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ASSISTED LIVING RESIDENTS GAIN ACCESS TO HOSPICE SERVICES

The New York State Department of Health has [announced a change in policy](#) that will enable some residents of adult care facilities and assisted living in New York to remain in those settings during their last days of life, according to LeadingAge New York.

The issue has been significant and a focus of advocacy efforts by stakeholders. Historically, when assisted living residents could no longer actively participate in administering their own medication, they would often be transferred to a nursing home due to statutory limitations on nursing care in assisted living communities.

“With New York ranking 49th in the nation for hospice usage at the end of life, this is an important improvement that will allow families and providers to respect the wishes of seniors and allow seniors to experience a peaceful death,” said Ami Schnauber of LeadingAge New York. “We hope this sets a precedent for additional policy adjustments that will ensure more New Yorkers can access hospice, wherever they call home.”

This new policy will enable a resident’s trusted caregiver to assist with those needs, thereby preventing the resident from having to endure an unnecessary and disruptive transfer. LeadingAge New York worked with the Department of Health and other stakeholders to implement this change, which will afford residents at the end of their life greater dignity, comfort and peace.

According to the Hospice and Palliative Care Association of New York State (HPCANY), nearly 1.4 million individuals nationally, and 50,000 New Yorkers, receive hospice care annually.

Carla Braveman, President and CEO of HPCANY, said, “This change in policy is consistent with the mission of comfort care. For those in assisted living, it is a reasonable, rational and appropriate care option.”

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LeadingAge New York represents not-for-profit, mission-driven and public continuing care providers, including nursing homes, senior housing, adult care facilities, continuing care retirement communities, assisted living and community service providers. LeadingAge New York’s more than 600 members employ 150,000 professionals serving more than 500,000 New Yorkers annually.