



# **PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE WITH PLAN/NJ**

**Planned Lifetime Assistance Network  
of NJ**

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PLAN /NJ:

## Planned Lifetime Assistance Network

- a statewide non-profit organization
- Established in 1987
- a member of the National PLAN Alliance





PLAN / NJ

## MISSION STATEMENT

- THE PLAN/NJ MISSION is to answer the question, **“Who will care for my loved one when I am gone?”**
- PLAN/NJ provides practical solutions to families and their loved ones with significant disabilities or mental illness, thus lessening the fear and anxiety families experience when planning for the future.



# PLAN/NJ SERVICES

1. Life Care Planning
2. Social Services
  - Guardianship, Advocacy, Home-visit monitoring
  - Trustee Special Needs Trusts
  - Pooled Special Needs Trust
  - Representative Payee



# FUTURE LIFE PLANNING

- Develop a LifePLAN:
  - Inventory of the needs of your loved one with a disability or mental illness
  - Person and family wishes, preferences and goals
- Locate resources to support the plan
  - Independent Living
  - Financial
  - Legal
- Identify appropriate people to implement the plan



# LIFE PLANNING

- What is a good life?
- Who will help maintain your choices, community participation and quality of life?
- Who will do what your support network does now?
- What critical independent living, legal and financial planning can be prepared?



# Life Planning Areas

- **Relationships:** friend and family connections
- **Contribution:** Doing (work, volunteer, create, cook dinner) and being (caring, attention, acceptance, gratitude, loyalty)
- **Home:** Comfort, privacy, continuity, security
- **Decision making:** choices, preferences, values, information and options
- **Financial security:** Wills, Special Needs Trusts, employment and benefit preservation



# Advocacy / Home Visit Monitoring Services

- **Monitor** living arrangements, employment, day center, physicians, and other providers to identify concerns and ensure good delivery of services
- **Advocate** so that clients make healthy life decisions for themselves and that their preferences are taken into account
- **Make certain** all of their medical, employment, social, legal and financial needs are met
- **Accompany** clients to medical appointments, visit them in hospitals and advocate on their behalf with medical personnel





# What Is a Supplemental Needs Trust (SNT) ?

- A way to set aside funds for a person with a disability without jeopardizing vital government benefits (e.g., SSI, Medicaid, Section 8 housing, food stamps).
- The beneficiary does not have direct access to the trust.
- Prevents beneficiary from owning assets that could eliminate means tested government benefits.



# Two Types of Special Needs Trusts: Who funded the Trust?

- Third Party Trust are funded with assets belonging to an individual other than the beneficiary (no payback provisions). Other family members and friends of the beneficiary can contribute to an already established Third Party Trust.
- Self-settled (first party) Trusts are funded with assets belonging to the beneficiary, such as a settlement, a direct inheritance or personal savings (payback provisions).



# Benefits of an SNT

- The beneficiary may continue to collect benefits: SSI, Medicaid, Food Stamps, Section 8 Housing, etc.
- The trust can provide things to enhance his or her life, such as personal care assistance, transportation, education and recreation.
- The trust protects assets from being claimed by creditors or government agencies.
- The beneficiary is protected from being exploited through the appointment of a trustee.



# Examples of Trust Distributions

- Treatments or equipment not covered by Medicaid or Medicare such as:
  - Dental, eye care, or other medical treatments
  - Glasses, hearing aids, wheel chairs
  - Therapy- physical or psychological
  - Prescriptions or health treatments
  - Home health support
  - Vacation expenses: travel, hotel, entertainment
  - Educational expenses (tuition, books, supplies)



# Examples of Trust Distributions

- Utilities such as cable and telephone
- Vehicles
- Auto repairs, maintenance, insurance
- Renters insurance
- Pre-paid funeral arrangements



# What is a Community (Pooled) Trust?

- It is a trust that is established and administered by a non-profit organization under The New Jersey Community Trust Act.
- The New Jersey Community Trust Act allows the individual, parents, grandparents, legal guardians and/or the court to act as grantors.
- Sub-accounts are pooled together for investment, management and fee reduction purposes.
- A separate sub-account shall be maintained for each beneficiary.
- A percentage of remaining funds are retained by the non-profit to benefit people with disabilities.
- A Pooled Trust can manage both Self-Settled and Third Party Trusts.



# ABLE Accounts: Achieving a Better Life Experience Act of 2014

- Protecting eligibility for Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income, other Federal benefits.
- More choice and control over spending on qualified disability expenses.
- A new avenue to save and promote independence.



# ABLE Act: The Basics

- A person can only have one ABLE account.
- It must be established for a disabled individual whose disability onset was prior to the age of 26.
- There is an annual contribution limit of \$14,000, and the total maximum contributions that can be made to an ABLE account over time is \$100,000.00.
- If the account grows to more than \$100,000, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments will be suspended, but Medicaid remains intact.





# ABLE Account Basics

- While the account balance remains below \$100,000, gains in the account are not taxed.
- Distributions will not be taxed if made for qualifying disability-related expenses.
- Upon death, state Medicaid agencies must be repaid out of the account balance for any benefits provided to the beneficiary while the account was in existence.



# WHERE DOES PLAN/NJ FIT IN?

- Support to you in the form of money management, regular visits, coordinating services, and advocating for quality of life.
- Support to other family members in the form of regular communication, alerts to problems, expertise in the disability/mental health service systems and public benefits.



# For More Information Contact: Planned Lifetime Assistance Network

PLAN/NJ

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