

Home Care Crisis Coalition Update

The New York Home Care Crisis Coalition is a group of advocates, community-based organizations, health and human service agency professionals, providers, and local government organizations throughout NYS collaborating together to seek adequate, and affordable home care for all who need it, regardless of payer or geographic location.

EXPLAIN THE CRISIS:

- **Growing Need:** The current population of New Yorkers age 65 and older is estimated at over 2.9 million and is expected to approach 4.4 million by the year 2040. (NYS Office for the Aging data, County Data Book).
- **Inadequate Home Health Aide Services:** Both the Medicaid and Non-Medicaid populations are underserved.
- **Consequences of Insufficient home care workforce:** Elders face delayed discharge from hospital or require costlier institutionalization rather than preferred (and less expensive services at home).
- **Decreasing numbers of available informal caregivers** will increase the demand for home care.
- **The human dignity of all persons requires that they** receive care when it is needed, regardless of payer.

AIMS OF THE CAMPAIGN:

- **Raise awareness** about the inadequate home care services in New York State and **seek solutions** to provide accessible, affordable, and available home health care for people who need it in NYS.
- Raise Public Awareness about the growing need for age-friendly communities and health systems.
- Seek more qualified home health care workers.
- Improve the quality of the home health delivery system in NYS.
- Improve the quality of life of elders who access home care.

TRANSPORTATION ISSUES:

Recently, Coalition members formed working groups to examine the issue of Transportation as it pertains to the lack of home care workers in the community. We surveyed our members and consumers around the state and found out the following information:

Geographic Characteristics:

- Difficult weather conditions throughout much of the year.
- Rural, hilly, isolated areas that create long distances between cases.

Challenges

- Limited mass transit.
- Long travel time, short visits.
- Cost of auto maintenance, lack of mileage reimbursement.
- Aides not getting paid a living wage.

Model Solutions:

- Multiple Aide agencies to collaborate & set-up zone areas of service allowing aides to work in smaller areas.
- Subsidize transportation.
- Funding for innovative programs to be piloted around the state.
- Understanding the Unmet Need: Institute a uniform reporting mechanism requiring all counties, government offices, and providers to identify how many people are on their waiting lists (whether they are not being served because of lack of home care aides or due to lack of funding).

Call StateWide at **800-333-4374** or email Mercy Care of the Adirondacks at: dbeal@adkmercy.org to share your opinions, views and solutions.

