

# Put Florida's Seniors First

## *Legislators must properly fund elder care services*

In Florida, it is vitally important that we develop and reinforce a system with a quality continuum of care for aging Floridians. This must include resources to deal with the inevitable growth of the elder population, including home-based assistance, nursing home care and community-wide supports. The Coalition for Silver Solutions is committed to advocating this year for sufficient funding for both nursing home care and home-and community-based services, while also working to formulate long-term strategies that will guide Florida as it deals with the unique and increasing challenges of the state's large and growing population of seniors.

### RENEW NURSING HOME FUNDING

*Support Resident Quality Care & Caregiver Jobs*

#### **Renew the \$138 Million Medicaid Funding Increase in the State Budget (SB 2500/HB 5001) and Protect Quality Care and Caregiver Jobs**

The \$138 million Medicaid increase in the FY 2018-19 budget (\$50 million GR) funded an increase in the direct care rate and the quality incentive pool under the Prospective Payment System (PPS). Renewing these added dollars will enable nursing centers to continue achieving quality goals aimed at improving staffing and other measures focused on better health outcomes for seniors (\$29.9 million GR in increased PPS quality spending).

Nursing homes are already making quality advancements under PPS, with more centers now earning a CMS 4- or 5-star rating, improving in 7 out of 8 Quality Measures and reducing residents' use of antipsychotic medications.

Increased funding will give nursing homes greater ability to recruit and retain qualified caregivers to meet residents' care needs (\$19.7 million GR in increased PPS direct care spending) and keep up with the increasing costs of advancing technologies that improve patient care.

**Without these funds, nursing homes around the state can expect to lose, on average, almost \$300,000 per year when the new fiscal year begins.** A one-year increase will not sustain these centers' ability to build a strong staff and continue achieving the quality improvements being made.

**Though not included in the current Senate and House budgets (SB 2500/HB 5001), the Coalition asks legislators to renew the 2018-19 Medicaid funding increase of \$138 million, giving nursing homes much-needed resources to support high-quality care.**



### FUND THE HCBS WAIT LIST

*Provide Needed Services to Seniors*

#### **Support Florida's growing elder population and family caregivers by funding the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS).**

Currently, Florida has 2.67 million family caregivers who are providing care for frail and vulnerable loved ones or friends. These caregivers are saving Florida taxpayers over \$2 billion a year, but they need help to shoulder the responsibility. They are in desperate need of support from Home and Community Based Services (HCBS).

HCBS options include an array of services, including adult day care, medical supplies, home-delivered meals, home health aides, transportation, help with housekeeping, and much more. All these services are made available to help keep older Floridians where they prefer to be – in their home or community.

Florida maintains the largest waiting list of frail and vulnerable adults who are in need of services. Incremental increases have done little to resolve the problem. Our state must get ahead of the demand curve.

**If the state funded just 10 percent above the increase in the demand rate on an annual basis, Florida would eventually eliminate the waiting list.**

Florida has the fastest growing elder population in the country. The age 85 plus population - the group with the highest need for long term care support services - is exploding. In the next few years, it is projected to triple to a more than 200% increase.

**The time to act is now.** That is why AARP has joined ranks with the Florida Health Care Association, LeadingAge, and Pin Point Results to form the Coalition for Silver Solutions. Together, we will build a better Florida for older Floridians.

Florida Health Care Association • AARP • LeadingAge Florida  
Learn more at [www.fhca.org/advocacy/silversolutions](http://www.fhca.org/advocacy/silversolutions)