

## **MEDICAL CARE PROGRAMS ADMINISTRATION BUDGET HEARING**

### **SENATE BUDGET AND TAXATION COMMITTEE**

Friday, February 21, 2025, Miller Senate Building, William Amoss Room, 4th Floor

Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair

Senator Jim Rosapepe, Vice Chair

*Health and Human Services Subcommittee*

Subcommittee Chair: Cory McCray

Please accept the following as the written testimony of Service Coordination, Inc. regarding the Medical Care Programs Administration budget proposal for FY2026.

SCI is a leading non-profit organization providing award-winning case management services and advocacy for more than 16,000 individuals with disabilities and medically complex needs, across Maryland. SCI's mission is to help people with disabilities understand their choices and create pathways to community resources that respect their dignity and rights.

Supports Planning Services (SPS) works in conjunction with the Maryland Department of Health's Office of Long Term Services and Supports to assist Marylanders in determining eligibility, obtaining enrollment, and maintaining services in the: Community Personal Assistance Services (CPAS), Community First Choice (CFC), Community Options (CO) Waiver, and Increased Community Services (ICS) programs. These programs allow people with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses the opportunity to live in the community and receive needed assistance with activities of daily living. Activities of daily living include eating, bathing, grooming, dressing, toileting, and mobility assistance. Program services that assist with activities of daily living and community living may include personal assistance, supports planning, nurse monitoring, personal emergency response systems, assistive technology, environmental assessments, accessibility adaptations, and home delivered meals. These services are essential to prevent higher cost institutionalized care and to allow people to live in the community; decide where and with whom they live; to have control over the services they receive and who provides the services, and to include friends and supports to help them participate in good community life. These services not only promote optimal health outcomes, but also greater independence and better quality of life, allowing people to fully participate in their communities to the extent that they desire and are able.

In the Maryland Department of Health Medical Care Programs Budget Analysis, the DLS recommends reducing HCBS provider rates by 2% effective July 1, 2025. We strongly encourage the committees to decline this recommendation and ensure adequate rates for home and community-based providers as they are essential to ensuring that The Maryland Department of Health and community service providers can continue to provide vital supports that enable people to live and work in their communities. At a minimum, a cost-of-living

rate increase should be adopted to ensure that existing services are not further decimated by inflationary costs that impact services, and we don't lose the progress made.

We value the collaboration with the MDH-MCPA and will continue to work with the Department on strategies to provide appropriate high-quality services to individuals served. We thank you for your continued support of the funding for these vital programs and services.