

MEMORANDUM

A.4583 (Paulin)/S.2931 (Rivera)

AN ACT to amend the public health law and the social services law, in relation to enacting the New York home care first act

LeadingAge New York supports the Home Care First Act which provides in statute a proactive policy, reimbursement and operational approach to support the availability and utilization of home care services in the State. This legislation is aimed at improving the integration of home care in primary care, public health, and health care delivery planning.

LeadingAge New York represents all provider types on the long-term care continuum – nursing homes, adult care facilities, home care, hospice, senior housing and more. All options are necessary to ensure appropriate delivery of long-term and post-acute care for New Yorkers. This bill would ensure that individuals are educated and provided with options to receive care in the home when considering how to receive the care they need. New York's health care system should facilitate care that is person centered and reflects an individual's preferences, ensuring patients and families are educated and aware of all the options available to them.

The legislation helps reframe state policy to encourage the utilization of home care and promote integration and collaboration among home care, hospitals, primary care and long-term care providers. This approach will be necessary considering New York is approaching a demographic crisis. Between 2015 and 2040, the number of adults ages 65 and over will increase by 50 percent, and the number of adults over 85 will double. Home care providers are a critical link in care for this growing population. They prevent functional decline, promote safety and independence, and provide care during critical transitions from hospital and nursing home to home, delivering quality post-acute care and preventing hospital readmissions.

The bill also makes several changes to the reimbursement and delivery of home care, ensuring Medicaid rate adjustments account for the recent minimum wage increase for home care aides, workforce payments for home care nurses and therapists, and employee supports for aides to ensure solid recruitment and retention of workers. The bill would also ensure that home care providers can continue to engage in telehealth activities to augment and support home care. Home care providers should be able to modernize their services to include telehealth services delivery like other providers have during the pandemic.

For these reasons, LeadingAge New York supports A.4583 (Paulin)/S.2931 (Rivera) and urges that it be adopted.

LeadingAge New York represents over 400 not-for-profit and public long term care providers, including nursing homes, home care agencies, senior housing, retirement communities, assisted living, adult care facilities, adult day health care and managed long-term care.

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