

# HCBS Waiver Wait Lists: National Estimates 2012

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# Wait Listed Individuals -- Total

- There were an estimated 523,710 individuals on HCBS waiver waiting lists in 2012.
- The ratio of wait listed individuals to waiver slots was .34
- The average wait time across all waivers was 27 months.
- Almost three quarters (72%) prioritize those on the list; two thirds screen for Medicaid eligibility and 91% offer non waiver services.
- Only a handful of states reported no waiting lists -- D.C., DE, HI, ID, KY, MA, ND, NH, and OR. NY, reported “unknown” for children, but otherwise no waiting lists.

# IDD Waiver Wait Lists

- Individuals on IDD HCBS waiver waiting lists represent 58 percent of the total on all waiver waiting lists.
- The ratio of individuals on IDD waiver waiting lists (303,909) to total IDD waiver slots (618,872) is .49
- The average wait time is 47 months.
- Two thirds of IDD waiver wait lists screen those waiting for Medicaid eligibility.
- Almost three quarters (74%) prioritize those on waiting lists.
- The great majority (94%) provide non-waiver services.

# Waiting Lists for HCBS Waivers Targeted to Children

- Waivers for children (25) are most likely to have waiting lists.
- The total number of children on waiting lists for these waivers was 40,712 compared to total slots of 45,689 – a ratio of .89
- The average waiting time was 21 months.
- Two thirds of those on wait lists for children's waivers are in Texas. Most of the remainder are in Louisiana (5,339), Maryland (3,376), WI (1,938), Colorado (1,075), and Iowa (1,061).
- 80% screened for Medicaid eligibility.
- Only 52% prioritized; 72 % offered non-waiver services.

# Elderly Only Waiver Waiting lists

- Twenty one states have “elderly only” waivers, of which five have wait listed a total of 35,463 individuals relative to 162,177 slots (ratio = .22).
- Most of the wait listed individuals for elderly-only waivers were in Maryland (18,369), Florida (8,505), and PA(8,065).
- The average reported wait time was 13 months.
- All prioritized individuals on the waiting list.
- Eighty percent screened for Medicaid eligibility.
- All provided non-waiver services to those on the waiting list.

# Physically Disabled Adult Waivers

- Twenty-four states have waivers targeted exclusively to adults under age 65 with physical disabilities. 12 have waiting lists.
- Individuals on physical disabilities waiver waiting lists totaled 11,360 relative to 85,236 slots (ratio = .13).
- Iowa, Kansas, Mississippi, Minnesota, and Maryland accounted for 89 percent of those wait listed for physically disabled only waivers.
- Two thirds (67%) screen for Medicaid eligibility.
- However, only 58% prioritize those waiting.
- All provide non-waiver services.

# Aged/Disabled Waiver Waiting Lists

- Thirty-seven states serve the elderly and younger adults with physical disabilities in the same waivers (a total of 62 waivers).
- Twenty-six of these waivers have waiting lists.
- These waiver waiting lists individuals totaling 129,758 relative to 586,844 slots (ratio = .22).
- The average waiting time was 10 months.
- 80% screen for Medicaid eligibility.
- 81% prioritize.
- 88% offer non-waiver services to those waiting.

# Other Waivers

- Other waivers include those targeted to persons with HIV / AIDs, Mental Illness, or Traumatic Brain Injury / Spinal Cord Injuries.
- HIV / AIDS and MI waivers have relatively few slots (16,006 and 2,221) respectively and very few wait listed individuals (87 and 15 respectively).
- TBI / SCI waivers had a total 19,488 slots in 21 waivers.
- 12 TBI / SCI waivers had waiting lists totaling 2,406 individual (ratio = .12)
- TBI / SCI waivers had a reported wait time of 17 months.



