



Case Management	
Number of Participants	2,848
Total Expenditures	\$7,384,139
Average Cost per Participant	\$2,593
Number of Providers	39



Home Delivered Meals	
Number of Participants	1,773
Total Expenditures	\$4,582,342
Average Cost per Participant	\$2,585
Number of Providers	32



Personal Support Services	
Number of Participants	998
Total Expenditures	\$17,392,073
Average Cost per Participant	\$17,427
Number of Providers	23



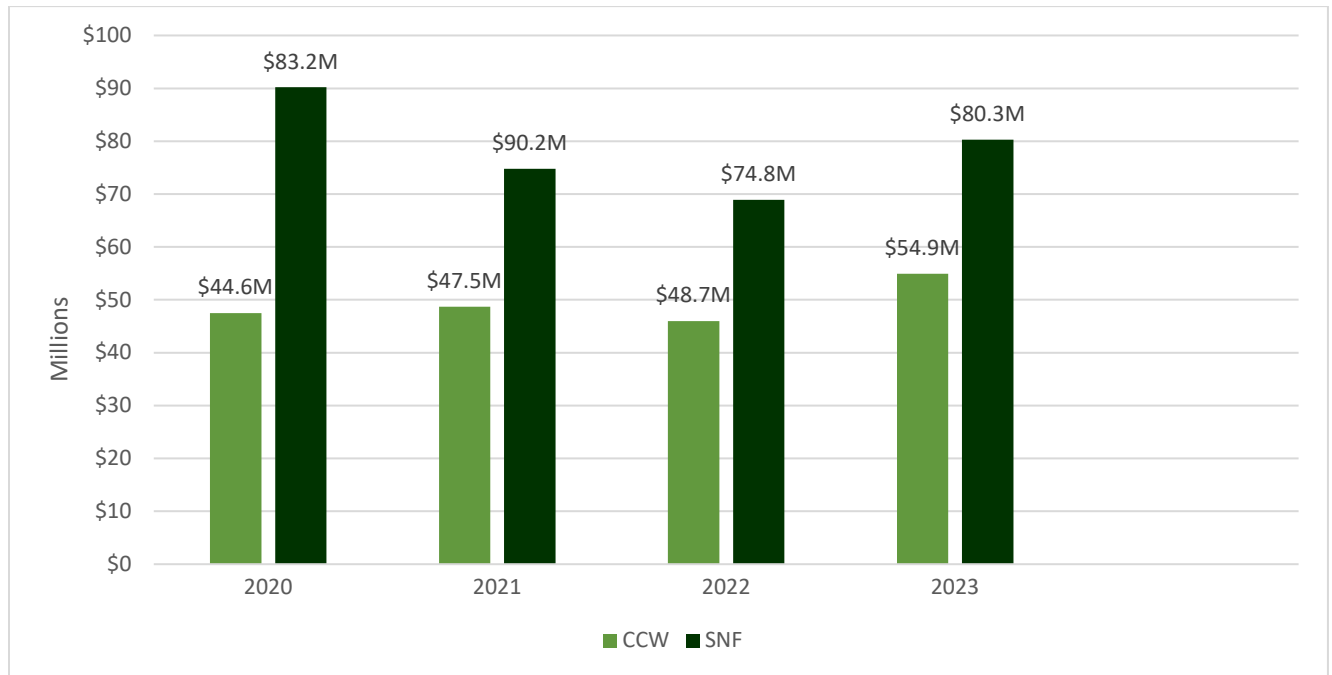
Assisted Living	
Number of Participants	381
Total Expenditures	\$7,081,396
Average Cost per Participant	\$18,586
Number of Providers	24

On average, the CCW program costs 135% less per participant than skilled nursing facility (SNF) services. This savings is demonstrated in Charts 9 and 10.

