



The Dignity Digest

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The *Dignity Digest* is information compiled by Dignity Alliance Massachusetts concerning long-term services, support, living options, and care issued each Monday.

***May require registration before accessing article.**

Spotlight

Biden-Harris Administration Announces Most Sweeping Set of Executive Actions to Improve Care in History

The White House

April 18, 2023

<https://tinyurl.com/BidenHarrisImproveCare>

Today, President Biden will announce the most comprehensive set of executive actions any President has ever taken to improve care for hard-working families while supporting care workers and family caregivers. Joined by people with disabilities, family caregivers, long-term care workers, early educators, veterans, and aging advocates, the President will sign an Executive Order that includes more than 50 directives to nearly every cabinet-level agency to expand access to affordable, high-quality care, and provide support for care workers and family caregivers.

Too many families and individuals struggle to access the affordable, high-quality care they need. The cost of childcare is up 26% in the last decade and more than 200 percent over the past 30 years. For the elderly or people with disabilities long-term care costs are up 40% in the past decade. The result is many Americans – particularly women – stay out of the workforce to care for their families, making it hard for businesses to attract and retain a skilled workforce and for the economy to grow. A [BCG brief](#) forecasts losses of \$290 billion each year in gross domestic product in 2030 and beyond if the U.S. fails to address the lack of affordable child care.

At the same time, many workers providing this critical care find themselves in low-paying jobs with few benefits. Care workers, who are disproportionately women of color, struggle to make ends meet, and turnover rates are high. In addition, at least 53 million Americans serve as family caregivers—including over 5 million caring for service members or veterans—and many face challenges due to lack of support, training, and opportunities for rest.

President Biden believes that we must secure significant new federal investments to transform care in this country. That’s why he and Vice President Harris called for investments to support high-quality, affordable child care, preschool, and long-term care in their fiscal year

2024 budget. While Congress considers those proposals, the President is taking immediate action to make care more affordable for American families, support family caregivers, boost compensation and improve job quality for care workers, and expand care options. Specifically, his Executive Order will:

- Make child care and long-term care more accessible and affordable for families, including military families. The acute challenges families face in accessing affordable, high-quality care are well documented. In 2019, 76% of families with young children who searched for care reported difficulty finding adequate child care, and military families consistently cite access to high-quality child care as an impediment to military spouse employment and family economic security. More than three-quarters of home and community-based care service providers are not accepting new clients, leaving hundreds of thousands of older Americans and Americans with disabilities on waiting lists for home and community-based services or struggling to afford the care they need. The President is taking action to make child care and long-term care more affordable by directing federal agencies to:
 - Identify which of their grant programs can support child care and long-term care for individuals working on federal projects, and consider requiring applicants seeking federal job-creating funds to expand access to care for their workers. This builds off of the [historic child care requirement](#) for semiconductor employers seeking significant federal funding under the CHIPS and Science Act of 2022 to submit a plan for how they will help employees access affordable child care. These actions help employers delivering major federal projects recruit and retain a robust, skilled, and diverse workforce.
 - Lower costs for families benefitting from the Child Care & Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program, including by directing the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to consider actions to reduce or eliminate families' co-payments for childcare.
 - Ensure the federal government is a model employer by supporting its own workforce. The Executive Order directs the Office of Personnel Management to conduct a review of childcare subsidy policy and consider setting standards for when and how federal agencies should provide child care subsidies to federal employees. Additionally, all federal agencies will review opportunities to expand employee access to child care services through federal child care centers, child care subsidies, or contracted care for providers.
 - Provide support for our service members and their families by directing the Department of Defense to take steps to improve the affordability of child care on military installations.
- Improve access to home-based care for veterans. To meet our sacred

obligation to our veterans and their families, the Executive Order directs the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to improve access to home-based care for veterans who require support with activities of daily living, like bathing and getting dressed, by giving them more decision-making power over who delivers that care and when. VA is directed to consider expanding its Veteran Directed Care program to all 172 VA Medical Centers by the end of Fiscal Year 2024. This program provides veterans with a budget to hire personal care assistance including from family members. VA will also consider piloting a new self-directed care program in no fewer than 5 new sites that provides veterans with a budget for personal care assistance while reducing administration burdens related to managing care. Further, VA will consider adding 75 new interdisciplinary teams to its Home-Based Primary Care program to serve an additional 5,600 veterans in their homes.

