

AARP Long-Term Care Principles

The following principles for long-term services and supports (LTSS) should be used to guide the county's efforts to bring about a quality-long term care system that meets the needs and preferences of consumers.

- The design and delivery of the long-term care system should promote consumer independence, choice, dignity, quality, and privacy.
- Consumers should have access to a comprehensive range of long-term services and supports (LTSS). These should include in-home assistance, community services, a full range of supportive housing options, institutional care, rehabilitative services, as well as assistive devices and home modifications.
- Services should be provided in the most integrated setting appropriate and should enhance the ability of people of all ages and incomes to participate as fully as possible in all aspects of community living.
- The county should recognize and support consumer choice to the maximum extent possible. Consumers should have the right to decide on and direct the LTSS they receive, unless they are unable to do so.
- Consumers should receive unbiased information about their range of options and assistance in accessing them through a single point of entry where financial and functional eligibility for services can be determined in a timely manner.
- Eligibility for services should be based on a person's physical and cognitive or other mental functioning and on the types of assistance a person needs. Uniform assessments should determine whether a person meets the eligibility criteria for a program and what type and level of services a person requires.
- Public LTSS should support families and friends who care for their loved ones. This assistance should include assessment of the caregiver's own needs, respite care, adult day services, and programs that help individuals pay relatives and friends who provide care.
- A re-designed long-term care system should consider how best to use the skills and talents of volunteers to complement the efforts of formal and informal caregivers.
- Systems for quality oversight and enforcement of quality of care standards for all settings should be built and strengthened. Furthermore, management systems for effective administration and oversight must be in place.
- The design of the long-term care system should embrace new models of LTSS that emphasize resident-centered care, a home environment, a positive workplace culture, and opportunities for resident involvement in the community.
- The rights of consumers receiving LTSS should be protected. These rights include the right to timely information concerning care, including access to their medical records; the right to meet with advocates and express grievances without fear of reprisal; the right to keep and secure personal possessions, and the right to privacy.
- Coordination should be improved among LTSS programs and between the health and LTSS systems for people who need services from both.