Chart 9
CCW/SNF Annual Participant Cost Comparison
SFY2020 - 2023



Chart 10
CCW/SNF Annual Program Cost Comparison
SFY2020 - 2023



DD WAIVER SERVICES

The DD Waivers offer a variety of services from which a participant can choose. All services have specific definitions and limitations. The Comprehensive and Supports Waiver Index is available on the [Service Definitions and Rates](#) page of the [Section website](#).

Case Management services are required for all people who received waiver funding. In SFY2023, the Supports Waiver offered only low tier residential services, but all tiers of residential services were available on the Comprehensive Waiver.

Habilitation services are services that require the participant to establish and work toward a goal, and include specific education and skill development to help the participant reach that goal. In SFY2023, these services included Community Support Services, Child Habilitation, and Individual Habilitation Training. There are also services available that do not require a participant to establish and work toward a specific goal; however, the participant and provider work together to develop a plan that establishes what the participant wants from that service so the service can be delivered in a way that supports the participant's wants, needs, and preferences. In SFY2023, these services included Adult Day and Companion Services.

Employment services offer a variety of supports for people to find and maintain self-employment or a job in a competitive, integrated work setting for which a person is paid at least minimum wage. In SFY2023, individual and group Supported Employment Services were available. Prevocational and sub-minimum wage services have not been DD Waiver supported services since April 2019. Follow-Along Services were also available, and allowed the provider to follow up with an employer on behalf of a participant if the participant was not present.