- Boost job quality for early educators. Early care and education professionals are among the lowest-paid workers in the country. Childcare workers earn a median wage of less than \$18 an hour, while the typical nonsupervisory worker in the U.S. earns over \$28 an hour. While the average salary of a public preschool teacher and kindergarten teacher is about \$49,000 and \$60,000, respectively, the average annual salary for Head Start and preschool teachers is about \$35,000. To address this, HHS will take steps to increase the pay and benefits for Head Start teachers and staff. HHS will implement policies so that more childcare providers benefiting from CCDBG receive higher reimbursements for the children they serve. Additionally, the Department of Education (ED) will encourage grantees of the Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) program—which supports thousands of student-parents across the country pay for care while going to school—to improve the quality of the services they provide, including higher wages for childcare workers.
- Enhance job quality for long-term care workers. The President is committed to improving the quality of long-term care jobs in this country so that Americans can get the reliable, high-quality care they deserve—whether it is in their homes and communities or in nursing homes. To advance the President’s long-term care priorities, the Executive Order directs HHS to consider issuing several regulations and guidance documents to improve the quality of home care jobs, including by leveraging Medicaid funding to ensure there are enough home care workers to provide care to seniors and people with disabilities enrolled in Medicaid, as well as build on the minimum staffing standards for nursing homes and condition a portion of Medicare payments on how well a nursing home retains workers.
- Support family caregivers. Without adequate resources, family caregiving can affect caregivers’ physical and emotional health and well-being and contribute to financial strain. These negative

consequences are felt most acutely by women, who make up nearly two-thirds of family caregivers and who drop out of the workforce at higher rates than men. To provide greater support to family caregivers, the Executive Order directs HHS to consider testing a new dementia care model that will include support for respite care (short-term help to give a primary family caregiver a break) and make it easier for family caregivers to access Medicare beneficiary information and provide more support to family caregivers during the hospital discharge planning process. Additionally, VA will consider expanding access to the Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers and provide more mental health support for caregivers enrolled in that program. These actions build on the [2022 National Strategy to Support Caregivers](#).

- Advance domestic workers' rights. Care workers should be supported, valued, and fairly compensated, and care workers should have the free and fair choice to join a union. In particular, domestic workers providing care for our loved ones are often underpaid and subject to discrimination and abuse. To provide greater protection for these workers, the Department of Labor will publish a sample employment agreement so domestic childcare and long-term care workers and their employers can ensure both parties better understand their rights and responsibilities.
- Ease construction of early childhood facilities for Tribes. There are approximately half a million American Indian and Alaska Native children under the age of 13 who potentially need childcare so their parents can work. Nearly half are below the age of five. To help the families of these children access high-quality child care, HHS will streamline the process for tribal grantees of federal child care assistance and Head Start to apply for and construct or improve early childhood facilities.
- Engage affected communities. To make the delivery and design of federal care assistance and programs work better for families, the care workforce, and people seeking care, the Treasury and the Departments of Defense, Agriculture, Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Veterans Affairs, will engage with parents, guardians, and other relatives with care responsibilities; individuals receiving long-term care; State and local care experts; care providers and workers; employers; and labor unions. The Executive Order also encourages the Administrator of the Small Business Administration to consider conducting similar engagement.

