

# Medicaid

## What is Medicaid?

Medicaid is a program that gives health care and other help to people in the United States who need it. The people who use it are children, pregnant women, adults, seniors, and people with disabilities.

- Medicaid helps more than 70 million people in the U.S.
- The federal (United States) government and states work together to run Medicaid.
  - The U.S. makes rules for Medicaid and the states run the program.
  - The states also give money to run Medicaid, and the U.S. matches the money put in by the states.



## Why is Medicaid important to the disability community?

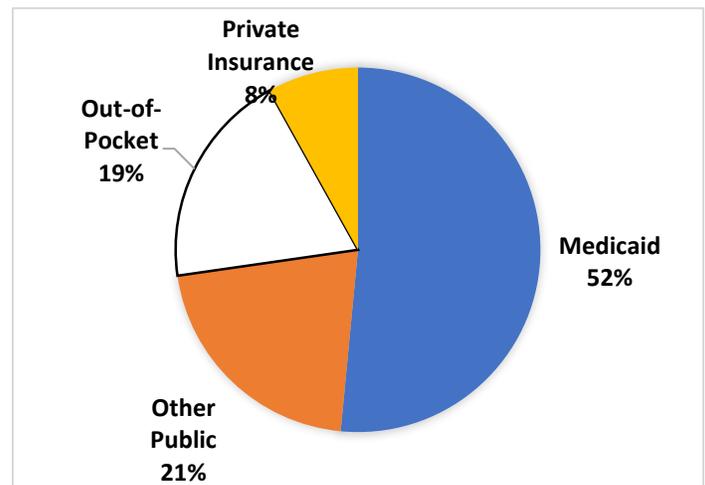
Medicaid gives health care and other important services to people with disabilities. Many people with disabilities need this help from Medicaid to be healthy and live on their own. Medicaid covers over 10 million people with disabilities.

## What are Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) and how do they connect with Medicaid?

Long-term services and supports (LTSS) are services that help a person live life each day. A person may need this extra help for daily living, like eating, bathing, dressing, and working.

- This support might be staff to help people with disabilities do daily tasks.
- LTSS might be equipment like lifts or a wheelchair ramp.
- LTSS could also be supportive adaptations (changes to help a person get through his or her daily routine, like a wheelchair ramp or a speaking tool).

These supports are not usually covered through private insurance and are too costly for most people to afford on their own. Paying on your own is often called “out-of-pocket.” Medicaid is the major – sometimes the only – funding for long-term supports and services. People get these services in nursing homes, other care settings, and in the community.



## How else does Medicaid support people with disabilities?

Many children with disabilities rely on Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). IEPs are plans that talk about the ways a child with disabilities can get the help he or she needs at school. IEPs often include services such as physical and speech therapy. Medicaid can pay for therapy for people with disabilities. So, some schools use Medicaid to cover those range of services.

This document was prepared by the Association of University Centers on Disabilities.

For more information, visit [www.aucd.org](http://www.aucd.org), or contact Policy Director Rylin Rodgers at [rrodgers@aucd.org](mailto:rrodgers@aucd.org).

Some states offer Medicaid Buy-In programs that let people with disabilities keep their health care while working. People with disabilities often need help getting health care if they earn above the regular Medicaid income limits. Before the Affordable Care Act (ACA) health care law, Medicaid was the only insurance program that covered health care for adults with disabilities.

### Who makes decisions about Medicaid?

- The House Energy and Commerce Committee
- The Senate Finance Committee
- The Senate Health, Disability, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee

These committees hear and review changes to Medicaid before **all members** of Congress vote on those changes.

### How can Congress ensure that Medicaid works for people with disabilities?

Every member of Congress represents people with disabilities in their area. People with disabilities and their families vote, so their ideas matter. Many of these people with disabilities and the systems that serve them rely on Medicaid for help.

- Congress must make sure people with disabilities can get the health care and long-term supports and services they need.
- Congress should also act to get rid of waiting lists for LTSS in every state. Some states have waiting lists with thousands of people with disabilities on them, and people wait a very long time to get the help they need.
- Congress should work to make sure all people with disabilities have the right to live in their own homes near people who care about them.



This document was prepared by the Association of University Centers on Disabilities. For more information, visit [www.aucd.org](http://www.aucd.org), or contact Policy Director Rylin Rodgers at [rrodgers@aucd.org](mailto:rrodgers@aucd.org).