



May 2022

Dear Friends of UCP Heartland,

I hope everyone is well, healthy, and safe.

Over the past couple of months, UCP Heartland has been in the midst of creating the Fiscal Year 2023 budget, which begins on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Every year this is a task that seems to get more complicated due to funding uncertainties, growth, workforce issues, predicting the future, and the current environment particularly coming out of a public health crisis. UCP Heartland is currently in draft #3 and there are positive trends up to this point due to the extraordinary efforts of the Missouri Association of Rehabilitation Facilities (MARF), providers like UCP Heartland, our constituents, Department of Mental Health administration, and the Missouri Legislator, to provide a much-needed reimbursement increase to providers. Now it is in the hands of the Governor to act on the budget, which we are confident this will happen. As we are navigating through this budget process, we are excited about being able to invest in our employees, as the work each of them do daily to make our mission a reality, is most deserving.

We are grateful, but a continued priority will be to make certain the funding increases are maintained in July 2023 and moving forward, despite the State of Missouri receiving a temporary increase through the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP).

This leads me to my next important point about information coming out of our partners at ANCOR (American Network of Community Options and Resources), which lead national advocacy efforts in concert with providers. They have launched a campaign called #AllInForHCBS.

As you know, last summer the administration announced that a historic investment in the Medicaid Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) program would be part of the Build Back Better agenda. Ever since, it has been ANCOR and providers top priority to ensure that this HCBS investment is signed into law.

For nearly a year now, the road to getting this legislation passed has taken no shortage of twists and turns. During this time, ANCOR has taken every avenue to make the case to Congress for why community-based I/DD service providers desperately need this long-overdue investment.

According to ANCOR, even though 2021 ended with Congress at a stalemate, the Senate can still advance their legislative priorities and it is up to advocacy efforts to ensure that funding for HCBS is included.

Why is this important and specifically now? First, Medicaid and HCBS funding is not always top priority, which has resulted in year after year of very little to NO reimbursement increases, excluding this year in Missouri. At the same time, we're seeing heightened scrutiny, increased regulations, more demand for community services from individuals and families, and low wages for direct care employees who are vital to high quality supports provided. Add on the temporary increase through FMAP as mentioned above and making sure this year's reimbursement increases are maintained moving forward. Hence, why we need this consistent follow-up money through the investment of HCBS to happen, in order to have long-term stability in our funding system.

Below is more information on the ANCOR campaign around HCBS that will provide you resources and details on this important topic and how you can participate if you would like. Since last week and the start of this campaign, advocates have collectively sent over 2,200 messages to the Senate. We are confident and hopeful this continues over the next few weeks.

**Now is the time to LEARN, SHARE and TAKE ACTION:**

1. **LEARN** more about the importance of this legislation and the power of your advocacy by [watching this short video](#).
2. **SHARE** this message with your colleagues, friends, family members and everyone else you can think of with our easy-to-use [social media toolkit](#).
3. **TAKE ACTION** using our [one-click advocacy tool](#)—today and every day over the next five weeks—to tell your Senators that our services need their support.

If you have questions or want to learn more about UCP Heartland, please don't hesitate to reach out. As always, thank you for your support.

Sincerely,  
Clint