The Biden-Harris Administration's Record on Care

The Administration invested over \$60 billion from the American Rescue Plan (ARP) Act in the care economy, including \$39 billion to help child care providers keep their doors open and to provide child

care workers with higher pay, bonuses, and other benefits—reducing turnover and attracting new staff. To date, these efforts have helped 220,000 child care programs, which employ more than one million child care workers with the capacity to serve 9.6 million children. In addition, the Administration invested \$25 billion in ARP funds to help states strengthen their Medicaid home care programs, including over \$9 billion in spending to boost wages for home care workers as well as improve overall job quality.

The stabilization funding provided through the ARP saved child care in this country. One in three child care programs who received stabilization support [report](#) that they would have been forced to close permanently without these funds.

These grants likely have had effects beyond the child care workforce and providers as access to child care is critical for parental employment, particularly for women. The President’s Council of Economic Advisers analyzed this relationship in their most recent [Economic Report of the President](#), and found that mothers’ employment has recovered more quickly in areas with greater child care capacity supported by ARP stabilization grants. In those areas, employment among mothers with young children outpaced that of mothers in lower ARP-supported areas throughout 2022 and rebounded to pre-pandemic levels by mid-2022.

The FY 2024 President’s Budget builds on these investments and proposes investing \$600 billion over 10 years to expand access to high-quality, affordable childcare and free, high-quality preschool. This funding will enable States to increase childcare options for more than 16 million young children. The proposal lowers costs so that parents can afford to send their children to high-quality child care while also paying child care providers wages that reflect the value they provide families and communities.

The President’s Budget also includes \$150 billion over the next decade to improve and expand Medicaid home care services—making it easier for seniors and people with disabilities to live, work, and participate in their communities. This funding would improve the quality of jobs for home care workers and support family caregivers. The Administration is also promoting the use of apprenticeship programs and partnering with employers, unions, and others to recruit, train, and keep long-term care workers on the job while also helping them advance their careers as registered and licensed nurses. Just this month, the President also signed the first-ever [proclamation](#) designating April as National Care Worker Recognition Month, to honor the efforts and sacrifices of our child care and long-term care workers.

	<p>The Administration is committed to getting caregivers the resources and respect they deserve. The National Strategy to Support Family Caregivers outlines nearly 350 actions the federal Government can take to support family caregivers’ health, well-being, and financial security. And the ARP provided \$145 million to help the National Family Caregiver Support Program deliver counseling, training, and short-term relief to family and other informal care providers. The Administration has also expanded the VA Program of Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers to veterans of all service eras so more veteran caregivers have the financial and mental health support they deserve. Through the First Lady’s <i>Joining Forces</i> initiative, the Administration has partnered with more than 50 public and private sector organizations to launch the “Hidden Helpers” Coalition to serve the 2.3 million military and veteran children in caregiving homes. https://tinyurl.com/BidenHarrisImproveCare</p>
<p>Commentary on the Biden-Harris Executive Order on the Care Economy</p>	<p>1. Disability Scoop April 19, 2023 <i>Biden Signs Executive Order Aimed at Improving Care for People with Disabilities</i> By Michelle Diament With a sweeping new executive order, President Joe Biden is looking to ease pressure on the nation’s beleaguered home and community-based services system. . . . The executive order is broad ranging, addressing everything from childcare to long-term care for the elderly and people with disabilities. It calls on federal agencies to identify any existing grant programs that can support care for those working on federal projects and to consider requiring entities seeking federal job-creating funds to expand access to care for their workers. In addition, Biden’s order urges the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to consider issuing regulations and guidance aimed at improving the quality of home care jobs by leveraging Medicaid and other means. And, officials said that the Department of Labor will release a sample employment agreement to help long-term care workers and their employers better understand these workers’ rights. . . . The White House noted that costs for long-term care have risen 40% in the last decade while care providers continue to receive low pay and few benefits, leading to high turnover. Meanwhile, the Biden administration said that over three-quarters of home and community-based services providers are turning away new clients and hundreds of thousands of people remain on waiting lists for services. Biden Signs Order</p> <p>2. AARP April 18, 2023 <i>AARP Applauds Executive Order on Family Caregivers, Early Educators, and Long-term Care Workers</i> WASHINGTON—AARP Executive Vice President and Chief Advocacy and Engagement Officer Nancy LeaMond issued the following statement in response to President Biden’s Executive Order to support family caregivers, early educators, and long-term care workers:</p>

