



NCAPPS

# National Center on Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems: Summary of Year Three Technical Assistance Activities

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# Introduction

The National Center on Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems (NCAPPS) provides technical assistance to State agencies, Tribes, and Territories to advance person-centered thinking, planning, and practices that support people with disabilities and older adults with long-term service and support needs. NCAPPS launched in the spring of 2019. Following the launch, a cohort of 15 States was selected from a total of 33 applicants to receive 100 hours of technical assistance per year for three years. Each of the 15 States developed a technical assistance plan that outlined the goals and objectives it hoped to achieve with support from NCAPPS and national subject matter experts. The [Summary of Year One Technical Assistance Activities](#) describes the content of those plans, and the [Summary of Year Two Technical Assistance Activities](#) describes progress during the second year.

In Year Three (the federal fiscal year that runs from October 2020 to September 2021), all 15 States continue to receive NCAPPS assistance. In this brief, we describe the common themes among their goals for Year Three as well as the group technical assistance efforts that will take place during the year. We also provide a brief summary of each State's activities to enhance person-centered thinking, planning, and practices.

## NCAPPS Technical Assistance States

Alabama, Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Kentucky, Montana, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Texas, Utah, Virginia

## Common Themes

In the third year of technical assistance, NCAPPS States have focused in on five primary areas: Stakeholder engagement, staff competencies, defining person-centered practice, sustainability, and leadership buy-in.

### Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement remained a common theme in States' technical assistance goals in Year Three. All 15 States are continuing to develop and improve strategies for engaging with stakeholders. Alabama, for example, is developing strategies to engage its various stakeholders—including existing advisory boards, leadership across the Alabama Department of Mental Health, and other groups—by creating a social media presence, reviewing engagement metrics such as website and social media channel traffic, and planning participant engagement events. Some states are working to collaborate with stakeholders to better implement person-centered practices. Oregon,

for example, is developing informational materials to increase engagement of older adults and people with physical disabilities and their families.

## Staff Competencies and Training

Another common theme in Year Three technical assistance goals relates to staff competencies and training. Connecticut, Hawaii, and Texas are using [Five Competency Domains for Staff Who Facilitate Person-Centered Planning](#), a product from Year Two technical assistance, to strengthen their training efforts. Connecticut will modify the core competency domains to better meet the State's needs, and will identify and develop measures suited for assessing the effectiveness of person-centered core competency training. Hawaii is also reviewing and modifying the core competencies with cultural responsiveness in mind, after which it will finalize them and disseminate for use across the populations being served. And Texas is using the five competency domains to organize its broad-based person-centered practices initiative.

Additionally, several States are working to develop various trainings for their staff to help enhance and promote person-centered thinking, planning, and practices. For example, Ohio continues to build on its work from Year Two related to self-direction; in Year Three, the Ohio team will be developing a training program for case managers to support service users to access self-direction. Pennsylvania is also building on its activities from the previous years of NCAPPS technical assistance on person-centered counseling; in Year Three, the Pennsylvania team will create a Person-Centered Counseling Certification and Competency Program for current and future counselors.

## Definitions of Person-Centeredness

Many of the NCAPPS Technical Assistance States continue to work toward developing standard definitions of person-centered thinking, planning, and practices. Georgia, Kentucky, and North Dakota are working with stakeholders to define person-centeredness in their respective States, and Idaho and Montana are working to operationalize, expand, and disseminate definitions of person-centeredness they established in the prior years of NCAPPS technical assistance.

## Sustainability and Scalability

Many States are working, in the third year of the technical assistance, to ensure sustainability and scalability of the progress they have made during the course of the technical assistance engagement. North Dakota, notably, is developing a communications plan and engagement sustainability plan to ensure that its work on stakeholder engagement continues.

## Leadership Buy-In and Engagement

One important element to enhance sustainability and scalability is getting buy-in and engagement from the leadership of the service systems. A handful of States are actively working to increase buy-in and engagement at this level. Leadership engagement has been a focus area for Texas since Year Two, when the team began to

receive technical assistance to develop strategies to ensure commitment, engagement, and buy-in from the leadership on person-centered thinking, planning, and practices. This effort will continue in Year Three through a series of facilitated workshops designed to enhance the leadership's understanding of and engagement in the work of implementing and advancing person-centered practices.

