

National Center on Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems (NCAPPS)
Transcript of the Kickoff Webinar
January 29, 2019

>> Melissa: Hello, everyone, we will be getting started with today's presentation in a few minutes. We recommend that you -- please dial into the webinar using the call-in number in the bottom right-hand corner of your screen.

>> Melissa: We are still waiting on some folks to join. Please note that the audio instructions are in the bottom corner of your screen.

>> Melissa: Hello, everyone and welcome to the webinar. My name is Melissa Burnett and I am the NCAPPS project coordinator. Before we get started, all participants are currently in listen only mode. To enhance the performance of the webinar, we ask that you listen in through your computer speakers. If this option is not available, please dial in using the call-in information in the audio box located at the bottom of your screen. If you are calling in, make sure to mute your computer speakers. This conference will have live closed captioning throughout. If you prefer to not have this service on your screen, you may extend the presentation slides to full screen using the dropdown menu in the presentation window. Alternatively, you may use a Post-it Note to cover the caption box. We have included files which are available for download in the download box. If at any point you have a technical assistance or content related question, please enter it into the Q&A box at the bottom of your screen. We will respond to technical questions throughout the presentation and will review content-based questions during the Q&A. At this time, I would like to welcome Lance Robertson, the Health and Human Services Assistant Secretary for Aging and the Administrator for the Administration on Community Living -- and Mike Nardone, the Director of the Disabled and Elderly Health Programs Group, Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services, and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

>> Lance: Good afternoon, Melissa. Hi, Mike.

>> Mike: Yes, hi, hello, everyone. This is Mike. Good afternoon, everyone and thank you for joining us today on this snowy day in Baltimore. Our team at CMS has been working in collaboration with Lance's team at ACL for a little over a year now to bring this much needed initiative to fruition and we are extremely excited to be here and kick off this webinar. Person-Centered thinking, planning and practice is foundational to supporting people with disabilities and older adults to live full lives in home and community-based settings. Underpinning all aspects of successful HCBS is the importance of a complete and inclusive person-centered planning process that addresses health and long-term services and support needs in a manner that reflects individual preferences. As such, person-centered planning requirements are built into the HCBS program authorities available to states in the Medicaid program. In fact, the HCBS final rule published in January 2014 provided the requirements of both a person-centered planning process and the components of a person-centered plan. It outlines the person-centered planning process and the importance of the individual to lead the process where possible and outlines what should be included at a minimum in the person-centered service plan with a focus on the person's preferences and goals. Despite the progress we've made in policy and programming at the local level, programs continue to grapple with how to effectively implement person-centered thinking, planning and practices in a manner consistent with their policy goals. In addition to the various options for technical assistance that are already available to states, we hope the establishment of the National Center on Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems will assist states in achieving their goals around systems change through learning collaboratives, national clearinghouse of resources and technical assistance. And I'm very proud to be able to open this session and with that, I'd turn it over to Lance.

>> Lance: Hey, thank you Michael. Michael, Nardone, everyone, from CMS, a great public servant; somebody we're very proud to be partnering with. Happy to reinforce with all of you how closely ACL does work with CMS and of course this is one example. I want to thank all of you for taking time out on a Tuesday afternoon to join us for this inaugural call. We believe that our work with CMS has and of course continues to drive systems change in home and community-based services towards community living for people with disabilities and older adults. The goal of our National Center on Person-Centered Practices and Systems is to promote systems change that makes person-centered principles not just an aspiration but a reality in the lives of people who require services and supports across the lifespan. NCAPPS grew out of our partnership with CMS and is really a strong articulation of ACL's core principles. First of all, that all Americans, including people with disabilities and older adults, should be able to live at home with the supports they need participating in communities that value their contributions and secondly, that people are experts in their own lives and that systems should be designed to respond according to each person's preferences, hopes, dreams and desires.

NCAPPS includes a person-centered advisory leadership group composed of national experts with lived experiences that will help us oversee all aspects of NCAPPS. In their applications for technical assistance, just so you're aware, states, tribes and territories of course are expected to demonstrate how they are going to be engaging participants. NCAPPS was created as a learning organization, meaning it deliberately fosters the development and implementation of new and innovative ways to achieve its goals based on continuously evolving knowledge and information. That means that we will be actively and continuously seeking to better understand how our systems work for the people they serve, and we will adjust and redesign those systems accordingly and certainly be responsive to their needs. ACL is supporting NCAPPS through two programs. One is our No Wrong Door system and the other is Traumatic Brain Injury Program. A little bit about both: The No Wrong Door System has invested in person-centered systems change for over a decade in over 38 states now. It has embraced person-centered counseling as a formal point of entry in the state long-term service and support systems. The Traumatic Brain Injury Program provides grants in 24 states and is heavily focused on supporting participant engagement in designing state systems. ACL also is developing a number of quality measures that will support the process and outcomes of person-centered thinking, planning and practice. All of these initiatives are successful because they draw upon partnerships across all levels of government, first of all, with organizations that serve older adults and people with disabilities and with those individuals themselves.

We believe that diversity of partnerships will enable NCAPPS to really help move the needle as we continue to help drive system-wide changes in states, tribes and territories that include multiple agencies and populations. So again, thanks for being on this call and thanks for your interest. With that, Melissa, we'll turn it back over to you.

