

# Oregon Project Independence – Medicaid



## Overview:

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services approved the expansion of the state-funded Oregon Project Independence (OPI) program for individuals who need in-home services and supports. With the approval, the ODHS Office of Aging and People with Disabilities (APD) can launch a new version of its OPI program that will be supported with Medicaid funds. This new option is called Oregon Project Independence – Medicaid (OPI-M).

## Why is this program needed?

More than 875,000 Oregonians are age 65 and older. By 2030, this population is projected to increase by 12 percent to nearly one million older adults. Those age 85 and older, and most at risk of needing Medicaid long-term care services and supports, are estimated to increase by 60 percent in the next 10 years, according to the Oregon Office of Economic Analysis from approximately 85,000 today to more than 135,000 in 2033.

## How many people will be served by OPI-M?

The program is estimated to be able to serve up to 4,500 Oregonians annually, up from about 1,850 currently served through state-funded Oregon Project Independence.

## Why did Oregon need CMS approval for this program?

Section 1115 of the Social Security Act gives the Secretary of Health and Human Services authority to approve experimental, pilot or demonstration projects that promote the objectives of the Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) programs. Under this authority, the Secretary may waive certain provisions of the Medicaid law to give states additional flexibility to design and improve their programs.

Oregon's application for this expansion received support from community members during the public comment period in late 2021. In its waiver approval letter, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services noted "Overall, the comments indicated strong support for the demonstration... Commenters emphasized that the demonstration will provide services beyond what the state funded program can offer due to limited funding. Lastly, commenters asserted that the demonstration will help prolong qualifying individuals' independence by delivering care that can be received in-home rather than in an institutional setting."

## How long will Oregon have approval for the demonstration?

The program will run for five years from 2024 through 2029.