

# **BETTER CARE BETTER JOBS ACT (S. 2210)**

## **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

### **1. How will the Better Care Better Jobs Act deliver on the President's promise in the American Jobs Plan to expand access to home and community-based services and eliminate wait lists?**

The Better Care Better Jobs Act (S. 2210) is a key part of President Biden's American Jobs Plan, which called for expansions to home and community-based services to better serve and meet the preferences of older adults and people with disabilities. As a condition of receiving a ten point increase in the Medicaid Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) for home and community-based services, the Better Care Better Jobs Act requires states to expand access to services and supports. Specifically, the bill would increase access to personal care services, family supports, community behavioral health services and expand eligibility requirements to ensure that a greater number of individuals qualify for services, including those currently on wait lists. Further, the bill would facilitate greater coordination with employment, housing and transportation supports. An [independent analysis](#) estimates the bill would provide enough funding to enable 3.2 million more individuals to use home and community-based services, making it possible to eliminate wait lists and provide supports for many more.

### **2. How will the Better Care Better Jobs Act deliver on the President's promise in the American Jobs Plan to increase wages and provide benefits to home care workers?**

The Better Care Better Jobs Act (S. 2210) is a key part of President Biden's American Jobs Plan, which called for strengthening and supporting the direct care workforce. As a condition of receiving a ten point increase in the Medicaid FMAP for home and community-based services, the Better Care Better Jobs Act requires states to invest in the direct care workforce. Specifically, the bill would require states to examine and improve the Medicaid rates they pay to providers of these services to ensure they are sufficient to recruit and retain qualified workers. The bill requires these rates be updated regularly via a transparent process and that stakeholders, including workers and their chosen representatives, have the opportunity to provide input. When increases to Medicaid rates are made, the bill would require that increases flow to workers, ensuring that workers would also see an increase in their compensation. The bill also includes structures that would help ensure that the rate of compensation is continuously updated over time.

The Better Care Better Jobs Act also offers a limited-time two point increase in the Medicaid FMAP for home and community-based services to states that establish programs to improve the delivery of self-directed care. These programs would provide substantial benefits to beneficiaries, including helping them find and choose qualified direct care workers. Establishing directories of services also can help facilitate the organizing of direct care workers and collective bargaining for unionized direct care workers. Collective bargaining can provide workers an opportunity to negotiate further improvements in compensation and working conditions.

### **3. How will the Better Care Better Jobs Act deliver on the President's promise of job creation?**

The Better Care Better Jobs Act will provide funding to states to significantly expand the provision of home and community-based services to older Americans and people with disabilities. This expansion of services would require additional direct care workers, creating new jobs. The bill's requirements that states put in place processes that would lead to direct care workers receiving improved wages and benefits will help states recruit more individuals into home care work and will ensure that the jobs filled are good, family-sustaining jobs. An [independent analysis](#) of the bill estimates over half a million direct care jobs would be created to provide the additional services.

The bill further requires states to develop and improve training for direct care workers to ensure the workforce has the skills needed to provide required services. The demand for home and community-based services is growing rapidly as the United States' population ages, and the Better Care Better Jobs act will help ensure the workforce is there to provide them while providing good, middle-class employment opportunities to American workers.

### **4. How will the Better Care Better Jobs Act help states and taxpayers?**

In addition to enabling individuals with significant physical and cognitive disabilities to live in their own homes or a home-like settings, home and community-based services are cost-effective. Studies have consistently found much lower per person average costs for home and community-based services compared with institutional care. Expenditures for Medicaid long-term services and supports have declined significantly over the past twenty years in large part due to efforts to transition to home and community-based services. The investments provided through the Better Care Better Jobs Act will result in reductions in Medicaid spending over time, reducing budget pressures for states and freeing up resources to enable states to fund other priorities. In addition, the jobs created through the Better Care Better Jobs Act will result in increased tax revenues for states, and enable citizens to more actively support their local economies. Home and community-based services is a necessary path forward to ensuring we use our taxpayer dollars responsibly while providing individuals and families with the services they prefer.

### **5. How will the Better Care Better Jobs Act promote self-directed care, independence and consumer choice?**

Home and community-based services enable seniors and people with disabilities to remain in their homes, stay active in their communities and lead independent lives. The Better Care Better Jobs Act reinforces and promotes these goals by providing incentives for states that adopt service delivery models that enable individuals to maintain decision-making authority and direct responsibility for managing the care they receive, including determining who to hire to provide for those services.

The bill would also provide people eligible for home and community-based services training in how to manage self-directed services, and it would provide workers with training on working with an older adult or person with a disability who is using a self-directed care model of service. Under the Better Care Better Jobs Act, states would also be required to adopt quality measures to evaluate the level and extent to which the states' home and community-based services program achieves self-directed care goals.

## **6. How will the Better Care Better Jobs Act help America's 53 million family caregivers?**

Family caregivers provide significant hands-on care for their loved ones, typically without any training, reprieve or financial support, often resulting in undue financial and emotional stress. In addition, because providing this care is often all consuming, many family caregivers are forced to leave the workforce, resulting in lost wages and diminished Social Security earnings, jeopardizing the overall financial stability of their families.

The Better Care Better Jobs Act provides funding that will enable states to mitigate these challenges through respite care and peer supports. For millions of family caregivers and their families, the Better Care Better Jobs Act will reduce caregiver demands and improve financial stability to improve quality of life for themselves and their loved ones. An [independent analysis](#) estimates that 1.1 million family caregivers would be able to return to the workforce. In addition to these direct improvements for family caregivers, the bill would provide for significant investments in the direct care workforce, leading to increased stability and availability of direct care workers, which can help to alleviate the physical and emotional burden faced by family caregivers.

## **7. How will the Better Care Better Jobs Act help middle-class Americans?**

Virtually no family is shielded from the realities that confront us when a loved one needs long-term care. Many middle-class Americans will ultimately turn to Medicaid to help pay for that care. The Better Care Better Jobs Act will ensure those families have a real choice as to where and how to receive that care. It will ensure they can choose to receive those supports at home, which is where the overwhelming majority of older adults and people with disabilities prefer to be.

Further, the workforce investments in the Better Care Better Jobs Act can help turn the low-wage work of providing home and community-based services into family sustaining, middle-class jobs. These investments will also help grow the direct care workforce and increase the supply of trained care professionals, who in turn can provide services to more families seeking them. For middle-class America, the Better Care Better Jobs Act provides a path to choice and to good jobs.

## **8. How will the Better Care Better Jobs Act affect families who would prefer for their loved ones to receive care in a nursing home, intermediate care facility or other institutional setting?**

The Better Care Better Jobs Act will only increase funding and options. This proposal takes no funds from existing services, and it in no way limits a family's choice of where to receive care. Families who choose to can continue to receive care in intermediate care facilities, nursing homes and other congregate settings, and they will have new options available in home and community-based settings. This is a robust plan to expand funding, expand options and expand choice for families.