>> Melissa: Thank you, Lance and Michael. At this point in time I will turn it over to the NCAPPS co-directors.

>> Bevin: Hi, everyone, this is Bevin Croft. I am one of the co-directors of the National Center on Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems, or NCAPPS. My other co-director is also on the call and will be joining us in just a little while. So, here's an agenda of what we'll be covering this afternoon. First, I'll provide an overview of the NCAPPS, talk about our goals, our priorities, define a few terms and then I'll introduce you to our team which includes national partner organizations, a cadre of experts that we've assembled for this project as well as our person-centered advisory and leadership group or PAL group. Next, I'll talk about some of the components of NCAPPS, including our website, which is now live, webinars and technical resources, planned learning collaboratives and a bit about technical assistance. And after that I'll hand things off to our co-director, my colleague, Alixe Bonardi who will give some more in-depth information about the technical assistance process, the application, and our selection criteria. There should be plenty of time at the end of the presentation for questions and answers.

We'll be joined at that point by members of the contracting officer's representative team and we should be able to answer any questions that you may have. As Melissa said, if you have a question at any point in the presentation, please do type it into the Q&A box, which is just below the presentation slides on your screen and that question will go into the queue for the Q&A at the end. So, a little bit about some basic principles behind NCAPPS, the fundamental purpose of the center and who is involved so far.

First, I just want to review some key principles. These likely won't be brand new to any of you but we want to review them nonetheless. These definitions have been really developed and refined based on conversations and dialogue with our partners at national organizations as well as our person-centered advisory leadership group. So, the first is person-centered thinking, which is a foundational principle at the heart of all NCAPPS activities and it's rooted in the fundamental belief that people are experts in their own lives. This principle requires that we are consistent in our speech and our actions in really holding this value in everything that we do in systems, services, programs. And person-centered thinking places equal emphasis on quality of life, health and well-being, but also the critical importance of people making their own informed choices about their lives. When we talk about person-centered planning, we're really talking about a methodology or a set of methodologies that are about supporting a person to identify their vision for a good life and then identifying the required supports, both paid and unpaid, or natural supports that a person needs to achieve that vision. Person-centered planning is always directed by the person and supported by others who are selected by the person. And finally, person-centered practices refer to sort of a macro-vision aligning services, systems, programs, activities, so people have access to all the benefits of living a full life in the community. And person-centered practices are really about services and service delivery that facilitates individuals' achievement of what they view as their desired outcome.

At NCAPPS, the goal is to promote systems change that makes the person-centered principles not just an aspiration but a reality for persons across the lifespan. It's about transforming how we think, plan and practice – the tagline of NCAPPS. We have key priorities as well, for the center that really undergird everything that we're doing. First and most importantly, participants, service user and family engagement must be at the heart of all person-centered practices. It also must be at the heart of all NCAPPS practices. So that's something that we are dedicated to, we're constantly working at elevating the voice of people with lived experience of navigating disability support systems, systems for older adults and their caregivers and their family as well.

The second key priority for NCAPPS is cultural and linguistic competence. We recognize that person-centered principles may not look exactly the same from culture to culture. And because this center is really meant to benefit states as well as tribal and territorial governments, it's critically important that we think about person-centeredness through a cultural lens so that is another priority of NCAPPS. And finally, the third priority of NCAPPS is cross-system collaboration. This center is an all payers, all populations center. And we believe that person-centered principles are transferable and relevant regardless of what group you belong to or what systems you are using services in. And that collaboration across systems and within systems can benefit and enhance person-centered practices for all.

The National Center for Advancing Person-Centered Practices and Systems is really for the states, also for tribes and territories, and it's focused on systems for people with disabilities and older adults with long-term services support needs. That includes brain injury, intellectual developmental disabilities, aging and disability and behavioral health. So, you can see what I mean by opportunities and potential for cross-system collaboration with NCAPPS. Our person-centered advisory and leadership group or PAL group is being formed now. We've pulled together some members to support the development of this webinar and the website, but we're really continuing to build that membership now. We're very committed to having diverse perspectives represented on that group, primarily perspectives of people with their own direct

personal lived experience of navigating disability support systems and systems for older adults. So that's diversity in terms of groups, brain injury, older adults, physical disability, psychiatric disability, intellectual development disability. We want to make sure that people from tribes and territories are represented on the PAL group, we're working on that, but also ensuring diversity in terms of race, ethnicity, language, gender, gender identity, et cetera. This group is going to be at the heart of NCAPPS activities and their task is really to help us to promote and actualize participant engagement in all of our NCAPPS components and all of our activities. The group will meet twice per year formally but there are also additional ad hoc meetings, communications and subgroups, etc. Group members will be paid a stipend for the meetings, but they may also be engaged as paid subject matter experts contributing to webinars, research and development, technical assistance, and alike. So just to give you a sense to meet some of our PAL group members, we've asked them to give a few words why they are in support of NCAPPS and why they're involved. Here are a few of them. This is from Robin Powell, she's at Brandeis University and she said "person-centered planning ensures that people with disabilities are able to live the life they want."

