

ICF Transitions

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is OPWDD closing and converting ICFs?

OPWDD is committed to ensuring that all individuals are supported so that personal goals can be achieved in the most integrated and person-centered manner as possible. For this reason, OPWDD is transforming its service system by offering residents of Developmental Centers, Intermediate Care Facilities (ICFs), and nursing homes the chance to be supported in integrated community-based settings (such as in group homes including Individual Residential Alternatives (IRAs), Family Care homes, family homes and supportive apartments). Not everyone, however, who currently resides in an ICF will move to a different location. OPWDD is committed to making sure all people – whether they move or remain in the same location - will continue to have their needs met. This means that individuals will receive new kinds of supports in community settings: clinical, medical and behavioral supports and services that will allow greater community integration and quality of life.

Does OPWDD have plans to close all ICFs?

No. OPWDD's ICF Transition Plan (contained in OPWDD's Transformation Agreement with CMS), proposes to reduce reliance on ICFs so that by October 1, 2018, there will be only 150 people in institutional campus settings such as Developmental Centers and 456 children in ICFs known as Children's Residential Projects (CRPs). As part of this transition, OPWDD expects that some ICFs will be able to convert to IRAs by changing how each person plans for and receives person-centered Home and Community Based Services. However, any ICF where more than 14 people live will need to downsize and convert to smaller IRAs or offer opportunities for people to move to other community settings.

What happens when an individual wants a less restrictive environment or something different, but the family does not?

An individual's choice must be respected. However, the service provider should work with the family and person to pinpoint concerns and attempt to identify supports that address the family's concerns.

What is the process if the move to a community setting doesn't work out? Can the person go back to the ICF?

OPWDD will review all new placements on a case-by case basis to ensure that the new setting meets the individual's needs. In each instance, the service provider will work with the individual and his/her advocate(s) as well as the OPWDD Regional Office (if the person is served by a voluntary service provider) or the OPWDD State Operations Office (if the person is served by the DDSOO) to determine the best plan for the person. The person-centered planning process is designed to be directed by the individual and his/her advocates and result in an Individualized Service Plan that will meet all of the individual's needs. If an individual moves to a setting where needs are not being met, the individual

may work with his or her Medicaid Service Coordinator and OPWDD's Front Door staff to identify another community-based setting that will better meet his or her needs.

If a person wants to move from an ICF to an IRA, will money be available to meet the needs of the person in the community setting?

Yes. OPWDD is developing funding solutions to ensure that provider agencies are able to fully support the individual transitioning from an ICF.

The protections currently in place for an individual with Prader Willi syndrome at the ICF would not be allowed in an IRA (securing food in an area). Will an individual with Prader Willi syndrome lose ICF placement?

Before a person moves into a new home setting, the person-centered planning process which includes the individual, his or her family members and advocates, the Medicaid Service Coordinator, as well as the ICF discharge planner will evaluate all of the person's strengths and needs in order to determine what kinds of supports are needed in a new home setting. If an existing ICF changes to an IRA, agencies will continue to provide the individuals living in that IRA the protections and safeguards they need.

Do all individuals leaving ICFs need to move to an IRA of four people or less?

No. OPWDD is participating in New York State's Money Follows the Person Demonstration (MFP), which is one part of OPWDD's larger system change and ICF transitions plan. Some people who leave ICFs will move into MFP-qualifying settings, and others will not. The only kind of IRA that is an MFP-qualifying community setting is one in which four or fewer unrelated people live. However, it is **not** required that all individuals moving from ICFs into IRAs move into four-person or smaller IRAs.

What will happen to ICFs that support medically frail individuals? Many of these people cannot live in a less restrictive setting. Can a different model be considered for those high needs individuals outside of an ICF?

Part of the OPWDD transformation is the agency's efforts to increase its ability to support individuals with behavioral and medical needs in community settings. In certain community-based settings throughout New York State, providers are already successfully supporting individuals with extensive medical needs.

How will staffing within the community-settings ensure that people are integrated, that they are getting the supports they need and that they are participating in the community?

Working together, the individual, his/her family members or advocates, the Regional Office, and the service provider will figure out what services are needed to successfully support the individual in the new community home setting. OPWDD's Front Door staff will review all plans for individuals to transition from ICF to HCBS Waiver services to make sure they are person-centered and provide community involvement. A centralized review process to ensure Person Centered Practices are utilized for individuals who are part of conversion proposals is in place as well. Further, OPWDD has established a revenue neutral policy for funding providers' conversions of ICFs to Individualized Residential Alternatives (IRAs) to

ensure continued funding for necessary clinical and support staff. OPWDD is working on development of funding support for ICFs that will downsize and/or close. OPWDD is also studying a new Coordinated Assessment System (CAS) tool, which will eventually be used to assess each person's needs for supports and services and to figure out how much money each person needs.

What is the funding difference between Money Follows the Person (MFP) and non-MFP individuals?

There is no difference in the level of funding that is provided to meet the needs of individuals who are MFP participants and those who are not. Each person will take part in the creation of an Individualized Service Plan (ISP) that will list the person's needs for support, desired personal goals and the services and supports he or she will receive to meet those needs and goals. New York State, however, will receive additional federal funding based on the number of people who take part in MFP. These funds are provided by the federal government for the purpose of improving the state service system so that community-based supports can be available for more people receiving long-term services.

How will needed building changes be funded for individuals who want to move into a one- or two-bed apartment?

Depending on the individual's request, waiver services may provide helpful equipment or pay for needed changes to their homes. Community Transition Services, a new waiver service that became available 10/1/14, also allows for one-time expenses associated with household set-up for people who are moving from a developmental center, ICF/IID or any community-based, provider-operated living arrangement to a private residence in the community where the person is directly responsible for his or her own living expenses. Providers should work with OPWDD's Regional Office to make sure the person has all the services he/she needs to succeed.

What should a provider do when an individual expresses interest in moving to a more integrated community setting?

The provider should meet with the individual and his/her advocate or family member to discuss what kinds of community services and supports might work for the individual. This discussion should focus on what the individual would like to experience and begin to identify supports that would be necessary to make that possible. If the provider is not going to convert that individual's ICF to an IRA, the provider should contact the DDRO to begin the process of planning for the desired community-based supports and transition. If the provider plans to convert the ICF to an IRA, the provider should notify the DDRO to assist with the person-centered planning for the individual. Comprehensive guidance on the ICF conversion processes can be found on the OPWDD website at:

http://www.opwdd.ny.gov/transformation-agreement/mfp/ICF_Transitions

If a provider has opportunities available in their existing homes, how can the provider find out who has expressed interest in moving?

OPWDD has established a clear process to manage residential opportunities through which agencies will be notified of individuals who are seeking a community residential setting.