



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

MARYLAND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
Community First Choice Transmittal No. 19
Community Personal Assistance Services Transmittal No. 20
Home and Community-Based Options Waiver Transmittal No. 22
Increased Community Services Transmittal No. 9
January 24, 2025

To: Community First Choice Providers
Community Personal Assistance Services Providers
Home and Community-Based Options Waiver Providers
Increased Community Services Providers

From: Jamie S. Smith, Director *Jamie Smith*
Office of Long Term Services and Supports

Re: Renaming of Adult Evaluation and Review Services (AERS), Change in Scope and Transition from the Statewide Evaluation and Planning Services (STEPS) Assessment

Note: **Please ensure the appropriate staff members in your organization are informed of the contents of this transmittal.**

The Maryland Department of Health (MDH), Office of Long Term Services and Supports (OLTSS) is issuing this transmittal to notify applicable stakeholders about the change in scope, and subsequent renaming, of Adult Evaluation and Review Services (AERS), a program situated within each of the 24 Local Health Departments (LHDs) in Maryland.

Prior to the implementation of the Community First Choice (CFC) program in 2014, the AERS program was responsible for assessing the needs of older adults seeking long term services and supports, making recommendations for services, and supporting individuals in obtaining services through case management. With the implementation of CFC, the scope of work for the LHDs shifted in significant ways, most notably, the expansion of comprehensive evaluations to children and youth, the re-assignment of case management services to Supports Planning Agencies (SPAs), and the dissolution of nursing delegation and oversight for personal assistance providers.

In order to more appropriately describe the services currently provided by AERS, OLTSS collaborated with the 24 LHDs to designate a new program name, utilizing the same acronym recognized by stakeholders to preserve continuity and minimize potential confusion. Effective January 1, 2025, these programs will be identified as Assessments,

Evaluation & Review Services, reflective of the broader population currently assessed, and emphasizing the centrality of assessments and evaluation, rather than service planning which falls within the scope of SPAs and other case management entities.

As part of this transition, OLTSS is also discontinuing the utilization of the Statewide Evaluation and Planning Services (STEPS) assessment for all purposes other than the Preadmission Screening and Resident Review (PASRR) Level II Evaluation. The interRAI Home Care (iHC) is the tool designated by MDH for the purpose of the comprehensive evaluation described in Code of Maryland Regulations 10.09.30. This tool has been tested rigorously for validity and reliability and includes a range of outputs that can be used to determine medical eligibility for various programs, identify risk of institutionalization, and provide recommendations for care planning.

Effective February 3, 2025, the interRAI Home Care (iHC) or the interRAI Pediatric HC, as applicable, must be utilized to evaluate individuals for all Medicaid and non-Medicaid programs and Maryland Medicaid will no longer reimburse LHDs for the completion of the STEPS assessment for any purpose other than the PASRR Level II Evaluation.

Questions regarding this matter may be directed to Carrie Goodman, Chief, Division of Clinical Support, at (410) 767-6765 or Carrie.Goodman@maryland.gov.