

Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities and the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations Joint Recommendations from the Commission on Long-term Care Reports

In September 2013, the Commission on Long-Term Care (LTC), established under Section 643 of the *American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012*, submitted recommendations to Congress for developing a national strategy to ensure access to quality long-term services and supports (LTSS). Nine Commissioners approved the Commission's report to Congress, while six other Commissioners authored an alternative report. The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) and the Leadership Council of Aging Organizations (LCAO) jointly reviewed the Commission reports and outlined several areas that they could support and advance in the future (noted below, not in priority order).

The following recommendations are based only on the Commissions' reports, and do not represent all LTSS positions held by CCD and LCAO in these areas. For additional information, please refer to the coalition websites: <http://c-c-d.org/> and <http://www.lcao.org/>.

CCD/LCOA Recommendations

Providing Access to Home and Community-based Services

- End institutional bias through short and long-term strategies, such as enhancing, improving and extending the Balancing Incentive Program (BIP) and Money Follows the Person (MFP) and improving mechanisms for balancing Medicaid long-term services and supports.
- Make HCBS spousal impoverishment protections permanent. Raise the asset test, which remained at \$2,000 since the 1980s.
- Provide individuals with a person-centered plan, including information for individuals and family caregivers.
- Incentivize state provision of care and services to enable individuals to live in the most integrated setting based on a person-centered process that is informed by an objective assessment of need (from Quality group)

Ensuring an Adequate Paid Workforce

- Adopt strategies to improve the recruitment and retention of the LTSS workforce.
- Create meaningful career ladders/lattices for direct-care workers.
- Begin detailed and uniform data collection on the LTSS workforce by a designated federal agency.

Supporting Family Caregivers

- Advance bi-partisan legislation to create a national strategy to support family caregivers.
- Extend the family caregiver assessment provision in the 1915(i) HCBS state plan option to other Medicaid HCBS authorities.
- Increase funding for federal programs supporting family caregivers including the National Family Caregiver Support Program and Lifespan Respite Care Program and evaluate effectiveness of caregiver interventions.

Achieving Quality Delivery of LTSS Services

- Adapt Medicare to reduce barriers to inpatient rehabilitation, durable medical equipment, assistive technology, services, outpatient therapies, home health, and skilled nursing facility care, specifically,

counting time spent by beneficiaries in observation status toward the 3-day stay requirement for SNF care.

- Strengthen oversight and enforcement to ensure appropriate assessment of quality of care and quality of life in all settings
- Develop and publish enforceable HCBS quality measures through an objective regulatory system
- Support development by CMS and HHS' Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC) of an integrated HIT platform and incorporation of LTSS care plans in Electronic Health Records (EHR)

Establishing National Financing Solutions

- The Commission on LTC did not reach consensus on financing solutions. CCD and LCAO members support a national system to finance and provide access to high quality LTSS for all Americans, consistent with the joint principles on LTSS financing previously adopted by LCAO and CCD.

In sum, we believe it is critical to keep LTSS on the national policy agenda. As a nation, we have ignored the urgent need to address in a bipartisan, fiscally responsible manner the emerging LTSS crisis facing older adults, baby boomers, people of all ages with disabilities, and family caregivers for too long. LTSS should offer consumers access to a broad array of support options, including home and community-based supportive services, as well as residential options, as needed. Instead, the current system often forces people into institutions, requires many to spend-down into poverty before receiving the help they need, fails to provide realistic opportunities for personal planning, and falls short in terms of supporting family caregivers adequately. America can and must do better.

The recommendations of the Long-Term Care Commission represent an important step forward toward this goal. These joint LCAO-CCD recommendations are designed to continue that progress and provide a framework for building a national system to finance and provide access to high quality LTSS for all Americans, regardless of age.

For additional information, please contact Marsha R. Greenfield, mgreenfield@leadingage.org.