



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

### **Fact Sheet: American Rescue Plan Act Investments in Assistive Technology**

**Reason for investment:** COVID 19 resulted in a sudden surge in demand for community care in lieu of care in a nursing home. While remaining safe in the community, needs related to isolation emerged quickly for the long-term support and service system participants served at home. The importance of technology, including virtual technology, emerged as a leading strategy to address not only isolation but also to increase independence and decrease the need for human assistance. The decrease in need for human assistance through integration of technology also support the critical informal caregivers who may have limited time to provide direct support to a family member while balancing work obligations.

**Target population:** Individuals who meet the level of need requirements and their caregivers (if applicable) currently served under the Medicare Savings Program, home and community-based waivers, Community First Choice or Money Follows the Person

**What services will be provided:** Examples of assistive technology/Smart Home Technology include but are not limited to: Set up apartments to monitor the individual's patterns and identify when their pattern changes, such as not opening the refrigerator around lunch time or toileting regularly; installing a system to enhance hearing devices in group areas of subsidized housing; converting TVs into video chat; smart stove that automatically shuts of when left unattended; artificial intelligence smart assistants with access to personal memory database Smart doorbells; Smart lighting to improve visibility and avoid falls.

**How will Smart Home Technology be integrated into HUD 202, 236, and Assisted Living sites:** The Department of Social Service will release a request for proposals from HUD subsidized housing including HUD 202, 236 and Assisted Living Conversion Projects as well as from publicly funded state assisted living sites for integration of Smart Home Technology into their respective buildings. Successful proposals will be funded.

**How will technology be integrated into service plans for people living in private homes?** A team of 5 subject matter experts (SME) will be located at a regional level across the state. The SMEs will work in coordination with the access agencies to ensure assistive technology is considered as part of the care planning process, as appropriate. The SMEs will also work with providers, caregivers, and the individual to provide training and to ensure that technology is appropriately integrated into the daily routines.

**What is the expected outcome of integrating assistive technology?** The primary outcome of integrating assistive technology for caregivers is reduction of physical strain<sup>1</sup> and increase in independence for the individual who requires care. The primary outcome of integrating Smart Home Technology and other assistive technology into subsidized housing and into private residences where people receive services is increase in physical and cognitive capacity of older adults.<sup>2</sup> Investments in assistive technology overall aim to reduce unnecessary reliance on the direct workforce, including informal caregivers, increase independence, and delay or avoid nursing home placement.

---

<sup>1</sup> [Accelerating adoption of assistive technology to reduce physical strain among family caregivers of the chronically disabled elderly living at home - Digital Collections - National Library of Medicine \(nih.gov\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [IGN1219CHOI.indd \(nsf.gov\)](#)