Chart 11
DD Waiver Services Utilization
SFY2023

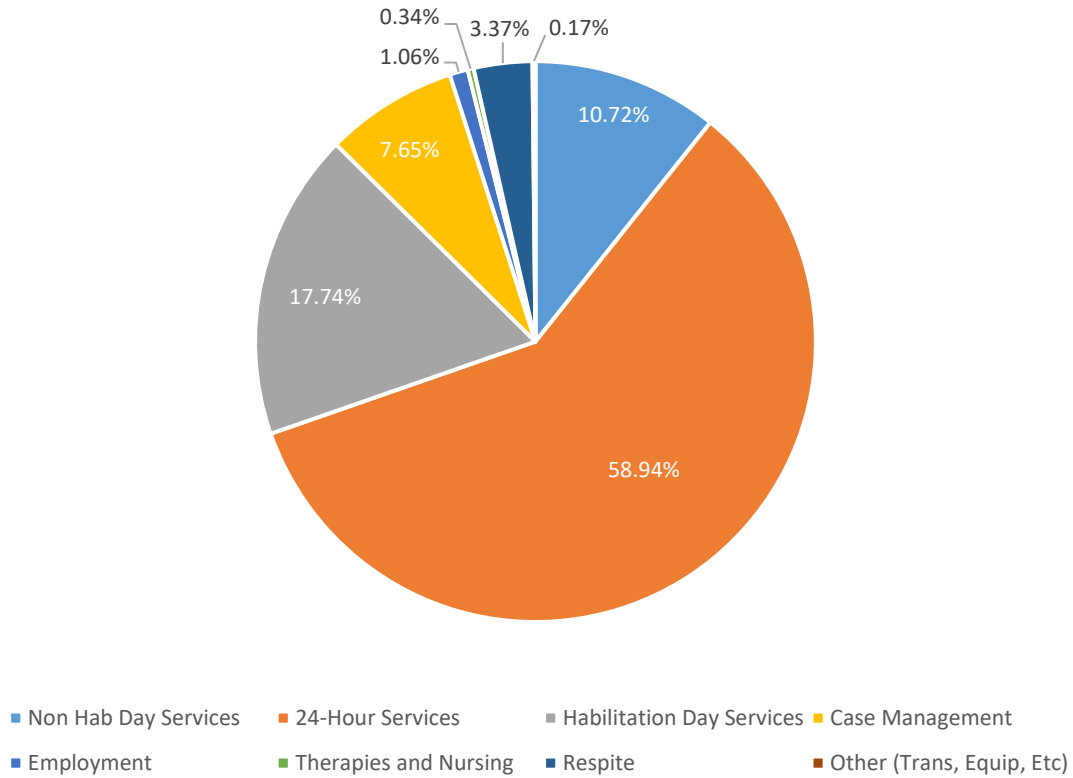


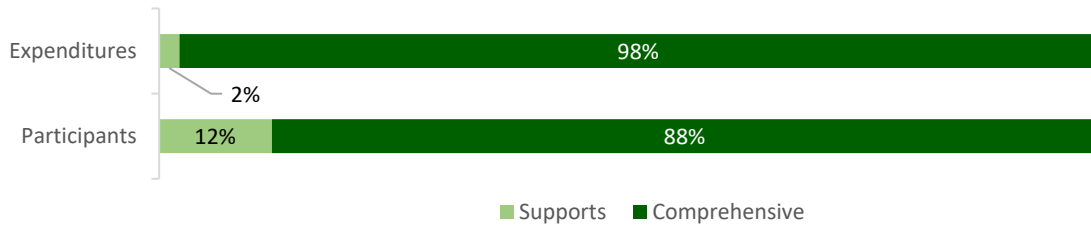
Table 3
DD Waiver Services Utilization, Costs, and Number of Providers by Service
SFY 2023

Case Management Services	
Number of Participants	2,569
Total Expenditures	\$8,310,684
Average Cost per Participant	\$3,235
Number of Providers	108

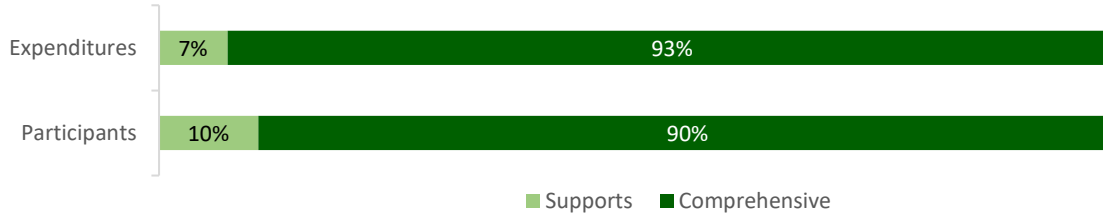


Residential Services

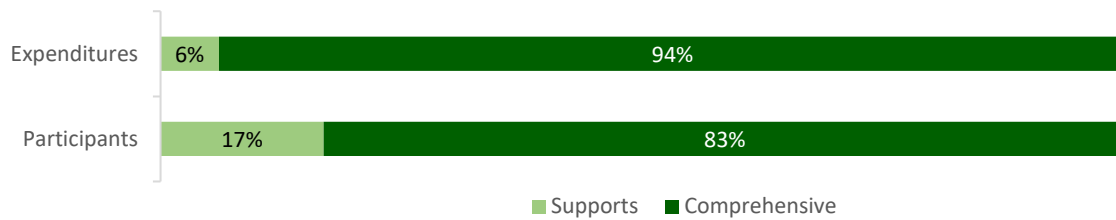
Number of Participants	1,496
Total Expenditures	\$66,484,976
Average Cost per Participant	\$44,441
Number of Providers	410



Employment Services	
Number of Participants	212
Total Expenditures	\$1,375,939
Average Cost per Participant	\$6,490
Number of Providers	46



Day Services	
Number of Participants	1,526
Total Expenditures	\$22,209,107
Average Cost per Participant	\$14,554
Number of Providers	217



SERVICE CAPACITY

In SFY2023, the Section certified 119 CCW providers and case managers statewide in order to ensure that participants had access to quality services and supports in their communities. As displayed in Table 3, the number of certified providers decreased in SFY2023.

Table 4
CCW Provider and Case Manager Count
SFYs 2020 - 2023

Year	All Waiver Providers	Case Managers
2020	123	44
2021	128	50
2022	123	41
2023	119	39

In SFY2023, the Section certified 553 DD Waiver providers and case managers statewide. As displayed in Table 4, the number of providers certified by the Section has slightly decreased over the last three fiscal years.

