

**State Unit on Aging
Alzheimer's Disease and Other Dementia Advisory Council Meeting
Friday, June 20, 2025
Jack J. Huck Continuing Education Center
301 S. 68th Street Place
Lincoln, NE 68510**

Voting Members Present: Julie Kaminski, Christopher Kelly, Tracy Lichti, Lisa Marks, Kierstin Reed, Mary Ann Stallings, David Thompson

Voting Members Absent: John Croghan, Julie Masters, Corie Sass

Non-Voting Members Present: Terri Ridder, Josie Rodriguez, Odessa Schoneberg

Non-Voting Members Absent: Timothy Tesmer

Council Staff Present: Joni Dulaney

State Unit on Aging Staff Present: Ben Stromberg

This meeting was held in person at the Jack J. Huck Continuing Education Center in Lincoln. A link was provided for members of the public to attend virtually. The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m. by Tracy Lichti, Council Chair. Roll was taken and Council members introduced themselves.

Nebraska Open Meetings Act Announcement

Tracy announced that Council meetings fall under the Nebraska Open Meetings Act. A copy of the Act was posted in the room on the bulletin board near the door.

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the May 16, 2025, meeting minutes was made by Lisa Marks and seconded by Julie Kaminski. No corrections were requested to the minutes.

A roll call vote was taken: Yes – 7; No – 0; Abstain – 0.

Presentations

Karen Houseman, DHHS Program Manager, gave a PowerPoint presentation on Home and Community-Based Services Waiver services, which includes the Aged and Disabled Waiver (AD) and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Waiver.

Waivers pay waiver providers for the services designed to keep people living as independently as possible in their communities and avoid moving into an institution. To be eligible for a waiver, an individual must be either aged or have a disability determination and meet both DHHS and nursing homes' nursing facility level of care criteria. Through waiver services, what is being waived is the nursing home stay – an individual would not have to go to a nursing home to receive these services. Instead, they could choose to receive those waiver services safely somewhere else.

Nursing Facility Level of Care eligibility, AD and TBI Waiver Services, interRAI assessment tool, and applying and eligibility for waivers and service coordination were also discussed. Individuals apply for a waiver on [iServeNebraska](#) where it is reviewed and next steps are taken to determine the individual's eligibility to receive waiver services. It was discussed that members of the public believe that when they have depleted all their resources, they automatically qualify for Medicaid, but this is not the case. There needs to be more communication to educate the public about this. An individual must meet Medicaid requirements and waiver requirements to get assisted living paid for in Nebraska.

A copy of the PowerPoint presentation showing the steps that the application goes through to determine whether the individual is offered waiver services and other discussion points and other information from the presentation can be found at the end of these minutes

Council members are encouraged to visit the DHHS website to read more about the [Aged and Disabled](#) (AD) Waiver for details and descriptions of AD Waiver services, resources, services available under the waiver, and provider options.

Angel Horton Frank, Executive Director, and Sadie Hinkel, Program Director, provided information on the Alzheimer's Association Nebraska Chapter.

Angel stated that they are a volunteer-led organization with nine full-time staff across the state. They are just finishing their [10-year strategic plan](#) with the next plan starting on July 1, 2025. They will continue to provide support groups and other support services, but they are moving more into the public health space to include brain health, lifestyle modifiable risk factors, warning signs, early detection, and treatments where applicable and appropriate. A national priority is to create a network of care navigators that would be funded and work within the healthcare systems. This has been lacking nationwide. This program is known as [GUIDE](#) and is being piloted in other states to fine tune before opening it up to all states. Homaha, a facility in Omaha, will begin using the GUIDE model on July 1, 2025. Angel suggested having someone from their national health systems staff come talk to the Council about the work they do.

Their national priorities include [AADAPT Act](#) (Accelerated Access to Dementia and Alzheimer's Provider Training) to create an online training to primary care providers and physician's assistants to increase their confidence in diagnosing dementia; the Credit for Caring Act to take the federal tax credit to \$5,000; the Alzheimer's Screening and Prevention Act (ASAP) for Medicaid and Medicare coverage for blood testing and preventive testing; and NIH funding research for Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

The Nebraska Chapter is working on legislative bills for the next session. They can report back on these after the bills are submitted in January 2026.

One of Sadie's roles is community education of the general public through presentations on the future of Alzheimer's and Alzheimer's research, brain health, risk reduction, benefits of early detection, awareness of the Alzheimer's Association, and more. Caregiver education is another

role. The Empowered Caregiver is a new five-part series for informal caregivers. They have 15 support groups across the state, all volunteer led.