# **The Impacts of Waiting Periods for Home- and Community-Based Services on Consumers and Medicaid Costs in Iowa**

**September 11, 2013**

**National Home & Community Based Services Conference  
Arlington, VA**

**Greg Peterson • Randy Brown • Allison Barrett**

**MATHEMATICA**  
Policy Research

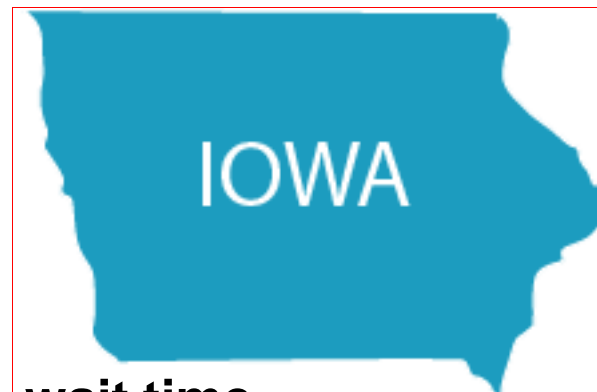
# Introduction

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- **Most states use Medicaid 1915(c) waivers to provide home- and community-based services (HCBS)**
- **Waiting periods are common**
- **Research questions: do long wait times**
  - **Increase the risk of entering a nursing home?**
  - **Affect hospitalization rates?**
  - **Affect total spending on long-term care?**

# Population and Data

- **Population: adults age 18–64 who applied for three waivers in 2002–2007 (n = 5,254)**
  - Health and disability (H&D)
  - Physical disability (PD)
  - Brain injury (BI)
- **Data sources**
  - Iowa Medicaid: who applied, when, wait time
  - Medicare/Medicaid claims in 2002–2010



# Quasi-Experimental Study Design

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- **Variation in wait times from 2002 to 2007**
- **Applicants grouped by median wait time for application cohort**
- **Compared outcomes up to three years after application, by group**

# Study Variables

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## ■ Outcomes

- Long-term stays (> 90 days) in nursing homes
- Hospitalizations (any, potentially preventable)
- Medicaid spending on long-term care (nursing home, community)

## ■ Control variables

- Demographics
- Medical conditions
- Application year

# Waiver Eligibility Criteria

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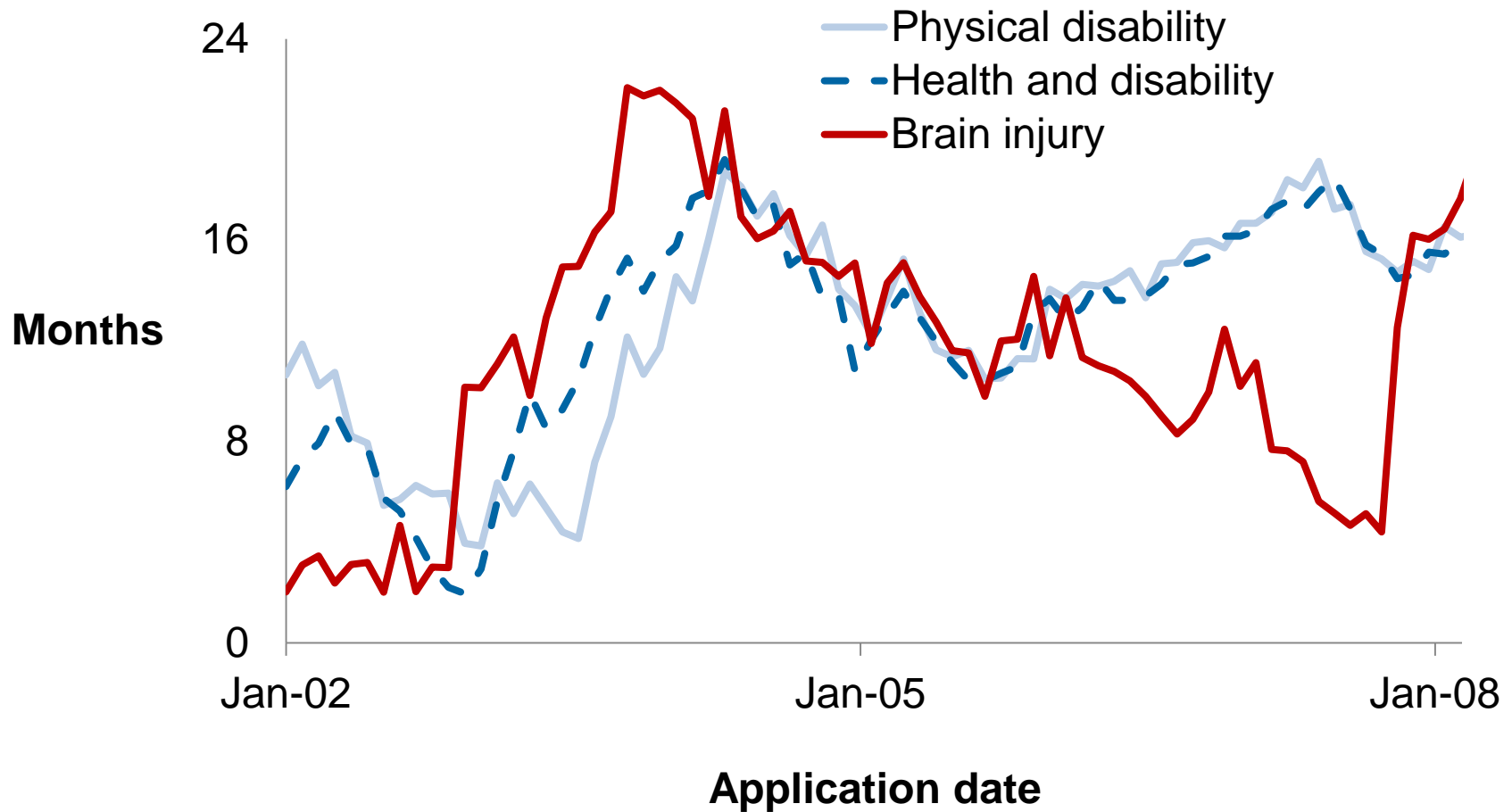
- **All three waivers: institutional level of care, Medicaid eligible, younger than 65**
- **PD: physical impairment, ineligible for intellectual disability waiver, older than 18**
- **H&D: income under 300 percent of Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and over 100 percent of SSI (if older than 25)**
- **BI: qualifying brain injury**