This is a quote from Kimberly Mills in the Virgin Islands. She says: "One of our most important rights as human beings and sovereign citizens is the right to pursue our goals, our dreams, our love and the things that make us happy. This is something that all people want and need. It fulfills us and makes our lives more rich and valuable. Person-centered planning is a thoughtful research based and beautiful process which helps us to provide the foundation of people with disabilities to also experience the joys of living a self-determined life. The work of NCAPPS is vital as a mechanism for the proliferation for best practices for person-centered planning throughout the nation and to provide people with disabilities, their families, and practitioners with the tools to make this all possible. The work of NCAPPS is the most timely and relevant work taking place in the disability community today."

And finally, this is from Martha Barbone: "I am passionate about the work of NCAPPS as many in my community (people with disabilities) have felt disempowered regarding decisions concerning their treatment, well-being and quality of life and have not been given the necessary knowledge to make true informed choices about their care. Collaboration between providers and patients through person-centered planning is vitally important to best achieve a person's desired outcomes and enhance one's quality of life."

In addition to the PAL group, we're also grateful to have engaged a number of national organization partners. These national organizations listed here really have a key role in NCAPPS because they are conveners of system administrators, of leaders in systems that represent all of the groups that are a focus of NCAPPS. And a special hello to those of you from our national partners who are on the call today. We're grateful that they have provided and will continue to provide critical guidance to NCAPPS from their members' perspective to ensure that all of our activities are relevant to system administrators in states, tribes and territories. They've also been great about supporting recruitment and conducting outreach to states, tribes and territories, letting you all know about this webinar, about the technical assistance application, et cetera. And folks from the national organizations may also be engaged as subject matter experts to provide technical assistance and support in the development of NCAPPS materials.

I skipped over the NCAPPS leadership team. So that's us. At the federal level a multiagency group oversees the work of NCAPPS. There are folks from the Administration for Community Living and for the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services who are working very closely with us, integrally involved in overseeing the work and supporting the work of the Human Services Research Institute. HSRI that team is listed on the right side led by my colleague Alixe Bonardi and myself. And a special mention to Melissa Burnett coordinating this call, and who is the project coordinator for all of the various components of NCAPPS. We'll be responsible for coordinating, administering the Center, working with and convening the national partner organizations, the subject matter experts, the PAL group, and we'll coordinate and support

Technical Assistance delivery, convene the learning collaborative, facilitate educational webinars and also maintain content for the website.

Finally, here's a partial list of our subject matter experts. We've assembled a group of people who have combined expertise that includes person-centered thinking, planning, practice across a whole range of disabilities, support needs, services and supports for older adults. We have experts that have key expertise in some of our priority focus areas like cultural and linguistic competence and participant engagement. Subject matter experts will respond to technical assistance requests from this team, they will work directly with states, tribes and territories in the provision of technical assistance, they'll provide content and facilitation of topic-specific learning communities and also support with the development of technical resources that will be available on the NCAPPS site. And as you can see we have an esteemed list of subject matter experts. And we do expect that we'll be engaging additional subject matter experts as we get to know the technical assistance participants learning collaborative participants and as the Center develops and evolves.

Next, a bit about some of the NCAPPS components before I turn things over to Alixe to focus on technical assistance. I'll talk a bit about our website, some plans for webinars, a LISTSERV and also our learning collaborative.

Just to give you a flavor of the types of topic areas that might be covered in webinars, focus areas for learning collaboratives and technical assistance. Here's a partial list of potential NCAPPS topics. They could include things like methods for effectively and meaningfully engaging people with lived experience to promote a system that's more responsive to service user preferences and needs as well as to promote accountability in systems.

We also may have topics related to payment structures to incentivize person-centered practices. Topics around enhancing cultural and linguistic responsiveness. Thinking about tailoring person-centered practices to be more culturally responsive. Topics related to aligning policy and procedure across systems and programs, the use of technology to enhance person-centered practice, and quality measures, structural process outcome measures that could be used to better both incentivize and evaluate person-centered practices.

Our website NCAPPS.ACL.gov, is live now, and is really going to serve as the central repository for all of the technical resources that are developed through NCAPPS. All NCAPPS webinars including this webinar will be recorded and available on that website. And we will also curate existing resources of which there are many that are about person-centered planning, thinking, practice, to have them all in one place. It will be the landing page for technical assistance recipients. Those of you have visited the website so far know that the TA application and guidance are already posted on that website. It will also be the landing page for our learning collaboratives.

This is just a screenshot from our resources page which is very much under development. Right now, it just has a few resources, but in the coming weeks we will be populating this page with numerous published articles and reports, practical tools and frameworks, webinar presentations, scales and measures, person-centered planning resources, as well as links to our partner organizations, related initiatives and federal guidance on person-centered thinking, planning and practice. We're doing a comprehensive literature scan now and will be curating and organizing those resources and putting them up in the coming weeks and months.

NCAPPS webinars, which will kickoff very soon and this is the first webinar, I suppose, will be related to those NCAPPS topics delivered by national experts, coordinated and hosted by the team at HRSI, they will be free and open to the public and really will derive from the technical assistance and the learning collaboratives to make sure that the learning from that work are as publicly available and useful as possible. We'll also be developing the priorities identified by our PAL group, again, with that focus on the service user and family engagement people.

We are building a centralized mailing list to share NCAPPS news and resources. If you haven't already, you can send us an email at NCAPPS@ACL.HHS.GOV with subject line subscribe and

we will add you to that list. We are not monitoring that email at this very moment, just so you are aware, but we will be checking it regularly in the future and that will be a great place to correspond with us directly. We'll also be thinking about how best to develop a social media presence moving forward to support communication and really make sure that all of these materials are getting out there to folks who can use them.

