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We Are Balanced in Ohio: What Shall Follow this Major Accomplishment?

Shahla A. Mehdizadeh

Scripps Gerontology Center, Miami University, mehdizk@miamiOH.edu

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Title: We Are Balanced in Ohio: What Shall Follow this Major Accomplishment?

Presenter: Shahla Mehdizadeh, Ph.D.; Senior Research Scholar; Scripps Gerontology Center, Miami University; Oxford, Ohio 45056. Email: mehdizk@miamiOh.edu

Narrative: By systematic efforts Ohio surpassed a balance between the numbers of people receiving home and-community based Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) and facility-based care, in 2013. In a milestone, in 2014 Ohio also reached a balance in dollars spent for LTSS in community and facility-based care; taking into account all home health care expenditures for individuals using these services with regularity as well as mental health care expenditures for those in need of long-term mental health care.

The estimated number of individuals with a severe disability who met either nursing home or ICF-IID level of care in 2014 was about 260,500, not all met Medicaid financial eligibility criteria; of those with physical and/or cognitive disability more than half had income up to 300% of the poverty threshold. Ohio is expected to experience a slow population growth in the next 15 years, still, with population aging, there will be an annual increase of 2.2% in the number of people with severe physical and/or cognitive disability.

Challenges: To maintain the balance, Ohio will need to increase its Medicaid allocation each year between now and 2030. Current trends in state governments' budgeting favors lowering total budget, thus, any increase in Medicaid allocation has to come at the expense of all other allocations. Since this is not a very feasible option, state must remain continuously innovative by offering alternatives to facility-based care and by helping consumers remain independent by alleviating environmental barriers and educating them on availability of assistive devices and services.