# Wait Lists and Alternative Services

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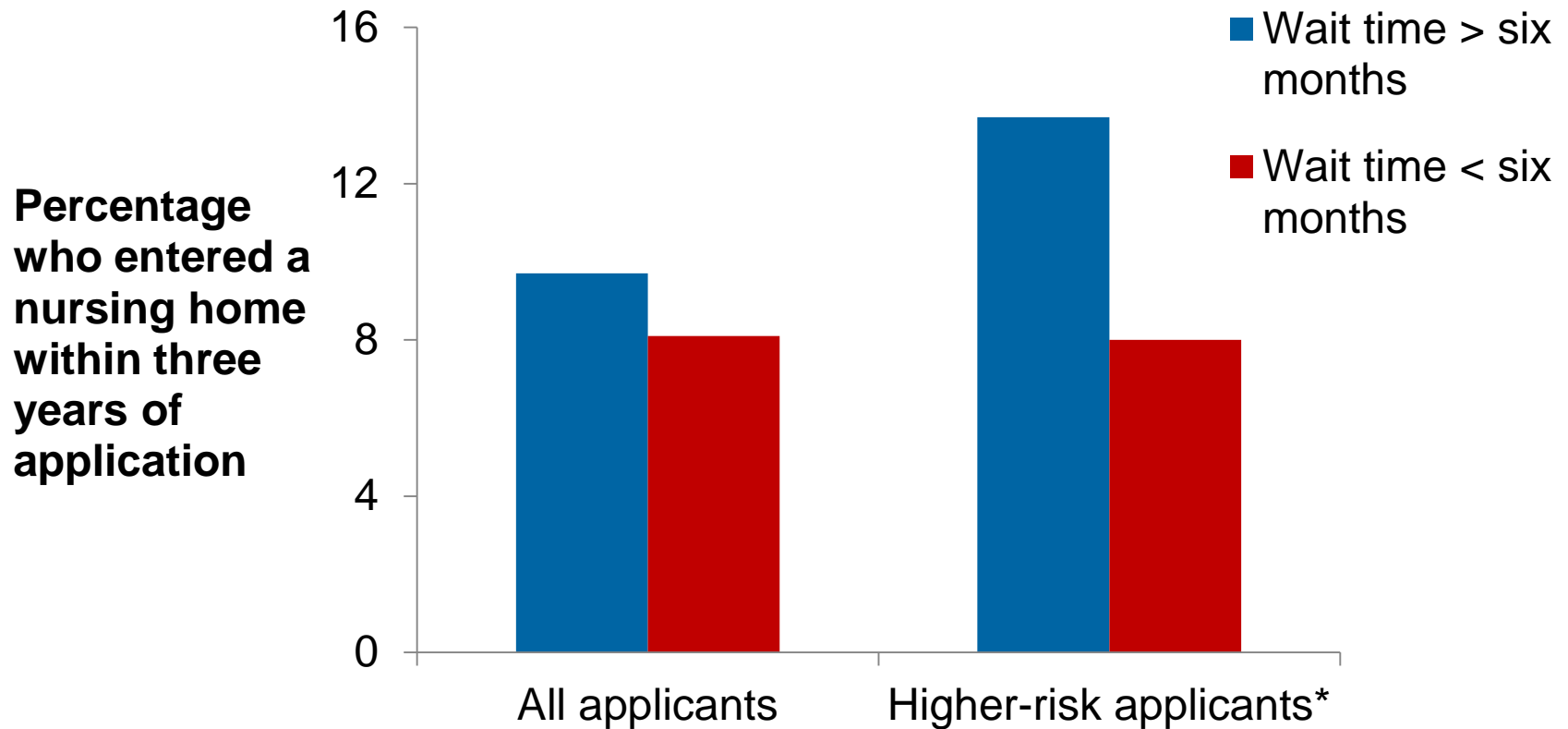
- **Wait lists**
  - Administered centrally
  - First come, first served
  - No formal screening to join wait list
- **Some support available while on wait list, if person qualifies**
  - Home health aide through state plan
  - In-home health-related care services