Finally, once the technical assistance gets underway, we will turn our attention to the formation of learning collaboratives. The goal of these learning collaboratives will be to promote peer-to-peer learning. Membership for these collaboratives will be open to folks who are receiving technical assistance as well as other systems stakeholders who have expressed interest in a given topic. They will be topic specific. For example, participant engagement specific methods, learning collaborative specific to cultural linguistic considerations, et cetera et cetera. And the structure of the learning collaboratives will be to have a specific learning goal with objectives and then to have structured group work that will be participant sharing of real-life scenarios and then feedback and guidance from our subject matter experts as well as other participants.

So those are the components, with the exception of technical assistance, which is really taking off at this moment. So, at this point, I will turn things over to Alixe Bonardi to walk you through the TA process and get a sense of next steps.

>> Alixe: Thank you, Bevin. This is Alixe Bonardi. Hello, everyone. Exciting to have been able to sit and listen to the fruits of a lot of discussions about the development of this building from a lot of what was laid as the foundation when CMS and ACL put this out as an opportunity and also some of the work to get the beginnings of this going. I'm going to focus a few minutes of discussion on the technical assistance piece. I have a feeling that a number of you who are participating on this call may be participating for purpose of hearing maybe some of the more details about the technical assistance application, which is out right now. So, I think we'll just launch right in.

The technical assistance, we are pushing this as forward as one of the priorities that we have been working on because we want to make sure to get started and get rolling with states, tribes and territories in their opportunities for technical assistance. The goal of technical assistance through the NCAPPS project is here on the slide. And that is to support systems change efforts, so the participant and family are at the center of thinking, planning and practice. We keep this at the forefront of our mind that we're thinking about systems change with the goal of making sure that participants are really at the center of thinking, planning and practice efforts.

Technical assistance was developed through the NCAPPS project to be available for up to 15 states, tribes and/or territories in each year. Just a little sense of the scope is for up to 100 hours per year for up to three years. That should say "up to," depending really on the technical assistance needs as detailed by states, tribes and territories in their application process. And the technical assistance is intended to be delivered by national subject matter experts, including some of the subject matter experts identified there by Bevin as well as others and also including subject matter experts from some of the partner organizations on the NCAPPS project as well. The technical assistance really is structured to address four main domains. And I'm going to spend a little bit of time talking through the main domains and a few examples. For those of you who have spent a bit of time with the technical assistance application, which can be downloaded from the NCAPPS website, there is more detail on each of these domains, so that will be a place to go if you're looking for additional information and I should also say the technical assistance application and guidance. That's one document. Is available for download from this webinar as well. You can download those files as well.

The first domain that is a focus of the technical assistance is the practice domain. And as an example, some of that could include the selection and development of a plan for training. It could include setting practice guidelines and thinking about culturally and linguistically responsive approaches to planning for the delivery of services for people.

One thing I do want to note, and this is also detailed in the technical assistance application, is that the intent is not to deliver specific training in the mechanics of person-centered thinking, planning and practice. This really is about systems change and so this would be bringing together groups to develop the plan, develop the strategies, and then the training would be something that would be added as part of systems change.

The second domain is the policy domain, which is another area of focus and could involve, for example, adopting requirements for person-centered planning, issuing or developing and then issuing policy guidance and/or review of policies across systems, for example, to ensure they are actually in complete alignment as they move towards ensuring person-centered approaches.

Another area in which there has been an expressed need for technical assistance is in the area of payment and payment systems, which could include adjusting service parameters and rates so that they're in better alignment with ways in which people want to have services delivered, implementing alternative payment methods, which some states, tribes, territories may be considering, and also the use of quality measures as they align with payment structures, including value-based payment structures.

The final domain that really is included in this technical assistance opportunity is really focused on participant engagement. This is identified as a domain, and Bevin mentioned that participant engagement is something we really have included as an emphasis across all components of this project. This could be an area of focus, for sure, participant engagement, supporting participants to serve on oversight boards, for example, incorporating feedback into program design. And essentially, amplifying the voice of people who receive services and their demand for person-centered support from participants.

The technical assistance application, as I've mentioned, is available for download from this webinar and also from the NCAPPS website. The brief application form, which I mentioned, can be downloaded, is due on February 12th. So, the application period is open right now and is due to be emailed in through the NCAPPS email address by February 12th. The application process as it's been developed is a two-stage process, essentially, or two-step process. The first step is the development by teams within states, tribes and territories to complete and submit the request for technical assistance by February 12th. Following that, HRSI will reach out to applicants to schedule a call to essentially complete the request and that will include getting a little bit more detail from the applicants on a phone call about some of the partnerships that are in place within the organization, the organization and across the states, tribes and territories. Some of the prior work that has been done to date. A number of states that we have heard from at this point that are considering submitting an application are thinking about prior efforts that have been done, perhaps in, for example, a strategic planning effort, other efforts that have been underway within the state, and are thinking about using this technical assistance opportunity as a way to bring together some of the work that has been going on across systems.

Once that has been completed, then the NCAPPS team, including our partners, our federal partners from ACL and CMS, will review and prioritize applications that demonstrate cross system partnerships, and emphasize robust participant engagement strategies across all aspects and system change efforts.