## Group Technical Assistance to Support Measurement of Person-Centered Practices

Nearly all of the NCAPPS states have articulated goals related to the measurement of person-centered practices, asking “How do we know if what we’re doing is truly person-centered?” NCAPPS states have also expressed a desire to engage in shared learning with one another. To meet these needs, NCAPPS technical assistance in Year Three included an option for group technical assistance focused on measurement. Nine participating states will receive technical assistance on how to identify, apply, and use measures of person-centered practices.

The states participating in the group technical assistance are interested in finding answers to the following questions:

- Do staff have the competencies to provide person-centered support, plan facilitation, mentorship or other provider roles?
- Are people supported by state agencies achieving desired person-centered outcomes?
- Does the process and content of the individual planning process align with person-centered principles and guidelines?

And some State teams have identified additional aspects of performance as targets for measurement.

Although each State sets its own specific measurement objectives and goals, all participating teams will receive information and guidance from multiple subject matter experts with experience in performance measurement. The participating States will also have an opportunity for mutual engagement and shared learning with each other. Products of this technical assistance may include State-specific scans of measures, a compendium of measures organized by competency domains, and an updated NCAPPS scan of measures of person-centered planning.

# State Activities

## Alabama

**Lead agency:** Alabama Department of Mental Health (DMH)

**Population:** Intellectual and developmental disabilities – adults and transition aged youth

Alabama has been working on person-centered programs and transformation by rewriting its administrative code, providing training to support coordinators and their supervisors, and developing new forms to facilitate person-centered planning. In Year Three of technical assistance, Alabama is working to develop a quality metric improvement strategy and enhancing participant engagement platforms and strategies. In addition, Alabama is participating in the group TA on measurement.

## Colorado

**Lead agency:** Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing

**Population:** Older adults, intellectual and developmental disabilities, and brain injury

For Year Three of technical assistance, the Colorado team identified a goal to support enhanced adoption of safeguarding rights and protection and advocacy processes. Colorado's Protection & Advocacy system is charged with ensuring that the human rights of people with IDD are protected through oversight mechanisms, such as its Human Rights Committees. Colorado is working to expand these protections to all long-term supports and services (LTSS) populations. The Colorado team is also looking for ways to expand opportunities for self-determination statewide, beyond formal self-direction programs; this includes tangible steps to adopt a supported decision-making (SDM) framework.

## Connecticut

**Lead agency:** Connecticut Department of Aging and Disability Services

**Population:** All populations

The NCAPPS technical assistance in Connecticut began with three broad goals: 1) to develop a set of core competencies for person-centered training that will be used across LTSS and health systems, along with programs to ensure residents throughout their lifespan, and those who support them, are receiving supports and services that promote choice, inclusion and autonomy; 2) to improve participant engagement in the person-centered planning process through outreach and education; and 3) to

develop measures to assess the quality and effectiveness of the trainings in targeting the knowledge domain of the core competency areas. In Year Three of technical assistance, Connecticut is reviewing and modifying the core competencies identified in Year Two to better meet the needs of the state, working to improve participant engagement via listening sessions and an online survey to solicit participants' preferences and needs for outreach and education in regard to person-centered practices and planning, and participating in the group TA to identify and develop measures suited for assessing the effectiveness of person-centered core competency training.

## Georgia

**Lead agency:** Georgia Department of Human Services/Division of Aging Services

**Population:** All populations

During Years One and Two of technical assistance, Georgia made significant progress in establishing an operational definition of person-centered practices to be utilized across systems. In Year Three, Georgia is continuing this work by vetting, revising, and finalizing the definition. The Georgia team is also participating in the group TA to further its work on developing and implementing the indicators that will be used to measure person-centered thinking, planning and practices. Finally, Georgia is working to develop trainings that are consistent with person-centered thinking, planning and practices to be used across systems for State staff who manage programs and for field staff who interact with service users.

