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More than 300 People Move from Long-Term Care Facilities to Homes, Thanks to HOME Choice Program

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) has announced that more than 300 people who once lived in long-term care facilities have moved to home settings, thanks to a one-year-old program called **HOME Choice (Helping Ohioans Move, Expanding Choice)**.

“HOME Choice has made a positive, life-changing difference in the lives of Ohioans who would otherwise have had no choice but to remain in long-term care facilities,” said ODJFS Director Douglas Lumpkin. “It also is helping to build partnerships with the public housing authorities and other agencies and service providers to overcome a common obstacle to independent living: finding accessible, affordable housing.”

The HOME Choice project is funded by a federal grant from the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. This “Money Follows the Person” demonstration grant provides up to \$100 million in matching funds over five years to allow elderly or disabled individuals who live in long-term care facilities to relocate to home and community-based settings. In addition, the program will help Ohio begin balancing its long-term services and supports systems by allowing greater choice, flexibility and transparency.

HOME Choice relocates Medicaid consumers who have lived for at least six months in nursing facilities, intermediate care facilities for people with developmental disabilities, hospitals or residential treatment facilities for children. The project also pays for some services not funded by Medicaid, to facilitate a successful transition. This can include help finding housing, help developing independent living skills or help coordinating benefits.

In creating the program, ODJFS sought input from consumer advocates, service providers and state agencies, including the Ohio departments of Developmental Disabilities, Aging, Mental Health, and Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services. ODJFS also established partnerships with Ohio’s public housing agencies, the Ohio Housing Finance Agency and the Ohio Department of Development. Stakeholders continue to assist ODJFS with the project’s implementation.

More information about HOME Choice, as well as success stories, can be found at <http://jfs.ohio.gov/OHP/consumers/homechoice.stm>.