There is an expectation, and this is what HRSI will be working with applicants on, as the technical assistance application gets underway and as we think about a plan, HRSI will work with applicants to develop goals and objectives and work across the technical assistance domains. The applicants may be focused on a particular domain. For example, practice, policy or payment. But the technical assistance application process, we will be asking the applicants to consider how that relates to the other domains within the other four domains and what the status is in terms of the development of those domains and whether there might need to be work to support the development of those domains as part of technical assistance as well.

We will also be working to ensure that there's an evaluation plan underway to make sure that applicants are from the inception collecting, analyzing, reporting how they're moving forward on

their technical assistance goals and essentially their systems change goals. And we will be also looking and working with states to establish states, tribes and territories, to establish strategies for ensuring meaningful participant and family engagement in the technical assistance and systems change efforts as the change process gets underway.

This brings us to the section of the application of this webinar, where we have opportunities for questions and answers. I have seen there's a number of questions that have come in. Frankly, as I was going through the technical assistance discussion, there were a number of questions that came in. Before we move on to the technical assistance questions, there were a few other questions that came in in the earlier portion of the webinar which I think perhaps we could get Bevin to respond to as I have a chance to read through some of the questions.

>> Bevin: Yes, absolutely. So, we did have a few questions coming in, so I'll go through them. This first couple are related to our team and membership in the different groups. The first question is: How are PAL group members chosen, can individuals apply to be a member? If so, how?

We do not have a formal application process for the PAL group. If you're interested in getting involved with the PAL group, we'd be glad to hear from you. You can send an email to NCAPPS@ACL.HSS.gov and introduce yourself a bit and we can get back to you. We will have a limit on the number of folks who can join that group, just to make sure that the group is of a size that's feasible to work with. And we, as I said before, we're really committed to make sure we have diversity, perspectives, but yes, we're glad to talk with folks who are interested in getting involved in that way. So, feel free to reach out.

The second question is related. It's how do we apply to become a subject matter expert? If you think you have got subject matter expertise to share, again, we'd be glad to hear from you. So, send us an email NCAPPS@ACL.HSS.gov Get in touch and we can have a conversation.

The third question, very similar, but more general, how might we connect about collaborating? Again, we would love to hear from you. It's an exciting time. The center is just taking shape and we're happy to talk with folks. Do send an email and we'll get in touch.

We have got one more question that I think I can take a crack at and then -- oh, one more sort of logistical question, so I'll get two more and share the love with my other presenters. Someone asked if we're automatically subscribed to the LISTSERV if we registered to the webinar. Yes, we will automatically add you to our LISTSERV if you subscribed to this webinar. I'm pleased to report that there were over a thousand people who registered to this webinar. We're blown away by the interest in the center and very excited about the possibilities for dialogue, collaborations, et cetera. So, we will go ahead and put folks on the LISTSERV who signed up for this webinar and certainly you are welcome to opt out if you're trying to manage your in-box, we completely understand. So, stay tuned on that.

And there's one more question that I can respond to. The person asked: I know person-centered care and folks like home and community services have seemed to exist more intensely in long-term care and IDD and [Away from mic] areas. I would like to know if there's going to be any specific focuses on behavioral health.

The short answer to that question is yes, behavioral health is very much within the scope of NCAPPS. The content of the learning collaboratives and the technical resources will, to some extent, be driven by the technical assistance application requests that are coming through. So, the extent to which behavioral health or any other specific group is a focus may be, in some part, determined by the types of TA requests we're getting. But nonetheless, we certainly will include a consideration of behavioral health in all of our products. There will be resources related to

person-centered planning and behavioral health on our resources page. Similarly, there are some related concepts: Recovery, peer support, practices that have been developed in the behavioral health sphere that are very much person-centered practices. We are including them in our scope of focus and really hope that some of those practices can be shared with folks in other systems so that there can be some cross-system learning. Yes, behavioral health is a focus and we have members of our internal project team with the behavioral health background. I, myself, have a behavioral health background. And subject matter experts as well and PAL group members who are coming from having lived experience as navigating the mental health systems [Away from mic] and supports for people with psychiatric disabilities. So that was a few questions and Melissa, I can turn things over to you to answer our next question.

>> Melissa: Thank you so much, Bevin. I am going to read out a question pertaining to technical assistance. This person asked: Is there a technical assistance application available to collaborative providers or individual facility providers?

I believe that's only a state tribe or territory that can request that resources will be available for the broader community. And is that something, Alixe, that you could respond to?

>> Alixe: Yes. And your sound cut out for just a minute. My understanding is that the question was focusing on whether the technical assistance opportunity could be available to a collaboration of organizations. So, the technical assistance opportunity was really established for states, tribes and territories. So, if we are talking about it being a collaboration of states, that is something that I guess we could talk about. That wasn't originally how it was developed. It was really developed for applying for assistance change within a state, tribe or territory.

Now, if those organizations, all of those things, state and tribe, for example, or territory and tribe, were interested in thinking about joining forces, that would be an opportunity that I think we could look at. I think for specific details, we probably would just refer questions through the NCAPPS email and we'd be happy to respond to any kind of specific questions about potential collaborations.

