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## Letter: New York must increase funding to nursing homes

Dec 9, 2021

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**M**ost hospitals are now full which has resulted in elective surgeries being postponed. Why are they full? Obviously because of Covid, but there is also another reason. Nursing homes don't have enough staff and therefore can't admit patients from the hospitals. Why don't nursing homes have enough staff? This is because New York State does not reimburse nursing homes for what it costs to care for Medicaid patients.

Pandemic-related cost increases and recent cuts have created financial instability among nursing home providers due to inadequate Medicaid rates. There has been no cost-of-living increase for long term care providers in 14 years, and over the last four years, New York has cut Medicaid reimbursement of long term care providers by more than \$750 million – almost three times the amount cut from any other health care sector.

Medicaid funds 72 percent of the care in New York nursing homes. Meanwhile, New York's Medicaid rate for nursing homes is the worst in the country when the cost of care is compared to payment. Now, New York's non-profit long term care providers are reaching a breaking point.

Across the long term care continuum, many nursing homes have suspended admissions and closed units because they are unable to find sufficient staff. The long-standing lack of funding and support is now explicitly manifesting in lack of care

options for our most vulnerable. Please tell your elected officials that the entire health system is being bottlenecked because of this lack of funding for nursing homes.

Peter Eimer

CEO of Brothers of Mercy

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