“AARP applauds today’s Executive Order recognizing the need to make family caregivers a national priority to meet the rapidly growing needs of families across America. Family caregivers are the indispensable backbone of our health and long-term care system, help their loved ones live at home, and they are exhausted. The more than 48 million Americans, including 5.5 million military and veteran caregivers, who help care for an older parent, spouse or other loved one often put their own health, financial and emotional wellbeing aside—and at risk. AARP has been fighting to give these families a voice and some needed relief. This is a nonpartisan issue that affects us all, but it does not get nearly the recognition or support it deserves.

“Family caregivers are an essential but often invisible part of almost any care team, who are often in desperate need of more support. Millions of Americans provide care to their family and friends, totaling an estimated \$600 billion in unpaid labor per year. Someone turning age 65 today has almost a 70% chance of needing help in their remaining years—most of us have been caregivers, are caregivers, will be caregivers, or will need a caregiver one day.

“Family caregivers work hand-in-hand with the paid direct care workforce. We need to strengthen and support this care team, and that includes investing in the 4.7 million long-term care workers, including those in nursing homes, and the families they serve, helping to improve recruitment, retention, and training for direct care workers.

“Today’s Executive Order is an important step forward, building on the first-ever National Strategy to Support Family Caregivers released last fall, the result of years of bipartisan effort in Congress. We stand ready to work with the Administration to advance the important policies to support family caregivers and the long-term workforce. We will continue to work with bipartisan leaders in Congress to advance legislation that can further deliver relief to family caregivers such as paid leave, family caregiver tax credits and other reimbursement programs, and other supports.

“AARP has spent decades fighting for family caregivers across the country, and we won’t stop until their needs are addressed—and their voices are heard.”

<https://tinyurl.com/AARPApplaudsExecutiveOrder>

3. American Association of People with Disabilities

April 18, 2023

AAPD Applauds Biden-Harris Executive Order on the Care Economy

Today, President Biden issued an historic Executive Order containing over fifty directives to mobilize resources across the federal government to bolster the care economy. This Executive Order increases access to home and community-based services, including for veterans, and to accessible childcare. It also improves job quality for direct support professionals and care workers who make early childhood education and home and community services possible for disabled people across the country and provides support for unpaid family caregivers. AAPD applauds this Executive Order and commends the Biden Administration on their commitment to advancing care and to making our nation one where all Americans, including people with disabilities, can thrive. People with disabilities engage with all aspects of care infrastructure. Disabled parents and children with disabilities benefit from the increased availability of affordable and accessible childcare. Disabled workers are more likely to need access to paid leave to manage their own health conditions, and when doing so, have lower incomes and savings to rely upon. Working caregivers, including