>> Great. Thanks, Alixe. Another question pertaining to technical assistance for you, Alixe. And the question is: Do you have a time line for notification of selection to participate in TA?

>> Alixe: Yes. And I had a note to mention this, but I forgot. Thank you for the question. We will be reaching out to states, tribes, territories to applicants within two weeks, to schedule a call within two weeks of the receipt of the initial application and it's our intent to turn it around quickly so that by early March, we should be able to reach back to applicants with a plan and probably mid-March with a plan for going forward and to notify them of a status.

>> Thank you. And I'll now ask a question for CMS. So, the question is: For 1915C home and community-based services waivers, does the technical assistance involve the definition of person-centered service plan in 42 C.F.R. 441.301?

>> Hi, yeah, this is Amanda Hill from CMS and I'll answer that question. We would encourage the person who is asking that to email their specific question to NCAPPS so the NCAPPS email box, so we can determine the best TA source to assist with their particular request.

>> Excellent. Thank you, Amanda. My next question, I'm going to ask some of the folks we have on the line with the ACL. This question is: Can area agencies on aging submit applications?

>> This is Joseph with ACL, I'll take that. That's a good question. And I think just to be consistent with the response earlier, by itself or on your own, AAA, [Away from mic] or center for independent living likely not be the ideal candidate to apply. Reaching out to your state entity, state unit on agency or your state Medicaid agency, then I think in collaboration with them, I think that would make a much better application and you would meet the criteria. So, the short answer is no, not by yourself. But you could definitely reach out to your state partner and have them submit on your behalf and I think it would make a stronger application.

>> Thank you, Joseph. Now I have a question. I'll turn it over to you, Bevin. Is the technical assistance intended to aid individuals directly or more by proxy by aiding providers in services?

>> Bevin: So, I think I understand this question to mean is the TA intended to aid people who use services directly or more by proxy by aiding direct service providers. The answer to that question is actually not necessarily either. The technical assistance is really designed to be targeted to the systems level, not the direct service level or the individual level. So, the technical assistance is really about supporting person-centered practice within systems and across systems. That would, of course, if successful, promote more person-centered practice at the direct service provider level and then promote a system that is experienced as person-centered by individuals. But really the focus of this center is about systems TA. And for that reason, the technical assistance available through this center is really not, for example, designed to cover things like providing person-centered planning training to providers. That is not something that would be included in technical assistance, as Alixe mentioned. We could support system administrators in selecting appropriate person-centered planning methodologies but not technical assistance at the direct service provider or service user level.

>> Great, Bevin, I think you answered some of the other questions that are coming in with that response. Alixe, I'm going to turn it to you to talk a bit about how we have the capacity to help build out culturally and linguistically responsive services.

>> Alixe: Sure. Thank you, Melissa. One of the subject matter experts that I think was listed on one of the previous slides but was part of a number, is the National Center for Cultural competency at Georgetown University. We have actually -- we're establishing a formal working relationship with the national center as we move this forward because we really have recognized that there are a lot of remaining questions from a number of systems about how to meaningfully address and consider and appropriately understand and then build out the practice of person-centered approaches, person-centered thinking, while being mindful and really intentional about ensuring that things are being looked at through a lens of cultural/linguistic competency. That's work that we were intending to do in a number of ways. We are certainly planning to have learning collaboratives that will focus on that particular area. We anticipate that there may be technical assistance that is particularly focused on that area and we look forward to be able to learn and delve into that with technical assistance applicants. And there's also a component of actually the development of new resources that can be supported through this center that we would anticipate would be done, building on some of the knowledge and expertise on some of our subject matter experts as well as input and participation and actually development of work from some of our PAL group members.

>> Melissa: Thank you, Alixe.

And Bevin, kind of bringing it back to talking about the subject matter experts, there was a question specifically asking if there are any rural health subject matter experts in our task force.

>> That's a great question. Thank you. I'm looking at our subject matter experts list right now. And while I'm sure many of our subject matter experts have done work in rural communities, I'm not seeing any specific to folks who have that as their primary expertise. That's an example of having rural health expertise as an example of an area where we would be seeking out additional subject matter experts and we can certainly do that. And I suppose I could also mention in the technical assistance application, if there are particular subject matter experts or areas of subject matter expertise that states, tribes and territories are looking to pursue, then that's something we can certainly discuss in the second stage of the application process. And we're pretty confident that within our networks we will be able to line that kind of support up. Again, the goal here really is to make sure that the technical assistance is well matched and suitable for the community that's requesting that technical assistance.

>> Melissa: Thanks, Bevin. Our next question I will direct towards Amanda and other folks at CMS. The question is: Will any of your work include person-centered care in long-term care facilities?

>> Yes, so I wouldn't rule that out. Although a lot of CMS's regulations do pertain specifically to home and community-based services, if a state believes that they have some goals in mind

around person-centered planning in the long-term facilities, then we would encourage them to submit the application.

>> Melissa: Thank you, Amanda. We are still getting quite a few questions directly related to TA. So Alixe, I'm going to ask you the question: What about TA related to helping people, families, providers and counties balance risk?

