

Legislative Priorities



Agencies on Aging – CT 2022 Legislative Priorities

Agencies on Aging – CT

Supporting older adults and the people who love them

Providing navigation through complex Medicare, Medicaid and Long-Term Services

Providing a safety net with access to home-delivered meals, adult day, in-home supports & transportation

Assisting with care management and alternatives to nursing home placement.

Connecticut's Regional Agencies on Aging

North Central AAA
860-724-6443

Senior Resources
AAA (Eastern)
860-887-3561

South Central AAA
203-785-8533

Southwestern AAA
203-333-9288

Western AAA
203-757-5449

Strengthen the Home & Community-Based Workforce

Most older adults would prefer to remain in the community and forego nursing home placement when they need long term services. Our State developed the **Connecticut Home Care Programs (CHCP)** to offer Connecticut's older and disabled residents an alternative to nursing home care. The home care workforce is struggling to attract and retain the homemakers, companions, and personal care workers that make an alternative to nursing home placement a reality for thousands of residents. Medicaid reimbursement must keep pace with minimum wage and cost of living increases. The Connecticut Agencies on Aging ask legislators to:

- Utilize the rate study to identify a fair and equitable reimbursement for Medicaid providers.
- Annualize the review of home-based care and adjust as wage and cost of living factors change
- Provide information & incentives for residents to pursue a career in long-term services
- Support training initiatives that add quality to the care of older adults

Protect Older Adults

According to the Department of Justice, at least 10% of adults age 65 and older will experience some form of elder abuse. The Agencies on Aging-CT hope that the legislature will adopt the recommendations of the State Task Force to Study Ways to Protect Senior Citizens from Fraud. Other parallel recommendations include:

- Greater coordination between State departments responding to allegations of fraud, neglect & abuse
- Training for community-level mandated reporters
- A Task Force to consider proactive steps to coordinate supports for older adults in the case of a pandemic or other emergency

Increase Prescription Drug Affordability

Prescription drug costs must be reasonable. Decisions to pay for either rent, or food, or life-sustaining prescriptions should not be a routine occurrence for any Connecticut resident. The Agencies on Aging-CT support AARP's recommendation for the creation of a Prescription Drug Affordability Board.

Make Medicaid Accessible to those in Need

The key to rebalancing Medicaid costs is community living in the least restrictive setting of an older adult's choice. To qualify for Medicaid, a resident must impoverish themselves bringing assets down to \$1,600 or less. Connecticut has the lowest Medicaid allowable asset maximum set against the 9th highest cost of living. New York and Maine offer asset protection of \$16,800 and \$10,000 respectively with many other states allowing assets of \$2,000 or more. Minimal assets force residents living with less than \$1,600 into serious fiscal jeopardy. An emergent expense or a small home repair puts them at-risk of homelessness. The low asset maximum is an administrative burden & causes delays in processing eligibility. The Agencies on Aging-CT ask legislators to consider an asset increase to a minimum of \$10,000 to improve access to Medicaid for residents in need.