# Unlocking the Value of Enabling Technology in Managed LTSS

## Facilitating Member, Caregiver, and Provider Education

### Challenges

- Any movement towards the use of ET must recognize that members and caregivers have differing levels of comfort with and desire to embrace technological supports into their daily lives.
- Providers need to be adequately supported to responsibly offer various technologies and help members and caregivers to effectively utilize them.
- Most States have yet to provide clear guidance on how technological support needs should be uniformly assessed across individuals in various waiver programs and populations.
- The lack of access to culturally competent information, provided at a basic level of literacy, makes it difficult for case managers and service coordinators to explore with LTSS participants and their caregivers how ET can be leveraged to address their needs or support their goals.
- This informational asymmetry limits both the ability of members and their caregivers to make informed decisions about ET during the person-centered planning process and the ability of caregivers and providers to support members in maximizing the benefits of technological tools and resources.

### *Federal Recommendations*

- CMS should offer technical assistance and guidance to States regarding strategies to streamline ET education and training requirements and implementation activities in partnership with plans and providers.
- CMS should partner with the Administration for Children, Families, and Communities to provide clarity regarding ongoing Federal support to aging and disability networks, which are often engaged in the assessment, planning, coordination, provision, and/or data collection processes related to securing HCBS participants' access to ET.

### *State Recommendations*

- States should outline specific content criteria for MCOs and providers to offer basic uniform Technology-First education and training across HCBS programs that expose and orient HCBS recipients, caregivers, and providers to various technological solutions and State requirements for how to access ET.

- States should engage with providers, vendors, and plans to establish in their HCBS applications/amendments or subsequent policy guidance, appropriate provider training/certification requirements for the provision of different categories of ET. Such requirements should be balanced to consider the sophistication of various levels of technologies required (i.e., low-tech v. high-tech) and allow flexibility for providers who are entering the space and wish to partner with plans to pilot new ET solutions.

- States should publish member training requirements for approved ET that all plans must implement with approved providers, with the goal of providing consumer-friendly information regarding the opportunity to receive initial and ongoing training on how to use ET.

  o Informed consent around utilization of ET should be established as part of the person-centered, individualized service planning process so individuals know not only how to use their equipment but also where their data is going and how it is protected.

  o States should also reinforce the importance of supporting members with education on an as-needed basis across the care continuum, taking into consideration that technology changes rapidly and technological literacy is an iterative process.

## *Plan Recommendations*

- Health plans should work with providers to develop their competencies to work with technology vendors and plans to introduce new ET solutions into the field and coordinate technical support as needed to direct care workers, LTSS recipients, and caregivers.

- Health plans should compensate technology vendors and/or providers for training members' care management and clinical teams, including providing financial support for hands-on in-person orientation and training for LTSS participants and their family caregivers. Such training models need to be flexible enough to take into consideration different levels/modes of learning and training, as well as the need for additional education and training as technology continues to expand and evolve.

- Health plans can partner with providers to survey LTSS recipients and caregivers about their fears, interests, and concerns about ET, as well as the kinds of information they need to feel confident using new technologies.

## *Provider Recommendations*

- ET providers and vendors should host onboarding meetings with members and their families/caregivers, provide access to technology home labs, and allow members to trial specific technological solutions before making a final decision. These practices can help teach members and their caregivers about the technology they are signing up for – avoiding purchasing ET that is ultimately a poor fit for the individual – and how their data will be protected. In alignment with person-centered practices, these orientation and educational practices meet members where they are with their technological comfort and needs.

- Providers should work with individuals' case manager/service coordinators and support teams to identify technological solutions that support individuals' person-centered goals, develop anticipated outcomes and evaluation protocols, and tailor the proposed ET interventions for members with different levels of comfort with technology. Informed consent should also be a key element in all assessment, exploration, and planning activities.