>> Alixe: Sure. So, as I understand the question, that sounds like that would be technical assistance that would fall within the practice domain as one of the domains that could certainly be considered as part of technical assistance. For example, selecting and setting practice guidelines as they relate to interpreting appropriate risk, dignity of risk, and understanding people's choices around that. That said, a technical assistance application that also considers in the context of policy and how policies will describe and -- well, describe and provide guidance around the interpretation of risk, as well as even payment methods and what that means in terms of concerns as it relates to measures of quality. I can see a number of things that would actually relate to risk. Thanks, Melissa.

>> Melissa: Sure. So, kind of a more broad question that I'll direct to Bevin first, but others can also definitely chime in. The question is: Is there an ideal project that we have in mind?

>> Bevin: There isn't a single ideal project that we have in mind, but as we have been developing the technical assistance process and having conversations with national partners and with contracting officers representative team with our PAL group and subject matter experts, really, I think we'd love to see projects that really have baked in different types of strategies to engage with service users in meaningful ways. We'd love to see projects that have engagement and involvement from people in positions of being able to make some real change across systems. So top level administrators, change agents. We'd love to see cross-system collaborations as I mentioned before. It would be great to see an IDD system working with the behavioral health system with aging and physical disability system. We'd love to see technical assistance applications that have special consideration for people with brain injury and that don't leave out that population that we know can so easily fall through the cracks in access to any type of services let alone truly person-centered services. So cross-system collaborations would be great. We would love to see applications from tribal governments and territorial governments. We would really love to see that to make sure that this work and these resources are available to tribes and territories as well as states. So, no single ideal application but all of those things I think we'd be really excited to see.

>> Melissa: That's great. Does anyone else have anything they would like to add?

Okay. I'll move on to another question kind of related to the logistics part of TA. The question is: I understand this is a three-year period. Is there an application process for each year? And I'll direct that to either Alixe or Bevin.

>> Alixe: Sure. We do intend to open the application period each year, recognizing that this is a learning center and that there will be times when TA and the particular focus of an applicant really is done and wrapped up in year one and rolling into year two. We want to create opportunities for other applicants to apply in future years. That said, for applicants who have completed this application process, we anticipate there will be a let's call it a lighter review process because the NCAPPS team is already familiar with the TA recipients. So, there will be an application, but it may not be the entire two-level approach.

>> Melissa: Great. Thank you. Another question is for CMS. And the question is: Would a pay for performance model in adult long-term care and a funded managed care model be a suitable topic?

>> Amanda: Yes. If a state, tribe or territory would have that request, then we would encourage them to apply. However, CMS isn't going to opine on all the suitable topics right now. That list could be very vast, and we could be here talking about the possibilities for quite a while.

>> Melissa: Thanks. Another question for Alixe. Somebody was asking on the call if Medicaid has to be the leading partner.

>> Alixe: Sure, I can take that. No, Medicaid does not need to be the leading partner in the application. It would be important to have and demonstrate cross-system collaborations or engagement, including funders such as Medicaid and that there would be those communications, essentially, to demonstrate that there is the will and the capacity to make the systems change that may be needed, for example. That really kind of relates to what the TA request is, but in short, no, Medicaid does not need to lead.

>> Amanda: This is Amanda from CMS. I would like to chime in and agree with Alixe. Although Medicaid does not need to be the lead, we would encourage that there would be some communication within the state that those are perhaps the operating agencies' intentions, because as stated, this is a goal to have real systems change, and so it's really important that the different agencies within a state and the Medicaid agency are having those conversations.

>> Melissa: Thank you. A logistical question that came in, I'll ask to you, Bevin. The question is will any travel conferences or face-to-face meetings be required?

>> Bevin: Yes, I should have clarified that when I described the learning collaboratives. For the learning collaboratives portion, those will all take place online, so those will be conference calls and various web conferencing platforms, so no traveling required. For the technical assistance, if states, tribes or territories are selected to receive technical assistance then subject matter experts will be traveling to the state, there will be no requirement that staff from the State, tribe or territory travel elsewhere. That said, we value person to person -- we also value person-centered interactions -- but we value person to person interaction a lot so we've talked a bit about strategizing and how we might capitalize on conferences and meetings as opportunities for people to meet and gather to hold in-person meetings of topic specific learning collaboratives if we can do that and people can be gathered for national conference organizing a specific session or a meeting-- during that conference and things like that. No, there will be no travel required.

>> Melissa: Thanks, Bevin. And while I have you, a specific question for folks who will not be getting direct assistance. The question is: Are there any manuals or best practice reports you can suggest now for those who won't be getting direct assistance?

>> Bevin: Yeah, so we have a dedicated page on the website NCAPPS.ACL.GOV that will be really a clearing house for reports, materials, tools, measures, for best practice in person-centered planning and thinking and practice. There are a handful of resources on the web page now, but we are doing a pretty scoping and systematic review of materials right now over the next few weeks. So that page will be populated with lots and lots of resources in the coming months. And by the way, if folks out there have any tools or resources that you all have found to be particularly valuable, we'd be glad to learn of them so you could send us an email NCAPPS@ACL.HHS.gov to bring those to our attention if we might not have seen them. Then the other thing to say about resources is as materials are developed through technical assistance and through the learning collaboratives which are more limited in who has access to those materials, we will be doing everything we can to create public facing materials that are useful to others as well and posting them on the website and there will be the webinars which will be available to the public. So hopefully lots of different types of tools will be available and we'll be able to find tools that do exist and if tools do not exist, support in creating those tools and making them available.

