

**Special Assistance is a term used to describe additional supports reserved for those with a Serious Mental Illness who are determined by the Clinical or Inpatient Team and meet specific criteria.**

To be determined needing Special Assistance a member must:

- Be determined to have a Serious Mental Illness (SMI); and,



- Unable to communicate preferences and/or participate effectively in Individual Service and/or Discharge Planning, grievance and/or appeal process; and,



- Not be able to communicate preference and/or participate effectively in treatment planning due to **ONE** of these specific conditions:

- o A cognitive ability/intellectual capacity
- o A language barrier that cannot be addressed by a translator/interpreter
- o A medical condition (including psychiatric symptoms); and/or
- o An Arizona Court has determined Full and Permanent Legal Guardianship for the member



If the team determines a person needs Special Assistance a Designated Representative will be identified by the team and or member. A Designated Representative can be a:

- Family member or Family of Choice member
- Close personal friend who interacts with the member on a regular basis, or
- Court-appointed Legal Guardian.

If no one is identified as willing or able to fulfill the role of the Designated Representative an advocate from the AHCCCS Office of Human Rights will be assigned as a Designated Representative.

A Designated Representative:

- Works with a member and the behavioral health team
- Can make decisions for a member if the designated representative is also a court appointed guardian.
- Provides additional supports and education on available member services;
- Ensures the member's voice and choice is reflected in all aspects of the treatment planning process.

A Designated Representative protects the rights of the member during:

- Service Planning
- Inpatient Treatment Discharge Planning, and
- The SMI Grievance or Investigation process, and
- The SMI Appeal process.

Special Assistance is a support for members who would otherwise be unable to advocate on their own behalf.

The Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System (AHCCCS) is committed to ensuring the availability of timely, quality health care. If you know of an AHCCCS member who is unable to access health services, or if you have a concern about the quality of care, please call your AHCCCS health care plan's Member Services number. If your concern is not resolved, please call AHCCCS Clinical Resolution Unit at 602-364-4558, or 1-800-867-5308.