

DEINSTITUTIONALIZATION

The federal regulations that define “relocation from a nursing home or institution” describe the service we in Kansas have termed “deinstitutionalization”.

Deinstitutionalization is moving into a community-based setting from a nursing home or other institutional setting. It is unlike the community-based living life area, which includes any consumer regardless of his/her living situation prior to receiving independent living services. Kansas has programs and services available to assist with the transition. According to the Kansas Department on Aging web site, “the state Money Follows the Person project (MFP) allows funds for persons who have lived in a nursing facility for a minimum of 3 months to receive services through the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS), Frail Elderly (FE), or Physically Disabled (PD) waiver program upon relocation to the community. This lessened the strain to move residents to the community while there was a HCBS waiting list.”

During the iKan focus group discussions, there were several individuals who reported feeling threatened that family or significant persons in their lives see nursing homes as the main living option. Focus group participants reported that many times other people involved in their lives rationalized that moving into a nursing home or remaining in a nursing home would ensure the individual’s safety. The following are comments and tips gathered from participants:

Housing

- Consumers want to have the option to remain at home and stay as independent as possible
- Consumers need to find out what options are available locally
- Consumers may need help finding Section 8 housing
- Financial changes “wreak havoc” on this population
- Consumers generally don’t want to be in “rehab” houses
- Consumers don’t want to be ‘hallway sitters’ in nursing facilities

- Consumers can live independently if their housing remains consistent

Education

- For the consumer to stay in the community, service providers need to be educated about the variety of needs the consumer may have
- Family members need to be educated about the options for the consumer
- Consumers and their families should be educated about emerging providers such as iKan
- The general public needs to be taught that an individual with a vision loss does not need to live in an institution
- Consumers may need to be taught to use other senses (touch, hearing, smell, taste)
- There is a need for Orientation & Mobility training

Transportation

- A shuttle bus for public transportation is available in numerous counties
 - Consumers may not be aware of how this service works
- The shuttle buses don't run on weekends, holidays, and over lunch in most areas and often, it closes at 5:00 p.m.
- Consumers must call to make arrangements the day before
- Some city taxi programs offer discount coupons for individuals with vision loss

Social

- Some consumers acknowledge the use of peer groups and advocacy groups as providing more information than they would receive in one to one training
- Activities are important – people need things to do
- Social and recreational resources are needed
- Senior companions are available in some communities through Area Agency on Aging
- Independent living trainers will be able to reach more people with information
- VA provides emergency life-line services to veterans

Assistive Technology

- Places in the community that have CCTVs available to use would be important
- Training in the use of CCTVs would also be good
- What funding is available to assist consumers to purchase CCTVs for their homes?