



## Home and Community Based Services Are Cost Saving

The Council commends and appreciates the following developments regarding funding for Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) and other areas important to Alaskans with developmental disabilities.

- **Proposed \$120 million increment to maintain services to eligible Medicaid recipients and make timely payments to providers for serving this population:** The \$120 million is critical in keeping our provider agencies in business and maintaining essential competitive services to our most vulnerable populations.
- **Restoration of Adult Preventative Dental:** We thank the Administration for restoring Adult Preventative Dental care. This beneficial service impacts many people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) who need this preventative care to remain healthy and avoid painful, complex, and very expensive emergency dental care.
- **Maintaining the current payment rates for Home and Community-Based Waiver Services:** We are grateful for HCBS provider rates being maintained at the old amount as this is imperative for continuing to provide vital supports for Alaskans with I/DD to live independently in their own communities. This was especially important for rural Alaska providers and small providers where concerns expressed included: providers not being able to offer certain services or even worse, some provider agencies closing their doors.
- **Restoring Adult Public Assistance payments:** We appreciate that the Administration has restored full Adult Public Assistance payments. While we understand the need to control costs, cuts in this area are likely to disproportionately harm the disability community.
- **Governor's proposed FY21 budget:** We are grateful that there were no substantial cuts to HCBS noted. The Council also appreciates the constraints of the current budgetary environment. It's important to note that any substantial cuts to services and supplies for Alaskans with disabilities would be disproportionately harmful, forcing an ever-increasing number of our community into institutional care outside at far higher cost to the state, or even institutionalizing our members in their own home due to lack of services.

**HCBS is not an option for Alaskans who experience intellectual and/or developmental disabilities, it is imperative - - of life and death importance.** By far, for most individuals with significant I/DDs, the only way that they can live a meaningful and productive life is through home-and community based supports. HCBS provide the ability to be fully included within their communities including being employed – everything it takes to lead a meaningful life. Without HCBS, many if not most, Alaskans with significant I/DDs would be forced to be institutionalized out of state and taken away from their home communities. Such institutional care would be at a far higher cost than HCBS. HCBS are long term supports and services and critical for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) oftentimes across their lifespan. Individuals with I/DD also rely heavily on early intervention services, special education services, regular Medicaid for healthcare, as well as services at the cross-section of disability and aging.

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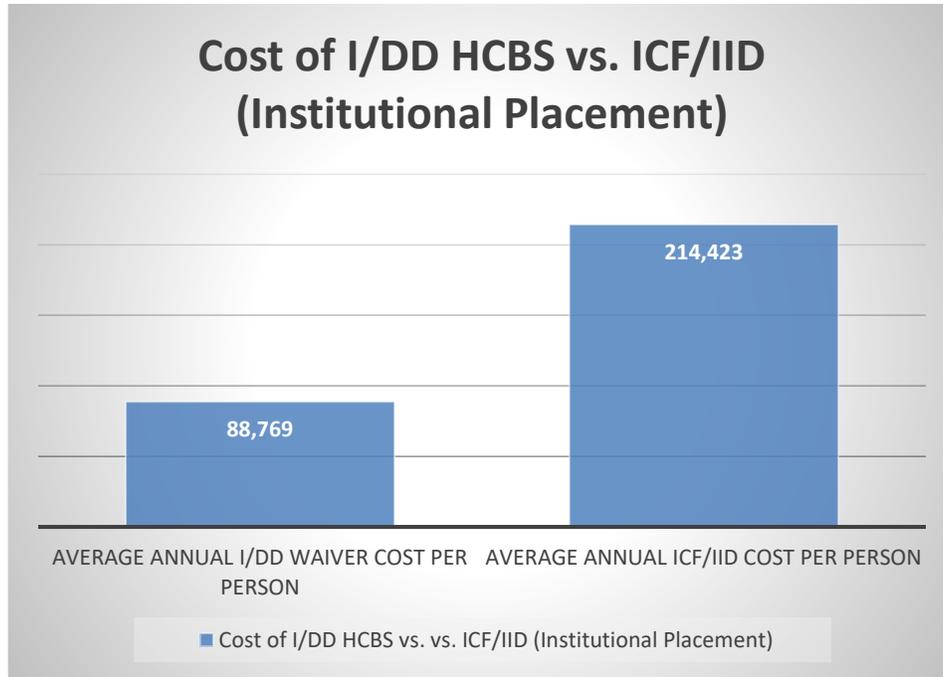
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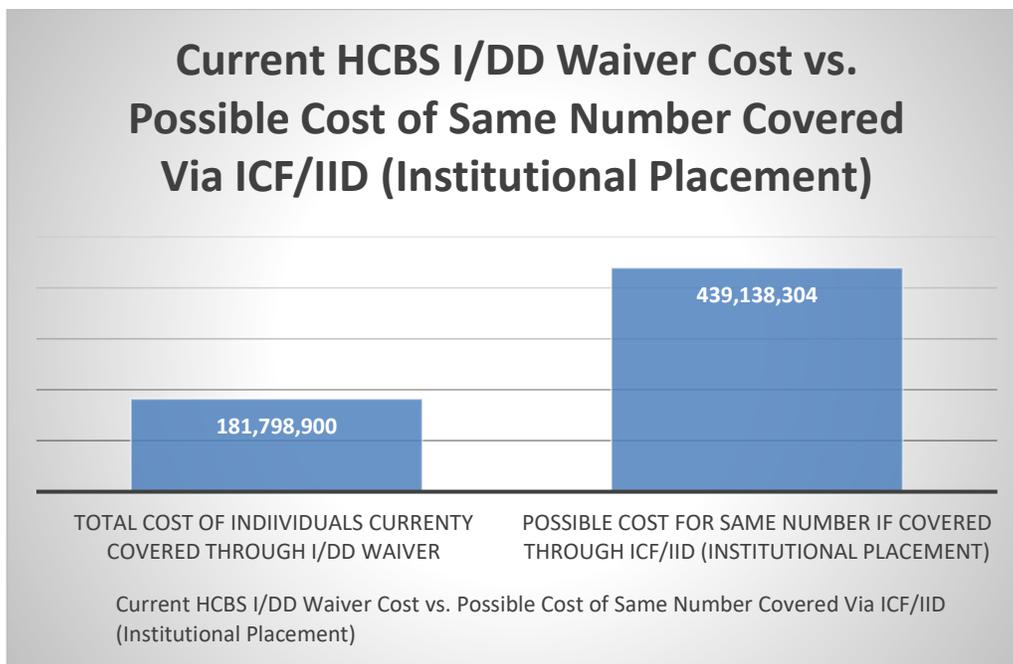


**HCBS allow Alaskans with disabilities to avoid institutional care, remaining in their home community pursuing as much independence as possible, at the least cost to the State.**

- Currently, 2,048 individuals receive HCBS I/DD waiver services at an average cost of \$88,769 per waiver, at a total cost of just under \$182 million.



- If these 2,048 individuals were in an institution (ICF/IID), at an average cost of \$214,423 per person annually, the total cost for serving these individuals could be around \$439 million.



\*Data Source for Graphs: State of Alaska Automated Budget System, Final Auth19 report, Harmony and COGNOS