



**Ohio Senate Finance Committee
Testimony by Karin VanZant
Executive Director, Life Services**

Chairman Oelslager, Vice Chair Coley, Ranking Member Skindell and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding HB 64. I am Karin VanZant, Executive Director of Life Services at CareSource. I am here today to specifically address what many refer to as human services-related comprehensive case management.

CareSource is a nonprofit health plan based in Dayton, Ohio that serves approximately 1.2 million Ohioans who are enrolled in Medicaid, more than 23,000 in Ohio's Medicare-Medicaid dual demonstration project and 48,000 in the healthcare Marketplace. For more than 26 years we have been serving members in a variety of ways beyond providing healthcare coverage because we understand there are many contributing factors to maintaining or reaching good health.

We at CareSource understand that needs and challenges keep our members from reaching their desired potential, so with strategic vision, in the last two years we developed what we call the **Life Services** model to offer more than health care to our membership – to offer a network of resources and support to achieve long term success for our members.

As the legislature considers innovative methods such as mentoring and case management to help Ohioans come out of poverty, we respectfully request that any programs or pilots that are authorized include the flexibility necessary to accommodate innovations from both the public and private sectors. CareSource would welcome an opportunity to compete for the opportunity to fully engage our Life Services model in a pilot setting.

The mission of Life Services is to make a sustained impact in our members' lives by effectively addressing the obstacles that impede progress in a member's journey toward self-sufficiency, improved health and well-being.

Many of CareSource's members are healthy, highly motivated individuals with a strong desire to be gainfully employed, but have barriers that prevent them from finding and keeping long term sustainable employment. We understand our members can be significantly more successful at obtaining and retaining employment when an over-arching, holistic view of their personal circumstances is taken into account when delivering wrap around support services.

Our focus with Life Services to date has been on helping members first find and attain employment and education opportunities. Our employment connection pilot is called JobConnect.

With seed funding from the CareSource Foundation we began to pilot JobConnect in Montgomery County. In December of last year we held job fairs in Montgomery County from which 400 CareSource Medicaid members identified themselves as interested in JobConnect. Of those 400 members, 370 are participating in Pre-Placement activities, such as coaching, resume and interview preparation, soft skills training and general job search activities. Those activities are led by our presently five-employee strong Life Services team with support from CareSource University, our nationally recognized internal training and education team, plus CareSource employee volunteers. Since December we have connected 74 of those members to potential employers or educational opportunities, and 23 have been hired. In the past 10 days another 20 members interviewed with employers.

We are very proud of our progress to date but also mindful that we are just scratching the surface. Our work is not done with those 23 members who have new jobs; for these 23 and others to follow, getting that job is not the end—it's the beginning in Life Services. In order to provide continuing support, mentoring and to support sustained employment, Life Services then provides those members continued partnership to deal with life points such as, transportation, childcare, health, ongoing educational needs and food assistance.

The members of Life Services set individual goals that will lead them to a life that is free from government subsidy and built on a strong foundation of economic stability. The transition will not be easy. Some members have never known a life that did not include government subsidies; they have never budgeted fully for food, rent, utilities and childcare. We have found that most members would love to live a life independent of subsidies and to provide fully for their families. Life Services will assist them to see the path to this future.

We believe that CareSource is in a unique position to deliver Life Services for several key reasons. First, we have a unique relationship with our members. They know CareSource to be a non-profit company that is critical to their families' health and well-being. We also believe that CareSource is uniquely positioned because we are an innovative company with a core business that is responsive and responsible to members and taxpayers.

CareSource is committed to improving the lives of our members and it is through this commitment that the Life Services model was developed. Thank you and I am available to answer any questions.