

# The Economic Case for HCBS in Georgia

Talking points for sharing how HCBS is good for Georgia communities, economies, and citizens

## Key Messages for Policymakers

*In Georgia, HCBS are not just a social service, they support our economic infrastructure by creating jobs, stabilizing families, and reducing reliance on higher costing alternatives (such as institutions, crisis centers, and prisons) in the long run.*

## The Bottom-Line

*Expanding HCBS in GA means serving more people at an average lower per-person cost. When people get HCBS they need, they tend to avoid more expensive settings and services, including Medicaid LTSS settings like institutions and crisis centers, and non-Medicaid settings that the state relies on when people lack needed supports, like ERs, prisons, and more. Expanding HCBS by opening up more waiver spots and protecting and increasing budgets for Medicaid is fiscally responsible, ensures more people with disabilities and their loved ones stay in the workforce, and results in better outcomes for Georgia communities.*

## HCBS impact on Georgia

- **For Georgia's healthcare system:** HCBS ensure needed supports that family members and natural caregivers often otherwise provide. This results in HCBS reducing caregiver burnout and avoid preventable health crises, lowering system-wide costs.
- **For equity in Georgia:** Having a disability comes with higher medical and caregiving costs. HCBS help families save on those costs, helping them be more financially stable.
- **For Georgia's budget:** HCBS address unmet need without creating uncontrolled Medicaid spending.



**This document shares evidence-based talking points from national and GA data to help make an economic case for HCBS**

*Advocates can use this information during Legislative Days to highlight the importance of decreasing the HCBS planning list.*

HCBS Impact	How do HCBS Deliver Results?	What it means for Georgia?
<p>HCBS reduces thousands in annual costs for families</p> 	<p>Research shows that lack of HCBS shifts thousands of dollars per year in caregiving costs onto families through unpaid care and out-of-pocket expenses.<sup>12</sup></p>	<p>Expanding HCBS reduces financial pressure on Georgia families, lowering out-of-pocket caregiving costs and helping families remain economically stable</p>
<p>HCBS expansion is fiscally responsible Medicaid policy</p> 	<p>Research and Medicaid data shows that gradually expanding HCBS can allow Georgia to serve more people while <b>reducing reliance on expensive institutional supports and decreasing long-term Medicaid LTSS spending by up to \$280M over ten years<sup>3</sup></b></p>	<p>Investing gradually and strategically in HCBS, rather than relying on institutional services, such as nursing homes and institutions, keeps Medicaid costs lower</p>
<p>Delaying HCBS increases state costs</p> 	<p>Research shows that <b>reducing HCBS spending by just 1 percentage point in Georgia, per year, increases LTSS costs by \$28.5M per year</b> leading to more reliance on expensive institutional and emergency or crisis care.<sup>2</sup></p>	<p>Delaying HCBS funding would be fiscally harmful for Georgia, pushing people into ERs, crisis centers, and jails which costs the system more money increasing Medicaid spending over time.</p>
<p>HCBS delivers greater economic benefits for underserved families</p> 	<p>Black caregivers spend <b>34% of their income and Hispanic/Latinx caregivers 47% of their income</b> on caregiving expenses when supports are inadequate.</p>	<p>Expanding HCBS delivers economic benefits to historically underserved families. Expanding HCBS is a concrete way to advance economic equity and racial equity in the state.</p>

<sup>1</sup> AARP <https://www.aarp.org/pri/topics/ltss/family-caregiving/family-caregivers-cost-survey/>

<sup>2</sup> Kaiser Family Foundation [https://www.kff.org/health-costs/the-affordability-of-long-term-care-and-support-services/#:~:text=The%20overwhelming%20majority%20of%20adults,nurse%20or%20aide%20\(83%25\).](https://www.kff.org/health-costs/the-affordability-of-long-term-care-and-support-services/#:~:text=The%20overwhelming%20majority%20of%20adults,nurse%20or%20aide%20(83%25).)

<sup>3</sup> Health Affairs <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/22665831/>