## Hawaii

**Lead agency:** Hawaii Department of Human Services Med-QUEST Division

**Population:** All Medicaid LTSS populations

During Years One and Two of technical assistance, the Hawaii team made progress in engaging entities with roles and responsibilities for person-centered thinking and practices. The team also made progress in establishing a core set of person-centered practice competencies for staff at multiple levels for use across populations and agencies. In Year Three, Hawaii will continue to work on stakeholder engagement, reviewing and modifying core competencies focusing on cultural competency, and finalizing and disseminating core competencies for person-centered practices. Hawaii is also participating in the group TA to begin preparing for incentivizing person-centered practices in managed care by exploring ways to measure person-centered thinking and practices.

## Idaho

**Lead agency:** Idaho Department of Health and Welfare/Division of Medicaid

**Population:** All Medicaid populations

For Year Three of technical assistance, the Idaho team will focus on dissemination and operationalization of the Department-wide definition of person-centered planning that was developed in Year One. The effort will entail introductory webinars, visioning meetings, and the development of program-specific action plans. This will enable all of the programs within the department to realize ways to operationalize the new definition within their unique context. The Idaho team is also participating in the group TA on measurement; the team is particularly interested in building mechanisms to measure outcomes from the participant-perspective.

## Kentucky

**Lead agency:** Kentucky Department for Aging and Independent Living

**Population:** Older adults, physical disability, brain injury, and No Wrong Door population

The Kentucky team is working with its stakeholders to reach a consensus on person-centered standards. This effort will support the cross-system adoption and implementation of practices that “operationalize” the agreed-upon definition of “person centeredness.” The team is also working to develop a clearinghouse of best practice resources that can be used by all agencies, organizations, and stakeholders for a variety of purposes, including capacity building, training, record keeping, and other agency processes.

## Montana

**Lead agency:** Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services Senior and Long-Term Care Division

**Population:** All Medicaid populations

The Montana team remains dedicated to expanding and building on its stakeholder engagement work from Years One and Two of technical assistance. In Year Three, the team is working to make stakeholder engagement a sustainable practice beyond NCAPPS technical assistance. The team is identifying ways to build upon the definition of person-centered planning adopted in Year One and the self-assessment work completed in Year Two to infuse more person-centered principles throughout program operations. The Montana team, which consists currently of the Senior and Long-Term Care Division, will also work toward cross-system collaboration to promote person-centered practices. Additionally, the Montana team is participating in the group TA on measurement of person-centered practices.

## North Dakota

**Lead agency:** North Dakota Department of Human Services (ND DHS)

**Population:** All populations served by DHS

The North Dakota team is pursuing five goals through NCAPPS technical assistance. The first goal focused on ensuring ND DHS executive leadership had a solid grounding in person-centered principles and a commitment to making the system person-centered. This goal was met in Year One. The second goal, which is ongoing, focuses on engaging a diverse group of service users in the system change efforts. For the third goal, the team is completing a self-assessment on person-centered practices and developing corresponding action plans for each division within ND DHS. The fourth goal involves developing recommended criteria for measurement of person-centered practices at the person-level with a focus on service user and family experience; the North Dakota team will work on this goal through the group TA. And in the fifth goal, the North Dakota team will review, select, and implement a train-the-trainer process for person-centered practices that will include the development and utilization of resources and toolkits that will guide in the implementation of person-centered practices.

## Ohio

**Lead agency:** Ohio Department of Medicaid

**Population:** Older adults, physical disabilities, brain injury, and mental health

In Year Two of technical assistance, the Ohio team focused on completing a sustainable stakeholder engagement plan to effectively gather input from a range of stakeholder groups. Efforts in Year Three will center on implementing the engagement plan and elevating the Center for Independent Living (CIL) to champion person-centered thinking and practice among the stakeholder network in Ohio. Another focus of the Ohio team's work has been on self-direction. Using the Ohio Participant Direction Overview, a product from Year Two, the Ohio team will inform the updates to training materials in Year Three to support case managers in supporting participants to access self-directed options aligned with person-centered thinking.

## Oregon

**Lead agency:** Oregon Department of Human Services/Aging and People with Disabilities

**Population:** Older adults and physical disabilities

In Year Two of technical assistance, the Oregon team developed a unified vision and definition of person-centered planning and practices to be shared across its programs.



