How the waiver program works
By Cindy Cantrell
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The state and federal Acquired Brain Injury Waiver Program is designed for people with brain injuries who wish to reintegrate into the community from a nursing facility, chronic care, or rehabilitation hospital.

Administered by the state’s MassHealth program and the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission, the program is being implemented by the Brain Injury Association of Massachusetts, a private, nonprofit organization based in Westborough.

The association provided a number of details about the waiver program and its requirements.

To be eligible, individuals must have acquired their brain injury at age 22 or older; lived in a nursing facility, or chronic or rehabilitation hospital for at least 90 consecutive days; and be eligible for MassHealth (Medicaid) if they were to move out of the care facility.

Enrollment is ongoing through next year for the nonresidential habilitation waiver program, which covers individuals who do not require 24-hour care. Enrollment in the residential habilitation waiver, which covers around-the-clock staffing through a residential provider agency, is anticipated to reopen this fall.

A client’s new residence may be in an apartment, with a relative or friend, or in a foster or group home. The Acquired Brain Injury Waiver Program provides for support ensuring a successful transition, as well as ongoing resources such as rehabilitation therapies, day programs, supported employment, community-based substance abuse treatment, transportation, and specialized medical equipment.

The nonresidential habilitation waiver also covers home accessibility adaptations, personal care, adult companionship, homemaker assistance, and respite for caregivers.

Expenditures must be cost neutral, or equal to or less than the institutionalized rates of the individual’s care, with a maximum of $194,186 per year for the residential habilitation waiver and $99,890 per year for the nonresidential habilitation waiver. Applicant screening and cost projection are conducted by the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

For details about the program, call the Brain Injury Association at 800-242-0030

800-242-0030 e-mail abiwaiver@biama.org, or visit www.biama.org.

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