	<p>working caregivers with disabilities, must reduce working hours or take leave to meet their caregiving responsibilities. This all too often results in family caregivers, including disabled family caregivers, leaving the workforce, and causing families of people with disabilities to experience financial hardship. Family caregivers frequently endure physical and emotional strain, becoming disabled if they were not already, and too often do not receive the respite support they need to sustain themselves.</p> <p>https://tinyurl.com/AAPDCareEconomy</p>
<p>Quotes</p>	<p><i>"Different people who need assistance may need it in different ways. So, asking them how you can help them is amazingly helpful. It allows the individual who's in need of assistance to maintain a sense of self, to maybe feel a little less helpless, and maybe even a little less vulnerable."</i></p> <p>Mike Huddleston, who has a degenerative neuromuscular condition, <i>After Mike fell on a busy sidewalk, a stranger helped in just the right way</i>, NPR My Unsung Hero from Hidden Brain, April 24, 2023, Fell on Busy Sidewalk</p> <p><i>"For decades, disabled people have fought to live in our homes and communities, not in institutions. A key element to this fight is enhancing wages, benefits, and job conditions for direct support workers who provide the necessary services to ensure community integration. Individuals in this workforce, who are predominantly disabled women of color, must often work multiple jobs with no benefits to make ends meet."</i></p> <p>Maria Town, President and CEO of American Association of People with Disabilities, in response to the issuance of the Biden-Harris Executive Order on the care economy, <i>AAPD Applauds Biden-Harris Executive Order on the Care Economy</i>, American Association of People with Disabilities, April 18, 2023, https://tinyurl.com/AAPDCareEconomy</p> <p><i>There are an estimated 1.5 million active adult guardianship cases across the country. It's a massive industry, with guardians controlling an estimated \$50 billion in assets. Advocates for guardianship reform say a lack of oversight leads to many reported instances of fraud and abuse.</i></p> <p><i>Local Spotlight: The dangers of guardianship programs</i>, 1A NPR, April 18, 2023, https://tinyurl.com/1ADangersOfGuardianship</p>

“President Biden took the significant step today of recognizing the value of family and paid caregiving across the life cycle including for people with disabilities.”

David Goldfarb, director of policy at The Arc, *Biden Signs Executive Order Aimed At Improving Care For People With Disabilities*, **Disability Scoop**, April 19, 2023, [Biden Signs Executive Order](#)

“I didn’t serve my country, work, and pay taxes for 44 years just to let my voice fade away or see younger generations lose benefits I fought for my whole life...I urge you to not cut or change benefits for Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. We are the richest democracy on earth, we can afford to allow workers to retire with dignity.”

Dave McLimans, a retired steelworker from Parkesburg, PA, *Beyond the 9 to 5: Dismantling Barriers and Building Economic Resilience for Older Workers*, **U. S. Senate Special Committee on Aging**, April 20, 2023, [Case Holds Hearing](#)

The United States has 4% of the world’s population but 16% of COVID-19 deaths.

The COVID Tracking Project Part 1, **The PRX Exchange**, April 18, 2023, <https://beta.prx.org/stories/468936>

People are rendered to a state of non-personhood, in the name of protection.

Morgan Whitlatch, Center for Public Representation, *Guardians’ Dark Side: Lax Rules Open the Vulnerable to Abuse*, **Bloomberg Law**, March 6, 2023, [Guardians Dark Side](#)

The [guardianship] system is a profit center. It is not benevolent. It is not altruistic.

Rick Black, guardian reformer, *Guardians’ Dark Side: Lax Rules Open the Vulnerable to Abuse*, **Bloomberg Law**, March 6, 2023, [Guardians Dark Side](#)

Across the US, uneven oversight and accountability mar the legal process by which adults are placed under guardianship. The lack of rigor has opened the door to stolen funds, judicial errors, bulging caseloads, and legal entanglements for vulnerable people.

