

# **Enabling Technology (ET) Basics**

*Creating and maintaining independent living options while reducing costs for all*

## **We Face a Growing Crisis in Long-Term Care:**

- A growing shortage of caregivers
- Increased population of those needing care.
- Restrictive waiver language limits the possibilities of flexible and technology-based supports

## **The Need for New Solutions**

Crisis intervention that simply utilizes institutional placements is expensive and represents an unacceptable model of care by any standard or approach.

## **Expanding Our View of Assistive Technology**

- Historically, waivers utilize narrow definitions of assistive technology, limiting the services that can be used and who has access to those services.
- Enabling Technology (ET) expands the traditional concept of assistive technology, from devices that may address a single concern or challenge, to an entire range of services that support and sustain the individual's independence.
- When implemented correctly, ET does not replace human support, but is linked to agency services and caregiver support (both paid and natural supports).
- ET addresses the individual's desire to live as independently as possible in the community and to take reasonable risks, while reducing unnecessary staff support and over-reliance on institutional settings.

## **The “Why” of Enabling Technology for Long-Term Care**

- Better outcomes
- Greater safety (Dignity of risk does not mean being unsafe)
- Improving quality of life
- Reducing costs

## **From Maine to Hawaii, Wisconsin to Mississippi, ET has produced successful outcomes:**

- A South Carolina provider is saving \$50K/per person/per year.
- A Wisconsin provider is saving over \$150/day for community placement vs. institutional care.
- Mississippi is using ET as part of DOJ settlement to move people from state schools to community living for less cost. Virginia is also piloting use of ET as part of the DOJ response.
- New York has approved expanded use of ET to enhance independent living at a lower cost.
- One Wisconsin MCO is spending 54% less for individualized community living than for placements in 5-8 bed group homes.

## **How Does ET Transform Care?**

- ET allows for natural supports to be an integral part of the outcome.
- ET can be used to support aging in place in underserved rural areas and small towns.
- ET improves the utilization of hospitals and institutions by eliminating many unnecessary expenditures while maintaining people's ability to live independently.

## **How Does ET Transform Funding?**

- ET equipment can be purchased or rented (fees range from \$30/month to \$500/month). Average ET monthly fee is \$60/month.
- Funding is no longer tied to a provider-owned home or a state institution; instead, funding is tied to supporting self-determination and self-directed services. Reimbursement of bricks and mortar settings is replaced by reimbursement for supporting a person where they choose to live.
- When implemented properly, ET creates incentives and funding conduits for staying at home.