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**NURSING HOME RESIDENTS NEED CONSISTENT CARE, NOT MILITARY MOBILIZATION:  
LEADINGAGE NEW YORK RESPONDS TO GOVERNOR HOCHUL'S  
NATIONAL GUARD DEPLOYMENT IN NURSING HOMES**

LeadingAge New York is urging Governor Kathy Hochul to provide an immediate Medicaid rate increase to New York's nursing homes to enable them to staff their facilities appropriately, deliver high-quality care to their residents and relieve hospital overcrowding.

"There is a health care crisis in New York that needs to be addressed immediately," said Jim Clyne, President and CEO of LeadingAge New York. "Nursing homes are unable to recruit and retain workers because New York's Medicaid rates don't cover the cost of care."

New York State's Medicaid program covers over 72 percent of the days of care in the state's nursing homes. The State has not provided a cost-of-living increase in 12 years.

"Governor Hochul has the authority to act immediately by providing an emergency Medicaid rate increase to nursing homes. Doing so before the end of December will guarantee that the State can take advantage of enhanced federal matching funds, lowering the Medicaid cost for the state," said Clyne.

In a news conference on Monday, Governor Hochul announced she will be deploying New York National Guard members who are certified Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) to assist New York nursing homes with staffing challenges. During the conference, the Governor acknowledged that the lack of available nursing home staff is causing a ripple effect throughout the health care system. Hospitals in several regions of the state have been unable to discharge patients who need home health care or nursing home care, hospital beds are not available for patients who need acute care and elective surgeries are being postponed.

"A temporary step like deploying the National Guard is like putting a band-aid on a gaping wound. It is not a substitute for a real plan to address the care of the older adults and people with disabilities served by our state's dedicated nursing home providers. The State's decision to cut nursing home funding by \$160 million in the middle of a pandemic has only made the provision of care more difficult. The State needs to immediately reverse its decade-long policy of underfunding long term care services," said Clyne.

While LeadingAge New York appreciates the Governor’s attention to the issue of nursing home staffing, leveraging the National Guard to fill in the staffing gaps in nursing homes will not deliver the consistent and specialized care that residents need. Imagine being a resident of a nursing home and seeing the National Guard come to your room to provide your care. Nursing home residents deserve to be cared for by familiar, professional and dedicated staff. The best way to build the dedicated workforce our loved ones in nursing homes deserve is by enabling nursing homes to offer competitive wages to recruit and retain highly qualified workers.

An effective solution to the long-term care workforce crisis requires collaboration between providers and state leaders. On November 10, 2021, LeadingAge New York sent a [letter to the Governor](#) highlighting the State’s lack of financial support and response to the needs of nursing homes and their residents throughout the pandemic. That letter is still awaiting a response from the Governor’s office, though LeadingAge New York is hopeful that there will be opportunities to collaborate in the future.

“We understand that Governor Hochul did not create this crisis, but it is here right now, and it needs to be addressed by the administration. Providers are struggling to deliver care while grappling with the worst staffing shortages in memory,” said Clyne. “With existing Medicaid rates, nursing homes simply cannot offer competitive compensation to their personnel, who perform skilled, sensitive and highly demanding jobs.”

For more than 60 years, LeadingAge New York has set an advocacy agenda for not-for-profit and government-sponsored nursing homes, senior housing, adult care facilities and retirement communities. Since the onset of the public health emergency in March 2020, LeadingAge New York has been an outspoken voice for long-term care providers, caregivers and residents.

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*LeadingAge New York represents over 400 not-for-profit, mission driven and public aging services providers, including nursing homes, senior housing, adult care facilities, continuing care retirement communities and assisted living and community service providers.*