Table 5
DD Waiver Provider and Case Manager Count
SFYs 2020 - 2023

Year	All Waiver Providers	Case Managers
2020	674	117
2021	606	108
2022	596	110
2023	553	107

The Section continues to monitor the number of providers certified to deliver waiver services.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA), SECTION 9817

The [American Rescue Plan Act of 2021](#) (ARPA) was signed into law by President Biden on March 11, 2021 and provides additional federal relief to address the continued impact of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) on the economy, public health, state and local governments, individuals, and businesses. It is intended, in part, to support states in enhancing services for individuals who are eligible for long-term care and HCBS, including participants of the Comprehensive, Supports, and CCW programs.

[Section 9817](#) of ARPA addresses additional support provided to HCBS. The law included a provision to increase the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) for HCBS by 10% from April 1, 2021 through March 31, 2022. This means that the Division received an additional 10% match on the money that was paid to HCBS providers during that time frame. That additional 10%, which is then matched by the federal government again, calculates to an additional \$29,600,766 that the Division must spend on identified projects by March 31, 2025.

In order to be eligible for this additional funding, the Division must implement, or supplement the implementation of, one or more activities to enhance, expand, or strengthen CCW and DD Waiver programs. Additionally, the Division must attest that, until the entirety of the additional funding is expended:

- It will not impose stricter eligibility standards, methodologies, or procedures for HCBS programs and services than were in place on April 1, 2021;
- It will maintain the amount, duration, and scope of all waiver services that were in effect as of April 1, 2021, remain in place; and
- It will maintain provider payments at a rate no less than those in place as of April 1, 2021.

The Division continues to follow guidance issued by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) ([SMD #21-003](#) and [SMD #22-002](#)), which details the federal requirements that states must meet in order to access the enhanced federal funding. This guidance requires the Division to submit regular updates to the initial spending plan and narrative that explain the state's approach to leveraging this federal funding, and report on how the funding is being expended. The Division has received approval of its spending plan and program initiatives, which allows the state to implement and receive funding for these programs.

The Division involved stakeholders early in this process, and continues to solicit feedback, both informally and through formal public feedback sessions. In SFY 2023, the Division held a public feedback session on August 8, 2022.

Wyoming was selected as one of seven states to receive intensive, short-term technical assistance through an ADvancing States program generously supported by The SCAN Foundation, The John A. Hartford Foundation, the Peterson Center on Healthcare, and the Milbank Memorial Fund. This project was intended to provide the selected states with assistance to facilitate and expedite the implementation of their plans to expand, enhance and strengthen services for older adults and persons with disabilities using ARPA funding. The project, which ended on November 30, 2021, resulted in a comprehensive project plan that the Division uses to manage and track each identified ARPA initiative. Current program initiatives are explained in greater detail below.

Provider Reimbursement Rates

The Division allocated \$21,185,972 toward the increase of provider reimbursement rates for the DD Waivers. This increase is intended to promote workforce stabilization, improve provider recruitment, ensure provider network adequacy, and increase business longevity for providers. The increased rates are based on the [rate rebasing project](#) that was completed in September 2021.

Providers are required to apply the entirety of this increase to the compensation for direct support professionals. In order to demonstrate continued compliance with this requirement, providers must report on how they have used the funds that are attributable to the increase in order to compensate employees (e.g., wages, bonuses, insurance or other benefits), and the amount expended for each category. Additionally, they must complete an attestation that acknowledges their understanding that they must continue to pass the entirety of the increase on to direct support professionals.

These increases went into effect on February 1, 2022. Because this increase is being paid with temporary ARPA funding, the Division cannot guarantee that these rates will continue beyond June 30, 2024. The Division's ability to maintain these rates beyond this date is subject to budgetary appropriations determined by the Wyoming State Legislature.