	<p><i>Guardians' Abuses Persist as One State's Easy Fix Goes Unmatched</i>, Bloomberg Law, March 10, 2023, A Solution</p> <p><i>"There shouldn't be a difference in the way that you treat athletes, be it Olympians, able-bodied athletes or athletes with disabilities."</i></p> <p>Jonas Oliveira, head of content for the International Paralympic Committee, <i>Edgy or insensitive? The Paralympics TikTok account sparks a debate</i>, NPR, April 24, 2023, Edgy or insensitive</p> <p><i>"A full analysis of nursing home cost reports, including charges by related parties, could determine whether and how much nursing homes really need to provide quality care for their residents."</i></p> <p>Former State Senator Richard T. Moore, Chair DignityMA Legislative Workgroup, <i>How Do We Know if Nursing Homes are Struggling?</i>, Response to The Daily News article (April 24, 2023), April 24, 2023</p>
<p>2023 Residents' Rights Month</p>	<p>1. National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care <i>2023 Residents' Rights Month Theme: Amplify Our Voices</i> October is Residents' Rights Month, an annual event designated by Consumer Voice to honor residents living in all long-term care facilities and those receiving care in their home or community. It is an opportunity to focus on and celebrate the dignity and rights of every individual receiving long-term services and supports.</p>
	<p>This year's Residents' Rights Month theme - Amplify Our Voices - emphasizes a community of long-term care residents coming together to make their voices heard. Amplifying your voice means being outspoken about sharing your preferences and choices, and sharing who you are and your experiences. Residents' voices are the most important at the decision-making table - your story deserves to be told!</p> <p>As you prepare for Residents' Rights Month in October, visit Consumer Voice's' Residents' Rights Month webpage for more information and materials. This page will continue to be updated.</p>
<p>Wellbeing Survey of Healthcare Workers</p>	<p>2. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) <i>NIOSH Launches Wellbeing Survey</i> The COVID-19 pandemic continues to challenge healthcare workers, particularly healthcare support workers such as nursing aides, home health aides, hospice aides, and psychiatric aides. The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) is distributing a survey to examine the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the well-being of these healthcare support workers.</p> <p>This survey is called <i>Wellbeing Survey of Nursing Aides, Psychiatric Aides, and Home Health Aides</i>. If you are a healthcare support worker in a nursing home, home health, hospice, or psychiatric clinic/hospital this is your opportunity to</p>



share your experiences. We know that healthcare support workers experience exposure to difficult or violent behaviors, have one of the highest rates of injuries and illnesses across healthcare, and are among the lowest paid in the healthcare field. We are asking you to complete this survey to help us understand the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on you and your work. NIOSH will use the survey results to develop recommendations to improve mental health conditions and reduce hazards faced by this worker group.

If you complete the survey:

- It will take about 30 minutes of your time
- You will receive a \$15 gift card

Access the survey at the link or QR code.

<https://redcap.link/nioshwellbeingsurvey>

Boston Marathon Photographs

Courtesy of Sue Rorke and Betsy Memishian



Marcel Hug (Switzerland) - winner of Men's Wheelchairs 1:17:02



Zachary Stinson of PA, 1st in Handcycles



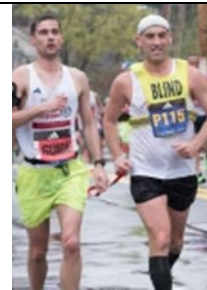
Left pushcart is Julien Pinsonneault and Me Hour Lim of Canada. Unidentified cart on right



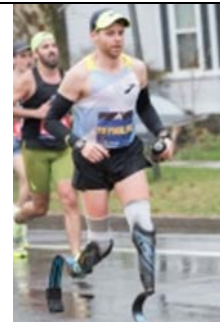
Duo team (unidentified)



W20 Sean Frame, Glasgow, Great Britain, W5 Kota Hokinoue, Japan, W10 Ernst Van Dyk of South Africa, W15 Simon Lawson of Great Britain



Joseph Burket of KY, Blind racer



Brian Reynolds of NJ



Valera Allen of AZ front, Phillip Croft of IL right rear

Mark Coyle and Jessica Kotler of PA

Reports

3. Bipartisan Policy Center
 April 14, 2023
The Future of Community Development Block Grants
 By Owen Minott, James Torrez, and Helen Nguyen
 The [Community Development Block Grant](#) (CDBG) program, administered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), provides flexible funding to states and localities to support a wide range of community development related needs. Grantees are required to demonstrate their funded activity is in alignment with one of the program’s three statutory objectives: benefit low- and moderate-income (LMI) persons; aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight; or meet an urgent need by addressing conditions that pose a severe and immediate threat to the health and safety of residents. . . CDBG’s flexible funding allows eligible grantees to support projects that meet their specific local needs unmet by other sources of federal funding. The bulk of annual CDBG spending is directed toward the following four categories:

