

# Money Follows the Person Medicaid Demonstration Program: Helping People Move Back Home

## MFP HELPS WOMAN WITH SPINAL CORD INJURY MOVE HOME AND RETURN TO WORK.



*"It's [MFP] the biggest blessing and the biggest miracle I could have."*

– Cathy,  
Lynnwood, Washington

Prior to a porch fall that severed her spinal cord, Cathy, 53, was living at home with her family and working full-time for an airline company and part-time in real estate. Everything changed after her fall. During a lengthy hospital stay, Cathy qualified for Medicaid and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) benefits based on her disability and work history. Without Cathy's income, her family lost their home to foreclosure, and Cathy's only option was the nursing home. In the nursing home, Cathy experienced repeated health problems and was anxious for the opportunity to be around people her own age.

Washington's Money Follows the Person (MFP) program, a Medicaid initiative, is called Roads to Community Living (RCL). RCL afforded Cathy the chance to regain her independence and move to a home of her own. RCL helped Cathy locate an apartment and arrange for home modifications such as a modified bathroom sink and easy-to-use doorknobs. Medicaid also provided her with a power wheelchair, a shower chair, 10 hours of personal care services a day, and emergency back-up care services. It took Cathy about five months to transition from the nursing home to her apartment mainly because she wanted to personally select the best caregivers to meet her needs.

Two years after her accident, Cathy says she is back to being herself again. She works from home on the computer for a former employer in their disability department. She also volunteers at local hospitals educating others with spinal cord injuries about their options for community living. Her health is steady, and she enjoys being able to direct her own care. Her future goals are to drive again, to travel with her adult children, and to continue helping others in situations like hers.

## MFP IS A LIFESAVER FOR A CANCER SURVIVOR IN AN EMERGENCY SITUATION.



*"I owe my life to [MFP]."*

– Debra,  
Yakima, Washington

One day Debra, 62, went to the hospital for a biopsy, and the next thing she remembers is waking up without a voice. Her doctors diagnosed her with throat cancer and immediately removed her larynx and implanted a permanent tracheostomy. Following her hospital stay, Debra ended up in a nursing home where she lived for almost a year until she was better able to manage her chronic lung condition and the challenges of overcoming communication barriers. Due to her disability, Debra is dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid and receives SSDI benefits.

Debra was able to move into an apartment with the help of RCL. Her RCL community choice guide helped her qualify for a housing voucher, and RCL covered her security deposit and part of the first month's rent. She receives 25 hours of personal care services a week to help with shopping and transportation needs, and, most important, for help communicating with health care providers. She receives home health services, lifeline, and durable medical equipment related to her 24-hour oxygen needs.

For her cancer treatment, Debra travels 150 miles to Seattle. RCL covers her transportation and pays for her choice guide to accompany her. On a recent return trip, there was an avalanche in the Snoqualmie Pass, and all traffic was stopped. Debra's choice guide contacted local emergency services to bring oxygen and attend to Debra's medical needs during the seven-hour wait for the road to clear. Debra believes her choice guide saved her life because she would have run out of oxygen. Despite facing many challenges, Debra remains cheerful and positive. She is very appreciative of RCL and believes her quality of life has gone up "700%" since transitioning out of the nursing home.

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## MEDICAID HELPS DUAL ELIGIBLE BENEFICIARY FIGHT GENETIC DISORDER AND MANAGE MULTIPLE CHRONIC CONDITIONS WHILE LIVING AT HOME.



*“He [Royce] would have died in the nursing home he was so depressed. Medicaid saved my family.”*

– Royce’s wife Trudi,  
Alma, Michigan

Royce, 61, suffers from a disabling genetic disorder called Von Hippel-Lindau Disease (VHL), characterized by the abnormal growth of tumors in certain parts of the body. Royce was diagnosed with VHL at age 30, and within ten years he had to leave his jobs as a cattle farmer and truck driver. Royce has a multitude of health issues including blindness, hearing loss, heart disease, diabetes, and arthritis. Based on his work history and his disability, Royce qualified for Medicare and SSDI benefits, and later became eligible for Medicaid when he entered a nursing home following hip replacement surgery. A caseworker at the nursing home explained MFP to Royce and his family, and Royce decided to move back home, a process he says was safe and easy.

Despite his constant pain, Royce says living at home is much richer than life in the nursing home where boredom was his biggest complaint. Living at home for over a year now, Royce relies on a wheelchair to get around and nine hours a day of personal care services. He takes 14 prescription drugs daily. Because Royce needed constant care and support, his wife Trudi left her job, and now she stays home to be Royce’s caregiver and help him stay on top of all of his health care needs. Royce and Trudi believe that transportation assistance, an increase in the maximum number of therapy visits per year, and paid family caregiver services would improve the MFP program, but overall they are pleased and very grateful to Medicaid. Their hope for the future is to stay in the home that they built together (with help from Habitat for Humanity). After losing his 30-year old son to VHL earlier this year, Royce knows the future holds many uncertainties, yet he remains optimistic. His goal is to stand with his daughter at her upcoming wedding, surrounded by family and friends.

## MEDICAID HELPS FATHER WITH SPINAL CORD INJURY AS HE WAITS TO QUALIFY FOR MEDICARE.



*“I would be living on the streets without Medicaid.”*

– Bobby,  
Midland, Michigan

Bobby, 47, was returning home from a 12-hour work shift early one morning when he slipped on his deck and injured his spinal cord. Uninsured at the time, he sought treatment in an emergency room and was admitted to the hospital for about three months. Afterwards, he entered a rehabilitation center/nursing home, where he learned to feed and dress himself again. Bobby qualified for Medicaid during his hospital stay, but was told he would have to wait two years before qualifying for Medicare. Bobby thought he would never go home again given his inability to walk, memory loss, and comprehension problems.

Through the MFP program, Bobby moved home and is able to have all of his health care needs met regularly. He qualifies for 40 hours of personal care services a week, and has multiple personal care attendants, including his son, who helps with general hygiene tasks and household chores. Bobby takes 16 prescription drugs daily to help with nerve damage and uses a wheelchair to get around. He pays a nominal co-pay for his drugs. Without Medicaid, his drugs would be unaffordable as one drug alone costs over \$900 a month. He also received physical and occupational therapy until recently when he reached his maximum number of visits for the year. Bobby says his biggest challenges in living at home are paying the bills and getting food on the table, and he says his wife is his daily inspiration to live. He spends time each day trying to regain his strength to stand, and he hopes to walk again in the near future.

This publication (#8415) is available on the Kaiser Family Foundation’s website at [www.kff.org](http://www.kff.org).

The Money Follows the Person (MFP) demonstration program is a Medicaid initiative designed to shift Medicaid long-term care spending from institutional care to home and community-based services. MFP was authorized in the Deficit Reduction Act of 2005 and then extended in the Affordable Care Act. For every eligible Medicaid beneficiary who transitions from an institution to the community, the MFP program provides to participating states 365 days of enhanced federal funding match on qualified services. Currently, 46 states have received federal MFP demonstration funding. For more information about MFP see: Money Follows the Person: A 2012 Survey of Transitions, Services and Costs, KCMU, February 2013, available at: <http://www.kff.org/medicaid/8142.cfm>.