>> Melissa, thank you, Bevin and thank you for people who are continuing to ask questions. You can continually continue to ask those as we're reviewing these questions. Alixe, somebody was asking if you could give a real-life example of how technical assistance is used in systems.

>> Alixe: Sure. Sure. And again, I can give an example because I do like having concrete examples. What's a little bit challenging is by providing an example, I don't want to be defining or necessarily describing "the" example that people would want to be using, because there are a number of different approaches. The technical assistance that we really intend to be able to facilitate or hope to facilitate really relates to meetings systems and people who are working to

make their systems more person-centered in a thoughtful approach, but really meeting people where they are. And for that reason, I don't want to necessarily give just one example. But I will take a stab because I do want to be able to answer. For example, this could include a review of person-centered practices, the actual practices that are used, the forms and tools that are used within and across different systems of support within a state. So, the forms that are used when somebody is planning for supports and they're receiving supports through the TBI system in their state or if they're receiving supports through the behavioral health system, do those forms and tools that are used align and also really demonstrate a person-centered approach. Now, looking at a system as the language used in quality monitoring also align with what would be considered a person-centered system, but if the policies across the system of let's say a state, for example. And another way you could look at it is to bring in technical assistance to help an applicant understand how the values stated by that state, tribe or territory translate through what could be a strategic plan through their policy, regulation, practices, and then quality monitoring. And so, a technical assistance approach could really be helping a system to think about all of those pieces and through the payment structures as well so there could be an identification of where there maybe needs some work to do or some actual changes that need to take place.

>> Melissa: Thanks for that example, Alixe.

Let's see, to bring it back to you, Alixe once again. There is a question about what are target level of expertise in person-centered planning you are trying to ensure you are able to provide TA to. Let me know if you would like me to repeat that question.

>> Alixe: I think I have it. I have the benefit of being able to read it as well. The question I think I see is what's your target level of expertise in PCP, person-centered planning, that you're trying to ensure that you are able to provide TA to?

My understanding is a question about whether we're trying to aim the TA at a particular level. And going back to my previous answer, I don't think there is a target level. We are aware that different systems, as Bevin mentioned, have had in some cases more time to work on developing the thinking and expertise across systems around person-centered planning, thinking and practices.

So, we are not actually expecting there is a particular level. I think the effect of -- the delivery of effective technical assistance meets systems where they are, helps to establish goals to move the system towards a more person-centered mode of meeting people's needs, and then helps track towards the goals. So, I would say there really isn't a target level of expertise.

>> Melissa: Thanks. Bevin, a couple questions for you. First of all, in regards to the application process, is there a preference as to the number of applications a state may complete?

>> Bevin: There is no formal limit to the number of applications a state may complete. However, we would like to see systems within states collaborating with each other on a single application as opposed to getting one application from an IDD system, one application from an aging services system, one application from a behavioral health system. There may be other considerations and we're open to that, but ideally, we'd see fewer, more collaborative applications.

>> Melissa: Great. And another question: Is the support develop associate for the learning community for person centered practices -- involved in NCAPPS?

>> Yes, support development associates and other members of the learning community have already signed on as subject matter experts.

>> Melissa: Thank you. While we're at it, Bevin, another question about subject matter experts. Are there subject matter experts who are self-advocates currently using an HCBS waiver or Medicaid long-term services or a family member whose loved one is served by the system this perspective as essential as theory does not always translate to practical reality?

>> Yeah, 100% agree and that perspective -- yeah, that theory doesn't always translate to practical reality really is the impetus for having our person-centered advisory and leadership

group, but also building in a strong service user engagement component in every aspect of the NCAPPS activities, learning collaboratives, the resource development, webinars and the technical assistance application. We do not have, at the moment, any subject -- that's not true. We have PAL group members who are current users of HCBS services. We will be recruiting additional PAL group members who are current users of HCBS services. Those PAL group members may also be engaged as subject matter experts. So yeah, absolutely.

>> Melissa: Thank you. Alixe, the next question is for you. That is: From what I understand, the TA feature is only available to state organizations. Will the other resources be available to service providers and how can service providers access those resources?

>> Alixe: Sure. Thanks, Melissa. Yes, this is Alixe again. The technical assistance is currently open and available to states, tribes and territories, so you're right, provider organizations cannot apply directly, although we have encouraged provider organizations who are interested in working with and collaborating with their local states, tribes and/or territories. That is certainly one means to become connected as appropriate. Providers can also access all the resources which are available on the NCAPPS website. We, as Bevin mentioned, that's currently being built out, so some of the resources are, let's say, a curated collection of resources that have been drawn from others, recognizing that this has been a developmental process for more than 20 years that people have been developing really great thinking around the development for person-centered practices. So, some of the both seminal work and more up to date work and also materials that will be developed as part of this project. So those will all be available to providers. And finally, of course, the LISTSERV will be available as an opportunity for any updates on some of the webinars coming out and we, as Bevin mentioned, will be turning to the learning collaborative. And as we form those learning collaboratives, the topic areas will be driven in part by technical assistance applications, but as we build out the learning collaborative groups, we will be reaching out through this shared list to enroll others who are interested and may be interested in engaging through the learning collaborative.

>> Melissa: Excellent. Thank you so much, Alixe. I think we're getting pretty close to wrapping up at this point in time.