# Median Wait Times





# Nursing Home Entry



\* BI applicants over age 40, H&D and PD applicants over age 55

# Nursing Home Entry: Regression-Adjusted

## Percentage Entering a Nursing Home Within Three Years of Application

Applicants	> Six-Month Wait	< Six-Month Wait	Difference
All	10.1 (n = 4,513)	7.6 (n = 741)	-2.5* (-25%)
Higher-risk	13.9 (n = 1,876)	7.2 (n = 308)	-6.7*** (-48%)
Lower-risk	7.4 (n = 2,637)	7.6 (n = 433)	0.2 (+3%)

\*p < .10, \*\*p < .05, \*\*\* p < .01

# Hospitalizations

## Mean Hospitalization Rate in the Three Years After Application (# of stays/person/year)

Applicants	> Six-Month Wait	< Six-Month Wait	Difference <sup>a</sup>
Any Stay			
All	0.93	0.91	-0.02
Higher-risk	0.97	1.02	0.05
Lower-risk	0.90	0.82	-0.07
Potentially Preventable Stays			
All	0.28	0.25	-0.04
Higher-risk	0.30	0.27	-0.02
Lower-risk	0.27	0.22	-0.05

<sup>a</sup>None of the differences are statistically significant

# Medicaid Long-Term Care Expenditures

**Difference in Mean Medicaid Expenditures for Applicants with a Wait Less Than Six Months vs. More Than Six Months (\$/person/month)<sup>a</sup>**

Long-Term Care Cost Category	All Applicants	Higher-Risk Applicants	Lower-Risk Applicants
Community	70***	91***	61
Institutional	-56*	-111***	-29
Total	14	-20	32

\*p < .10, \*\*p < .05, \*\*\*p < .01

<sup>a</sup>Over three years after waiver application

# Results for Individual Waivers

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- For PD and H&D waivers, short wait times decreased nursing home entry for *higher-risk* applicants
  - Similar to results for all waivers combined
- For BI waiver, short wait times decreased nursing home entry for *both* lower- and higher-risk applicants
  - May be due to more HCBS needed (waiver expenditures three times larger for BI than for other waivers)

# Summary

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- **Short wait times**
  - Decreased nursing home entry
  - Did not affect hospitalizations
- **Across all three waivers, large effects for higher-risk applicants**
  - Lower institutional costs fully offset higher HCBS costs over three years
- **For BI applicants, effects for both higher- and lower-risk applicants**

# Policy Implications

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- **Results support the value of prioritizing waiting lists based on**
  - Risk of nursing home entry
  - Amount of HCBS needed
- **2 out of 3 waivers programs nationally use some form of prioritization, but scope varies widely**

# Acknowledgments

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- **Mathematica: Beny Wu, Joe Mastrianni, Christal Valenzano, Bart Baker, Mark Flick, and Shinu Verghese**



# For More Information

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# Supplemental Slide

# Frequently Used Waiver Services

## Percentage of Waiver Enrollees Who Ever Used a Service, by Type of Service

Waiver Service	BI Waiver	H&D Waiver	PD Waiver
Consumer-directed attendant care	43	56	79
Supported community living	69	--	--
Case management	97	6	--
Meals and nutrition counseling	--	58	--
Personal emergency response	23	54	50
Home and vehicle modifications	19	31	27

A dash (--) indicates a service not included as a benefit under the waiver program.