One area of focus for the Nebraska Chapter is to try to get BOLD funding to Nebraska. Nebraska is one of only five states that does not have BOLD funding, which could bring \$2 million dollars to the state for public health and education. This funding could lead to focusing on the Healthy Brain Initiative. The Alzheimer's Association can help write the grant but cannot apply for or administer the grant. An Area Agency on Aging or other group/coalition could apply for and administer the grant.

State Plan

Tracy reminded everyone to get their subcommittee reports to Joni Dulaney. The annual update report is due to DHHS by August 26, 2025, for submission to the legislature and governor by October 1, 2025.

Announcements

The next meeting will be held virtually on July 18, 2025.

Adjourn

One voting member needed to leave the meeting early, which meant there was no longer a quorum. The meeting adjourned at 11:26 a.m.

Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waiver Services

June 20, 2025

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Division Of Developmental Disabilities www.dhhs.ne.gov/dd

Learn about HCBS Programs

Apply and request (DD Waiver) | Developmental Disabilities (DD) Waiver | Developmental Disabilities (DD) Waiver

Special Health Care Needs Waiver | State Unit on Aging Waiver

Find information by Topic

Understanding the DD Waiver | DD Waiver and Services | DD Waiver Waivers

Regulations and Waivers | Waiver Plan | Waiver Waivers

Waiver Waivers | Waiver Waivers | Waiver Waivers

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Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD)

Medicaid HCBS Waivers | Special Health Care Needs

State Unit on Aging

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General Medicaid and Waiver Information

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Agenda

- General Medicaid and Waiver Information.
- Waiver-Specific Information.
- Applying, Eligibility Determination, and Service Coordination.

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Medicaid Overview

Medicaid is a public health insurance program which provides healthcare programs and services to qualifying people. The primary goal is to ensure access to quality health care services for low-income people and families.

- In general, eligible people are low-income adults, pregnant women, children, elderly people, and people with disabilities.
- Eligibility is based on income, assets, residency, and other considerations.

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Medicaid – Income and Resources

Applying as a Child

Medicaid looks at family income and resources when an application is for a child.

Applying as an Adult

At age 19, parental income and resources no longer count, regardless of where a person lives.

Age 19 is the age of majority in Nebraska.

Katie Beckett Program

Children who live in their parent's home and have high needs can be eligible for Medicaid.

This program only looks at the child's income and resources.

The child must meet the level of care to live in a:

- Hospital;
- Nursing Facility (NF); or
- Intermediate Facility for individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICF/IID).

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Waiver Services

- Paid services wrap around natural supports to meet a participant's needs.
- The goal is as much independence as possible.
- Service examples:
 - Help with and teaching household tasks.
 - Help with and teaching self-care skills.
 - Teaching skills to get or maintain a competitive, integrated job.
 - Respite – relief to the usual caregiver.
 - Home and vehicle modifications.
 - Assistive technology and emergency response systems.

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Medicaid Disability

When a disability determination is needed, Medicaid uses the disability criteria established by the Social Security Administration (SSA).

- When an SSA determination has not been made, the State Review Team (SRT) uses the SSA disability criteria.
- SRT determines if a person meets disability criteria upon receiving 12 months of medical records.

Social Security Income (SSI)

SSI provides monthly payments to adults and children who have:

- Little or no income; and
- Little or no resources; and
- A disability, blindness, or are age 65 and older.

Age 18 is the federal age of majority, where family income and resources do not count.

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9

Medicaid HCBS Waivers in Nebraska



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Medicaid Waivers

- Allow the state to waive certain Medicaid requirements, so services can be provided in the community, avoiding institutionalization.
- Waiver services are in addition to straight Medicaid services.
- Medicaid waivers pay waiver providers for services.
- Services are designed to help people live in the community.

Waiver services are in addition to other services, including:

- Other DHHS programs.
- The Dept of Education.
- Vocational Rehabilitation.

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11

HCBS Waiver Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to receive any HCBS waiver, a person must:

- Be eligible for and receive Nebraska Medicaid;
 - Be a citizen or legal resident of the United States;
 - Be a legal resident of the state of Nebraska;
- Meet waiver Level of Care requirement; and
- Have a need for waiver services.