Case Manager Training

During initial listening sessions conducted by the Division, there was significant support for the development of case manager training on person-centered planning and best practices in person-centered care. The Division allocated \$1,319,235 toward the development and incentivization of this training.

The Division contracted with the Wyoming Institute for Disabilities (WIND) at the University of Wyoming to develop a training curriculum for DD Waiver and CCW case managers. WIND conducted interviews with family members, case managers, and direct support professionals to better understand the perceived gaps in case manager training, and areas of focus and interest. WIND also assembled an advisory group that is shaped the training and reviewed the final curriculum.

This training is an intensive, self-paced, on-line program that covers five core competencies:

- Strengths Based, Culturally Informed, Whole Person-Focused Planning
- Cultivating Connections
- Rights, Choice, and Control
- Partnership, Teamwork, Communication, and Facilitation
- Documentation, Implementation, and Monitoring.

The training is currently available, a case manager must complete the full training series and pass the required competency exams in order to receive a higher reimbursement rate (5%) for the services they provide.

Document Translation

The Division has allocated \$35,000 toward the translation of documents. The Division has inventoried and prioritized all public facing documents for the CCW and DD Waiver programs, and is actively working on getting them translated into Spanish. The Division is currently working with the Wyoming Department of Corrections (WDOC) on finalizing a contract to be able to translate documents into Braille. If a participant

needs a document to be translated to a language other than Spanish, they or their case manager can contact the area [Benefit and Eligibility Specialist](#) for assistance.

National Core Indicator Surveys

The National Core Indicators (NCI) survey is a tool developed by the National Association of State Directors of Developmental Disability Services (NASDDDS), Human Services Research Institute (HSRI), and ADvancing States to track and measure how HCBS impact the lives of participants and families, and identify areas in which improvement is needed.

The Division has allocated \$535,266 to implement the NCI for Intellectual/Developmental Disability (NCI-IDD) and the NCI for Aging and Disability (NCI-AD) surveys. The NCI-IDD survey will be conducted for participants receiving services on a DD Waiver, and will be implemented in SFY 2023. Beginning in SFY 2024, the NCI-AD survey will be conducted for participants receiving services on the CCW. The two surveys are currently scheduled to be conducted on alternating years, but this schedule may change if the Division decides to adopt standardized HCBS quality measures.

The information collected from these surveys will be used to identify, prioritize, design, and implement systemic program changes that improve the quality of HCBS throughout Wyoming.

NCI – IDD State of the Workforce Incentive Payment

The Division offered an annual incentive payment to providers that complete the annual National Core Indicators (NCI) Staff Stability survey, which provides data on wages, turnover, retention, and other information within the Direct Support Professional workforce. The survey data provides information on the existing workforce challenges and is crucial to the Division's ability to address the direct care workforce crisis and implement long-term strategies for creating a more stable workforce. The Division allocated \$500,000 to this for two survey cycles.

Technology Innovation Grants

During the COVID-19 public health emergency, many providers of HCBS used assistive and virtual technologies to connect with participants, monitor their well-being, and decrease their feelings of isolation and anxiety. Additionally, providers used these technologies to ensure staff members had necessary training, up-to-date communication, and access to resources and support. HCBS providers continue to face critical staffing shortages that could jeopardize participant access to needed services in their communities. T

The Division has allocated \$3,000,000 to a technology grant project and has offered innovation grants, in an amount not to exceed \$100,000 per award, to certified HCBS providers that submit a well-organized application that includes all required components and successfully demonstrates how the proposed project meets the goals and purpose of the Technology Innovation Grant program. Because providers deliver services differently and each participant's needs are individualized, the Division considers a wide variety of projects that are designed to meet the unique needs of the providers and participants receiving services within the provider's program, including, but not limited to, projects that address:

- Remote monitoring or virtual support services;
- Equipment purchases that support participant communication and access to needed services;
- Staff development and training; and
- Other technology projects identified by the provider.