The team also identified person-centered practices that are culturally responsive, particularly to the needs of participants who identify as tribal members. In Year Three, the team will focus on working with a primary stakeholder group of case managers and others to define more clearly how person-centered practices might be implemented. The Department of Human Services/Aging and People with Disabilities is taking a new approach in engaging with this group in the design and implementation of person-centered practices and expects that it will improve the applicability of person-centered practices across the system.

## Pennsylvania

**Lead agency:** Pennsylvania Department of Aging/Aging and Disability Resource Office

**Population:** ADRC users (all populations) and MLTSS populations

In Year Two of technical assistance, the Pennsylvania team focused on completing the review of the person-centered documentation tool that is used by counselors during the person-centered counseling process. In Year Three, the team will explore survey tools to gather information from participants of the person-centered process to identify operational, administrative and quality issues; measure consumer satisfaction; and improve stakeholder engagement. In addition, they will develop a plan to create a Person-Centered Counseling Certification and Competency Program for current and future counselors. The Pennsylvania team will also leverage opportunities to utilize the Advisory Group that was assembled to oversee recent initiatives of the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC), which is made up of stakeholders across multiple levels.

## Texas

**Lead agency:** Medicaid and CHIP/Policy and Program Development/Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC)

**Population:** All populations served by HHSC

The Texas team's first goal involves convening a diverse Steering Committee of stakeholders, including people with lived experience and families, to oversee and support the State's person-centered practices initiatives. In Year Two of technical assistance, the Texas team received technical assistance with developing a strategy for ensuring HHSC leadership understanding, buy-in, and commitment to person-centered thinking, planning, and practice. These efforts will continue in Year Three as a series of leadership engagements. A third area of focus for the team during Year Three is operationalizing staff competencies and quality measures necessary for the expansion of person-centered thinking, planning, and practices across the system. This work will be accomplished by gathering detailed information on how person-centered practices are supported from each HHSC division and department and

compiling this information into a document that identifies strengths and gaps to facilitate cross-fertilization of learning and sharing of resources. The subject matter experts will also develop materials that map staff competencies and quality measures onto existing and needed HHSC practices (tools, trainings, policies, procedures, quality initiatives) to support ongoing HHSC actions to enhance person-centered practices beyond this TA engagement.

## Utah

**Lead agency:** Utah Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD)

**Population:** Physical disabilities, brain injury, intellectual and developmental disabilities

The Utah DSPD is pursuing three goals in its third year of NCAPPS technical assistance. The first goal, which has been a focus of all three years, is to increase service user engagement with person-centered practices through the use of engagement strategies, the use of an Asset Map (completed in Year Two of technical assistance), and by leveraging existing and new partnerships. As part of this goal, DSPD will continue to produce and disseminate informational materials to all stakeholders through the DSPD website, community education events, and other communication methods. The second goal supports revision of the DSPD's Person-Centered Support Planning standards and procedures. Work on Goal 2 includes further refinement of a guidance document for support coordinators and embedding Charting the LifeCourse Nexus tools and processes into the DSPD's electronic record for digital use. The third goal is a new endeavor centered around the Utah team's participation in NCAPPS Group TA. DSPD hopes to develop and implement a protocol to measure service user and family experience of the Person-Centered Support Planning process. Service users and families will be engaged to support work on Goals 2 and 3 using strategies and resources developed through work on Goal 1.

## Virginia

**Lead agency:** Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services

**Population:** No Wrong Door (NWD) population

In Year Three of technical assistance, Virginia will continue its work to ensure consistency in a person-centered NWD experience. NWD will collaborate with its partners to create a journey map aimed at aligning its NWD system with person-centered thinking and practices, including its NWD platform and all accompanying tools. Another goal for Year Three is to enhance stakeholder engagement by convening an Insight Panel to participate in routine outreach regarding the NWD platform. This will involve Stakeholder mapping, a plan, and technical assistance.

## About NCAPPS

The National Center on Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems (NCAPPS) is an initiative from the Administration for Community Living and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to help States, Tribes, and Territories implement person-centered practices. It is administered by the Human Services Research Institute (HSRI) and overseen by a group of national experts with lived experience (people with personal, first-hand experience of using long-term services and supports).

NCAPPS partners with a host of national associations to deliver knowledgeable and targeted technical assistance.

You can find us at <https://ncapps.acl.gov>