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12

Waivers with Nursing Facility Level of Care (NF LOC)

Aged and Disabled (AD) Waiver Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Waiver

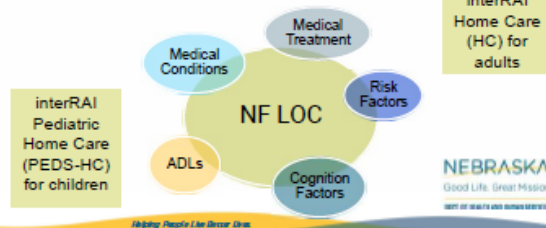
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15

Nursing Facility LOC

Nebraska uses interRAI assessments.



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Waivers with NF Level of Care

Aged and Disabled (AD) Waiver

- Aged: over the age of 65.
- Disabled: within Social Security criteria, includes ages birth to 64 years.

Both waivers require Nursing Facility Level of Care (LOC) found in 471 NAC.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) Waiver

- Age 18 years or older.
- Disabled within Social Security criteria.
- Diagnosis of traumatic brain injury.*
 - Non-degenerative, non-congenital insult to the brain from an external mechanical force;
 - Possibly leading to permanent or temporary impairment of cognitive, physical, and psychosocial functions; and
 - An associated diminished or altered state of consciousness.

*This program is not for acquired brain injury caused by strokes, tumors, and other non-traumatic causes. The term TBI does not apply to brain injuries induced or caused by birth trauma.

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Developmental Disabilities Waivers Intermediate Care Facilities for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICF/IID) LOC

- Family Support Waiver (FSW)
- Developmental Disabilities Adult Day Waiver (DDAD Waiver)
- Comprehensive Developmental Disabilities Waiver (CDD Waiver)

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AD Waiver Services

- Adult Day Health
- Assisted Living
- Assistive Technology
- Chore
- Companion
- Extra Care for Children with Disabilities
- Home Again
- Home and Vehicle Modifications
- Home-Delivered Meals
- Independence Skills Building
- Non-Medical Transportation
- Personal Care
- Personal Emergency Response System (PERS)
- Respite

AD Waiver Quick Guide

TBI Waiver Services

- Adult Day Health
- Assisted Living
- Assistive Technology
- Caregiver Training
- Chore
- Community Connections
- Companion
- Home Modifications
- Home-Delivered Meals
- Non-Medical Transportation
- Personal Care
- Personal Emergency Response System (PERS)
- Respite
- Supported Employment – Follow-Along
- Supported Employment – Individual
- Vehicle Modifications

TBI Waiver Quick Guide

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Waivers with ICF/IID Level of Care

Family Support Waiver (FSW)

- Ages birth through 21 years.
- Supports the child and their family.

Habilitation: Assisting a person with improving and achieving developmental skills, when impairments delayed or blocked initial acquisition of the skills.

Developmental Disabilities Adult Day (DDAD) Waiver

- Ages 21 years and older.
- Replaces services provided by the school system.
- Maximizes independence in the community.
- Focuses on competitive, integrated employment.
- Includes supported residential services.

Comprehensive Developmental Disabilities (CDD) Waiver

- All ages.
- Maximizes independence as people live, work, and socialize in their community.
- Includes 24-hour residential services.

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20

DD Waiver Services

[DD Waiver Quick Guide](#)

Day Services

- **Focus: integrated, competitive employment.**
- Services may:
 - Teach job skills before becoming employed, or
 - Provide support at a job.

Residential Services

- **Focus: independent living.**
- Services may occur:
 - In the participant's home;
 - In their family home, or
 - At a provider-operated home.

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Services Available	Yes	No
Assistive Technology	Yes	Yes
Behavioral Therapy	Yes	Yes
Child Day Habilitation	Yes	Yes
Community Integration	Yes	Yes
Continuum Assessment	Yes	Yes
Day Supports	Yes	Yes
Developmental Modification Assessment	Yes	Yes
Family Support Services	Yes	Yes
Health and Wellness Monitoring	Yes	Yes
Home Modification	Yes	Yes
Independent Living	Yes	Yes
Medical Services	Yes	Yes
Personal Emergency Response System	Yes	Yes
Personalized	Yes	Yes
Residential Habilitation - Core Income	Yes	Yes
Residential Habilitation - Core Income	Yes	Yes
Residential Habilitation - Shared Living	Yes	Yes
Respite	Yes	Yes
Small Group Vocational Support	Yes	Yes
Supported Employment - Full-time Living	Yes	Yes
Supported Employment - Individual	Yes	Yes
Supported Family Living	Yes	Yes
Therapeutic Residential Habilitation	Yes	Yes
Transportation	Yes	Yes
Vehicle Modification	Yes	Yes

ICF/IID Level of Care

The Developmental Index (DI) is a state-developed assessment used to determine LOC eligibility for DD waivers.

