

ARPA HCBS Technical Assistance Program Announcement: Phase 3

October 5, 2022

ADvancing States and the ARPA HCBS Technical Assistance Collective are excited to announce a **third phase** of technical assistance to State Medicaid programs to facilitate and expedite state implementation of the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) HCBS Funding Initiative, the largest federal investment in HCBS systems capacity in 40 years. In this third phase of technical assistance, two of the original funders - [The John A. Hartford Foundation](#) and the [Milbank Memorial Fund](#) - have been joined by [the Care for All with Respect and Equity \(CARE\) Fund](#) to support this effort. The third phase will begin on November 15, 2022 and end by January 15, 2024.

Background

The ARPA HCBS Funding Initiative was enacted under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021. The total amount of state and Federal expenditures for the Initiative is projected to exceed \$30 billion over a four- year period from April 1, 2021 until March 31, 2025.

To access ARPA HCBS funding, states were required to submit HCBS spending plans to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) during the summer of 2021. Since then, CMS has given approval to every state to draw down the additional Federal funds and most states have received approval for some, if not all, of their proposed activities. The funding available to states under the ARPA HCBS Initiative is enormous, and states are faced with the challenge of spending all the new ARPA HCBS funds by March 31, 2025.

The Technical Assistance Provided in Phase 3 will be Substantive

To help states meet this challenge, the first two phases of this technical assistance focused on project management planning to jump-start state implementation and topical learning collaboratives that shared ideas, successes, challenges, and strategies to assist states design their projects. Phase 3 will provide up to 10 selected states with substantive technical assistance for implementing discrete initiatives or portions of initiatives and is designed to facilitate the meaningful implementation of their HCBS Spending Plans.

Technical assistance will be provided by the ARPA HCBS Technical Assistance Collective, which is comprised of five organizations representing some of the nation's leading experts in HCBS policy:

Organization

ADvancing States
NASDDDS
Ventech Solutions
Halperin Butera Consulting
Riverstone Health Advisors

HCBS Policy Expert(s)

Camille Dobson and Damon Terzaghi
Mary Sowers and Teja Stokes
Brian Burwell
Alissa Halperin
Anne Jacobs

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The technical assistance effort will be uniquely tailored to the specific needs of each state that is selected to participate. All states are invited to apply; each selected state will be supported by the ARPA HCBS TA Collective in a customized manner.

Examples of the types of assistance that states might receive could include, but are not limited to:

- Developing a stakeholder engagement strategy and implementation plan, such as soliciting feedback on the quality of case management services received through HCBS waiver programs to build a modernized case management system.
- Developing strategies for sustaining a successful ARPA HCBS Initiative which has no long-term source of funding.
- Evaluating various vehicles and approaches to obtain federal authority to implement, extend, or modify HCBS programs or initiatives.
- Assisting with and advising about program or initiative design and policy considerations, as well as implementation strategies.
- Developing a data collection and analysis strategy, such as an approach to accurately measure both the supply and demand for direct care workers.
- Facilitating relationships among the HCBS operating agency, the Medicaid agency, and other partners around a specific ARPA HCBS initiative – such as strengthening the direct care workforce or creating affordable accessible housing options - that is challenged by different organizational cultures, policies, and rules of procedure.

Note: TA will not include operational activities normally conducted by state personnel such as writing proposal requests or waiver amendments, developing payment rates for HCBS services, etc.

Application and Selection Process

States will have three weeks to apply for this TA. Each state's application will require the following information:

- 1) the specific HCBS initiative(s) for which they are seeking assistance;
- 2) what progress they have made thus far on the initiative(s);
- 3) why they are seeking external assistance;
- 4) a specific goal or objective for the TA;
- 5) a description of the TA the state is seeking;
- 6) the name of the designated state lead as well as other key staff for this TA engagement; and
- 7) their desired period of performance for the TA (i.e., start date and end date).

The ARPA HCBS Collective will select up to 10 states, using the following criteria:

- *Leadership commitment to implementation.* Applicants must demonstrate a clear commitment from State Medicaid and operating agency leadership to successfully implement all spending plan projects relevant to the TA request, as evidenced by a project management structure that has been deployed by the agency, and allocation of resources to those projects.
- *Identified need for assistance.* Applicants shall have identified specific TA needs that are inhibiting successful and timely implementation; the more specific, the better.

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- *Reasonable and achievable outcomes.* Applicants shall specify desired outcomes that align with the program announcement and that ARPA HCBS TA Collective members believe can reasonably be accomplished within the timeline and resources of the TA initiative.
- *Readiness and availability.* The ARPA HCBS TA Collective will need early and steady access to key staff. Staff commitment and availability are essential for the success of the project.

The ARPA HCBS Collective will also consider factors such as successful collaboration with the team on similar prior projects, as well as political, geographic, and population diversity. Interested states need to thoughtfully and specifically complete an online application at: <https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7052897/ARPA-HCBS-Funding-Initiative-Technical-Assistance-Application-Round-3> by COB, Thursday, November 10, 2022.

States under consideration to participate in the project will be contacted for a conference call to discuss their proposal on one of the dates selected by the state. Selected states will be notified by Tuesday, November 15, and project work will begin immediately. The number of states selected for participation will depend upon the number and nature of state requests and the feasibility of meeting the states' needs within the time and resources allotted.

If you have any questions about your state's participation in the project, please contact ARPATA@advancingstates.org.



The
John A. Hartford
Foundation



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