The Division accepts applications on a semi-annual cycle, until such time as all funding allocated for this activity has been awarded. The first grant cycle ran from April 1, 2023 - June 30, 2023. The Division is currently processing the second grant cycle which ran from October 1, 2023 - December 31, 2023. An independent panel reviews and scores all applications using established criteria and a detailed scoring rubric. Awardees are required to report on project progress on a semi-annual basis until the project is complete. To date the Division has approved 21 grants for a total of \$ \$1,512,926.32.

Transitional and Diversional Services

During initial input sessions, stakeholders identified the need for the development or improvement of services that could be used to divert or transition individuals from institutional settings, specifically nursing facilities. The Division allocated \$960,100 toward this project.

The Division conducted research on transition services being used throughout the nation, and worked closely with stakeholders and industry experts to draft definitions for:

- Environmental Modification Services;
- Homemaker Services;
- Transition Intensive Case Management; and
- Transition Setup Expenses.

A CCW amendment that includes these new services went into effect on April 1, 2023. None of these services have been utilized as of the time this report was published. The Section will continue to work with case managers and providers over the next fiscal year to identify potential barriers to these services, and promote service availability to CCW participants.

HCBS SECTION PROJECTS

In addition to the day to day tasks related to participant eligibility and plan of care quality, provider and case manager certification and rule compliance, and critical incident and complaint management, the Section has completed several projects in SFY2023.

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Response and Closeout

On May 11th, 2023 the Public Health Emergency ended. As a result, all states had six months to extend or end any flexibilities that were implemented in response to COVID-19. Wyoming did extend various flexibilities. For CCW the state made permanent paid spousal support for the provision of personal support services to participants within the participant-directed service delivery option. For the DD Waivers, approval was received from CMS for specific services to be allowed in an acute care hospital. The ability to offer remote monitoring and virtual supports was also made permanent for several services.

Legislative Activities

During the 2023 General Session of the Wyoming Legislature, the Wyoming Legislature passed [House Enrolled Act 0037](#), the budget bill which included two provider reimbursement rate increases that impacted the Comprehensive and Supports Waiver (DD Waiver) providers.

The first increase applied to DD Waiver agency providers, which are defined as providers that designate wages and employ staff members other than themselves. Agency providers must legally report employee earnings

to the Internal Revenue Service. The second increase impacted all provider reimbursement rates which received a 2% rate increase. These rate increases went into effect October 1, 2023.

During the same session the Wyoming Legislature approved \$7.5 million dollars to fund the Supports Waiver waitlist. 244 individuals were funded from July 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023. Funding opportunities were provided throughout this time period to avoid overwhelming the service system.

Lastly, the Wyoming Legislature added a legislative footnote requiring the Section to initiate a project reviewing participant budget development methodology. The Section is currently undertaking the first stages of this project, and anticipates an initial study being available within the first quarter of 2024.

Functional Assessment of Standardized Items (FASI)

As a part of the ARPA spending plan, the Section continues its pilot project regarding the Functional Assessment of Standardized Items (FASI) assessment tool. This project it aimed at determining the feasibility of using the FASI to determine level of care for Wyoming HCBS and skilled nursing facility (SNF) programs.

The section has contracted with the Wyoming Institute of Disabilities (WIND) to complete this project. WIND will continue to gather data through conducting the assessment with those identified as participating in the pilot project.

National Core Indicator Staff Stability Survey

The NCI-IDD Staff Stability Survey collects comprehensive data on direct support professionals who provided direct supports to participants of the DD Waivers. This survey provides information that allows the Section to examine workforce challenges, identify areas for further investigation, establish baseline metrics, make recommendations for future policy and programmatic changes, and compare data to other states.