In July 2025, DDD will begin using interRAI assessments for ICF/IID Level of Care.

ICF/IID LOC

- Self-care
- Receptive and expressive language
- Learning
- Mobility
- Self-direction
- Capacity for independent living

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Defining Developmental Disability

- Have a **Developmental disability** as defined in *Neb. Rev. Stat. §83-1205*:
 - A **diagnosis** prior to the age of 22 years that is expected to continue indefinitely.
 - A **severe, chronic disability** including intellectual disability, other than mental illness, which is attributable to a mental or physical impairment.
 - The disability must result in **substantial functional limitations** in each of the following areas of adaptive function:
 - Conceptual – language, literacy, money, time, number concepts, and adaptive functioning.
 - Social – interpersonal, social responsibility, self-esteem, gullibility, awareness, social problem solving, ability to follow laws and rules, and avoid being victimized.
 - Practical – daily living, personal care, occupational skills, healthcare, and mobility.
- Meet the Level of Care needed to live in an Intermediate Care Facility for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities (ICF/IID).

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Applying, Eligibility Determination, and Service Coordination

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Helpful Documents for DD Eligibility Determination

- Medical Records from the diagnosing doctor or specialist.
 - Diagnosis of disability given before age 22, which affects ability to complete activities of daily living skills.
- Assessments from a licensed psychologist
 - [Information for the diagnosing psychologist](#)
- Information from the school:
 - All Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) reports
 - [Information for the school psychologist on what to include in the MDT](#)
 - The most recent Individual Education Plan (IEP)

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Submitting documentation with your application will speed the process.

Applying for a Waiver

Applications are on the DHHS website.

iServe Nebraska
Apply Today

- Includes a release of information.
- Anyone can help a person fill out an application.
- A signature is required on the application from the person, their guardian, or a legal representative.

The person or their legal representative, **must**:

- Answer questions;
- Provide information; and
- Participate in assessments.

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Eligibility Determination

- Verify Medicaid status (includes disability determination).
- When necessary:
 - Request DD-supporting documents:
 - **Diagnosis** can come from a medical doctor, specialist, or licensed psychologist.
 - **Limitations** are confirmed by reviewing information from the school.
 - Verify TBI diagnosis.
- When other waiver requirements are met, level of care assessment is completed.



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Roles of the Service Coordinator

- Answers questions.
- Helps plan services.
- Support what the participant wants.
- Attends IEP meetings (when the participant is in school).
 - The guardian must request the school invite the SC.
- Writes the **person-centered plan** at a yearly meeting.
- Monitors waiver services.



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27

Waiver Offers

- The **eligible** person receives an offer for the waiver that will meet their needs, based on eligibility and assessment.
 - This is currently true for the AD and TBI waivers.
 - This will be true for the DD waivers July 2025.
- The person, or their legal representative, must agree to receive waiver services.
- If no response is received, follow-up phone calls or emails occur.

DHHS is currently working to eliminate the Waitlist. Information about this initiative is online.



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The Individual Support Plan

- The **person-centered plan**:
 - Identifies services, supports, and resources.
 - Lists providers and outlines what they are responsible for.
- The approved person-centered plan is required before waiver services can begin.
- Waiver services should help the participant:
 - Live their most independent life and
 - Experience quality of life in their community.
- The plan can be revised whenever needed.



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29

Receiving a Service Coordinator

The Service Coordinator (SC) is in a local office.

- DD Waiver SC provided by DDD.
- AD Waiver SC provided by one of the following:
 - Early Development Network (EDN) for children participating in EDN services, typically ages birth to 3 years.
 - DDD for children ages 3 through 17 years, or younger when not choosing EDN services.
 - League of Human Dignity (LHD) for adults over age 18.
 - Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) for adults over age 18.
- TBI Waiver SC provided by LHD or AAA.



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Person-Centered Planning

- Charting the LifeCourse (CtLC) tools help a person plan their "good life."
- Person-centered planning includes:
 - What a person **wants** (what's important to them).
 - What a person **needs** (what's important for them).



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31

