

PLATFORM FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION



SENIOR ACTION WEEK: MAY 9-13, 2022

OLDER MICHIGANIANS DAY: MAY 11, 2022



SUPPORT AND STRENGTHEN THE DIRECT CARE WORKFORCE

Direct care workers (DCW) are an essential component in helping older Michiganians age in place. In Michigan, an additional 34,000 direct care workers are needed to meet the demand. There is currently no federal training standard to professionalize the direct care workforce although they provide the majority of in-home care.

ACTION: Support the Governor's FY 2023 budget inclusion of the \$2.35 DCW wage increase and ensure the wage increase is made permanent.

ACTION: Support and strengthen the direct care worker network through training, opportunity for advancement, and increased wages and benefits.



REBALANCE COMMUNITY-BASED LONG- TERM SERVICES AND SUPPORTS (LTSS)

Michigan ranks near the bottom in the proportion of taxpayer dollars spent by states to provide long term care in home and community-based settings versus institutional care. During FY21, only 43% of long-term services and supports funding was allocated to home and community-based services (HCBS) while 57% went to institutional settings. Michigan must strengthen the HCBS model of service delivery by expanding our Medicaid HCBS programs including MI Choice, PACE, and Home Help.

ACTION: Rebalance Medicaid long-term services and supports in Michigan by appropriating at least 50% of funding to HCBS.

ACTION: Urge MDHHS to allow flexibility to increase special income limits for home and community-based services.

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EXPAND ACCESS TO MI CHOICE

The MI Choice Waiver Program is an in-home service program that enables Medicaid eligible seniors and adults with a disability to receive long-term services and supports in their home rather than a nursing facility. MI Choice has demonstrated that care delivered in the home is 42% less expensive than having the same person moved into an institutional setting.

ACTION: Raise the MI Choice capitation rates to keep up with inflation and support direct care worker wage increases to stabilize and advance this workforce.



INCREASE ACCESS TO HOME AND COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES

In Michigan, there are currently 7,270 seniors on waiting lists for essential non-Medicaid in-home services. Services funded by the Aging and Community Living Supports Bureau include home delivered meals, in-home personal care, homemaking, and respite care that delay or prevent the need for more costly long-term care interventions.

ACTION: Support the Silver Key Coalition's request for a \$7 million increase for in-home services and a \$1 million increase for home delivered meals in the Aging and Community Living Supports Bureau's FY 2023 budget.



BRIDGE THE DIGITAL DIVIDE FOR OLDER ADULTS

Broadband access can reduce isolation, improve health outcomes, and help lower health care costs, but Michigan's digital divide is leaving many older adults behind. Older residents and individuals with disabilities are two groups who often face difficulty traveling for medical appointments and are also significantly less likely to have broadband service at home.

ACTION: Urge policymakers to use new federal funding for broadband infrastructure to expand access to affordable, reliable high-speed internet for all Michigan residents, regardless of where they live in the state.

ACTION: Urge policymakers to fund new and existing educational programs that provide technology training for older adults.

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