Due to the collection and analysis of data, there is a lag in the availability of survey results. The National 2020 Staff Stability Survey Report was released in SFY2022. The Section generated a Wyoming specific report that compared data from SFY2018 – SFY2020. Both reports are available on the [Public Notices, Regulatory Documents, and Reports](#) page of the Section website, under the *Reports* section.

Electronic Visit Verification

Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) is a technology required by Section 12006 of the [21st Century Cures Act](#), and used to verify that HCBS visits occur. The purpose of EVV is to ensure that services are delivered to people needing those services, and that providers only bill for services rendered. The Section partnered with Carebridge to provide Wyoming's EVV solution, which has been in effect for providers since April 1, 2022. The solution verifies visit information through a mobile application on a smart phone or tablet, a toll-free telephone number, or a web-based portal. Affected services include:

CCW	DD Waivers
Home Health Aide	Child Habilitation
Personal Support	Companion
Respite	Personal Care
Skilled Nursing	Respite
	Skilled Nursing

During the initial rollout, the Section and Carebridge identified provider billing practices that were not in compliance with the various waiver agreements or service definitions. As often occurs with any new requirement, challenges related to how the requirement was implemented created perceived barriers. For DD Waiver providers, the biggest challenge has been related to Respite services, and how those services are to be billed when the service extends beyond a calendar day, or beyond a 9 hour time frame in a given calendar day. During SFY2023, the Section collaborated with Carebridge to develop an EVV Respite Daily vs 15 Minute Guidance Document.

Carebridge continues to develop functionality that is required by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). Multi-factor authentication (MFA) and geo-fencing, which is a virtual perimeter for a real-world geographic area, will be implemented in the next fiscal year.

Chapter 34 Administrative Rule

In March of 2023, the Section sought informal public comment on Chapter 34 Wyoming Medicaid Rule. This rule is being revised to set program standards and requirements for the Community Choices Waiver. The feedback received was used to create the final draft of Chapter 34 before putting the rule out for formal public comment.

Since March of 2023, Chapter 34 has made it through the entire promulgation process. As of January 3rd, 2024, the rule was signed into effect.

Quality Improvement

In accordance with the DD Waiver and CCW agreements, all providers must report critical incidents, which are defined as any incident of abuse, neglect, exploitation, or unexpected death of a participant. Additionally, Chapter 45, Section 20 of Wyoming Medicaid Rules requires providers of DD services to report on additional incident categories.

During SFY2023, Incident Management Specialists reviewed over 4,000 incidents. These incidents were reported to the Section through a variety of methods, including reports from provider and provider staff; concerns from the participant, parent, or legally authorized representative; referrals from other agencies; and reports from members of the public. Incidents were reviewed on a daily basis, and reportable incidents were triaged to allow for appropriate follow-up action, depending on provider and participant need. Table 5 offers insight into the types of incidents the Section reviewed in SFY2023.

Table 6
Incident Report Types
SFY2023

Incident Type	CCW Incidents Reviewed	DD Incidents Reviewed	Percentage of Incidents Reviewed
Crime Committed by a Participant	0	25	0.57%
Death	91	50	3.25%
Elopement	0	97	2.23%
Intimidation	0	10	0.23%
Medical/Behavioral Admission	96	977	24.73%
Medication Error	5	893	20.70%
Other Injury	0	104	2.40%
Police Involvement	52	492	12.54%
Serious Injury/Illness	925	150	24.78%
Serious Mental Health Concern	87	0	2.01%
Suspected Abandonment	0	3	0.07%
Suspected Abuse	19	50	1.59%
Suspected Exploitation	31	35	1.52%
Suspected Neglect	33	37	1.61%
Suspected Self Abuse or Neglect	0	50	1.15%
Use of Restraint or Restrictive Intervention	4	23	0.62%
Total	1343	2996	100%

CONTACT US

For additional information regarding this report, or for information related to Comprehensive, Supports, or Community Choices Waiver services, please call (307) 777-7531 or visit the HCBS Section website at <https://health.wyo.gov/healthcarefin/hcbs/>.