



PROGRAM EVALUATION OF PASSPORT: OHIO'S HOME AND COMMUNITY-BASED MEDICAID WAIVER ASSESSMENT AND SERVICES

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Purpose:

This portion of the PASSPORT evaluation sought to determine the effectiveness of PASSPORT assessment in ensuring that PASSPORT consumers are supported in making informed choices about long-term care; and whether the service plans developed for enrolled PASSPORT consumers are based on the assessed needs of and the informed choices made by the consumer. Specifically, we answered the following questions: a) *Does the consumer exercise informed choice in the assessment, service planning, and service delivery experience?* b) *Does the assessment process capture and accurately document the individual's needs, strengths, and resources?* c) *Do both the service plan and service implementation match the individual's assessed needs and strengths?*

PASSPORT Assessment Process

1. Initial phone call from (or on behalf of) applicant to the PASSPORT Administrative Agency (PAA) ...



Preliminary screening

- Care needs
- Care choices
- Preliminary Medicaid eligibility

2. Applicant appears to have care/service needs ...



In-home assessment

- Level of need
- Level of informal support
- Income eligibility
- Consumer preferences

3. Possible outcomes ...

Based on outcomes of in-home assessment

- PASSPORT enrollment*
- Other home and community-based services
- Caregiver support
- Residential State Supplement
- Assisted living
- Nursing facility

*A consumer who is not currently a Medicaid beneficiary must apply through the County Department of Job & Family Services (CDJFS) for financial eligibility determination.

Methods:

We used a case study methodology to conduct an in-depth evaluation of the PASSPORT assessment and services experience of thirty individuals and their families. When nearly all case studies had been completed, we conducted a focus group of twelve PAA site directors or their designees.

For each case study, we interviewed the consumer, the caregiver (where applicable), the assessor (where applicable), and the case manager.

We interviewed the following types of consumers:

“**Newcomers**”: - Ten individuals who received an initial assessment, with a follow-up assessment after services had begun.

“**Continuing**”: - Ten consumers enrolled in PASSPORT for one year or more.

“**Disenrolled**”: - Ten consumers (nine living and one deceased) who had disenrolled from PASSPORT.

Case study data gathering included a combination of interviews, observation, and document review. Documents reviewed included the intake screening tool, the initial assessment, service plans, case management case notes, reassessments, disenrollment forms (where applicable), and miscellaneous documentation such as incident reports, hospital discharge notes, and physicians' statements.



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Findings:

- Case management and supervision work well; consumers and their caregivers use their case managers appropriately.
- Assessment in the PASSPORT program is an ongoing and developmental process. Successful initial assessments capture enough information about the consumer's strengths and needs, as well as the level of informal support, to institute an initial service plan.
- PASSPORT assessments are consumer-based rather than family-based. Caregiver assessment is minimal.
- Initial assessments are most effective when they do not overwhelm the consumer and caregiver(s); when the assessor uses clear, jargon-free language; and when written materials are kept to a minimum.
- Assessors, case managers and case management supervisors use professional judgment in facilitating informed choice and in the implementation of a service plan.
- Provider and worker quality is variable and consumers do not have adequate information about quality to make an informed choice about their service providers.
- Medicaid-eligibility delays in service onset are related, in part, to the volume of documentation demanded of consumers, but appear more often related to bureaucratic or worker delays at the County Department of Job and Family Services' (CDJFS) level.

"I couldn't dress or bathe without assistance. I only needed help for a few months. PASSPORT helped me stay at home during that time." - *Consumer*

"I cared for my mother in my home for one year before she got services. Then PASSPORT came along and my mother stayed with me for three more years." - *Family Caregiver*

Suggestions for the Future of PASSPORT:

- The size and level of demand of particular caseloads should be closely monitored.
- Ongoing assessment and service plan modification requires reliable systems of communication between providers/workers and case managers.
- The process and function of a family-based assessment is worthy of exploration.
- In order not to overwhelm the consumer and caregiver(s), initial information should focus on the fundamentals.
- Training should sensitize professionals to their discretionary "powers" and to the vulnerabilities of consumers.
- PASSPORT assessments should include an explicit evaluation of the consumer's capacity for informed decision making.
- Assessors and case managers cannot facilitate fully informed choice without adequate provider quality measures.
- Delays in service onset is a serious issue that requires systematic investigation.
- The evaluation did not look at consumer/family informed choice in the Medicaid-eligibility process at the CDJFS agency level. Because of its complexities and its significant implications for families we believe the process merits evaluation.

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