



August 30, 2021

Open Letter From Pennsylvania Homecare Providers to Governor Wolf, the Pennsylvania Departments of Human Services and Aging, and Pennsylvania Legislators

The Pennsylvania Homecare Association and the undersigned home care providers urge you to take action now to correct profound inequities and provide funding and additional supports for home and community-based providers, services, and consumers across Pennsylvania. We are also sharing this short video, [Crisis in Caregiving](#), highlighting the critical challenges that home care providers are facing today.

As Pennsylvania moves forward with its plans for distributing the \$1.2 billion in the American Rescue Plan (ARP) for home and community-based services (HCBS), providers of Personal Assistance Services (PAS) are compelled to share with you the overwhelming funding and staffing needs that threaten both the present and future of this much-needed care, and the Pennsylvania HCBS system as a whole.

As providers of services to many of the 100,000+ Pennsylvanians eligible for HCBS through the Community HealthChoices waiver, we cannot overstate the grave staffing and care crisis we currently face. Although we have struggled with staffing for many years due to chronic underfunding of this program, COVID-19 and its impacts have pushed the system to the brink of collapse. We are gravely concerned that if we do not receive funding and supports now, many of us will not be here six months from now, placing seniors and others across Pennsylvania at risk. Please help us to prevent that from happening.

Over the last eighteen months, home care providers have faced many of the same challenges and setbacks that institutional settings have faced. Though they were not in the headlines, home care providers quietly continued to provide care to hundreds of thousands of Pennsylvanians in need. While nursing homes received much-needed COVID-related funding of more than a billion dollars, Pennsylvania's Medicaid home care providers received only a one-time payment of \$112 million, more than a year ago, and nothing since. They were not prioritized for PPE, COVID-19 testing, or later vaccines, while their costs for PPE, overtime, IT, and more, continue to skyrocket. As you know, this year's budget included more than \$280 million for nursing homes and institutional care, with no additional funding for PAS providers or caregivers.

In recent years, demand for home and community-based long-term care services has increased by 20%, while the demand for institutional care dropped by the same amount. It is widely understood that home is not only where people prefer to receive care, it is also more cost effective, with better outcomes. Yet PAS Medicaid rates inexplicably remain far lower than comparable program rates, making it impossible for providers to compete for caregivers.

We thank you for your support of home-based care, and now is the time for action. We implore you to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that the federal funding is released as soon as possible and that the funds get where they need to be, now.

Sincerely,

Teri L. Henning, CEO
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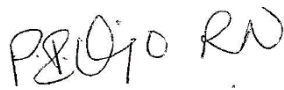
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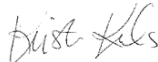
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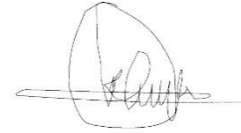
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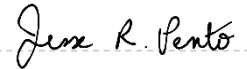
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