- **Public improvements:** public facilities and infrastructure including water and sewer improvements, street and sidewalk improvements, senior centers, and homeless facilities
- **Housing:** housing construction and rehabilitation, public housing modernization, housing payment assistance, building code enforcement, and hazard remediation and mitigation
- **Administration and planning:** general program administration, fair housing activities, and regional planning
- **Public services:** housing counseling, youth services, transportation services, mental health services, childcare services, and food banks

Recent Developments
 The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act included \$5 billion in supplemental appropriations to HUD’s Community Development Fund, the broader program that includes CDBG, to address the economic and housing instability faced by communities during the pandemic. Of that \$5 billion, \$2 billion was authorized for the conventional CDBG program, with an additional \$1 billion directed to states and insular areas outside the traditional formula, and \$2 billion to states and local governments at the HUD Secretary’s discretion. In fiscal year 2022, HUD disbursed about \$960 million in CARES Act CDBG funding; in fiscal year 2021, HUD disbursed \$964 million. In both years, most of these funds were spent on public services with hundreds of millions of dollars directed towards subsistence payments, which helped families avoid evictions or foreclosures by continuing housing payments, and covered the cost of food, clothing, and utilities. Other top spending categories included financial

	<p>assistance to businesses (\$125 million in fiscal year 2021) and food banks (\$95 million in fiscal year 2022).</p> <p>Download a full table of CARES Act CDBG spending by activity here.</p> <p>The Future of CDBG</p> <p>Given that the CDBG program has remained mostly unchanged for decades, it could benefit from reforms to meet modern needs. In a budget constrained environment, every program should be evaluated to maximize its impact. Should Congress choose to adjust the CDBG program, members might consider the following three questions.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Could the CDBG formula better target communities with the greatest need? 2. Should Congress set more restrictions on eligible projects? 3. Should local zoning and land use practices impact CDBG funding? <p>Conclusion</p> <p>For fiscal year 2024, the Biden administration requested \$3.4 billion for the Community Development Fund, including \$3.3 billion in formula funding for CDBG—roughly level funding compared to fiscal year 2023, excluding the additional \$3 billion in Community Development Funds that were appropriated through earmarks. This includes \$85 million in grants to remove barriers to affordable housing, continuing a new program established in fiscal year 2023.</p> <p>Future of CDBG Program</p>
<p>Webinars and Online Sessions</p>	<p>4. Bipartisan Policy Center</p> <p>Tuesday, April 25, 2023, 11:00 a.m.</p> <p><i>Can We Fix Social Security? A Discussion with Sen. Cassidy</i></p> <p>This year's Social Security Trustees Report confirms the urgent need for Congress to enact comprehensive Social Security reform or risk jeopardizing the future of America's retirees. It's now projected that the program's primary trust fund will deplete its reserves in 2033, one year earlier than last year's projection, at which time all beneficiaries will see their benefits cut by nearly 25%.</p> <p>Join the Bipartisan Policy Center and the Funding Our Future coalition as we speak with the Social Security Administration's Chief Actuary Stephen Goss about the program's solvency challenge. BPC Vice President and Chief Economist Jason Fichtner will also welcome Senator Bill Cassidy (R-LA) to discuss the legislative landscape and bipartisan solutions needed to sustain and strengthen the program for decades to come.</p> <p>SPEAKERS</p> <p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lettie Nocera Senior Manager, Funding Our Future <p>Keynote</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stephen Goss Chief Actuary, Social Security Administration <p>Fireside Chat</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bill Cassidy U.S. Senator, R-Louisiana • Jason Fichtner Chief Economist, BPC (Moderator) <p>Register Now</p> <p>5. Bipartisan Policy Center</p> <p>Thursday, April 27, 2023, 1:00 p.m.</p> <p><i>ADUs and Housing Affordability: Challenges to Financing and Construction</i></p> <p>With affordable housing in short supply, some states and local governments have responded by unlocking the potential of accessory dwelling units (ADUs), typically smaller and more affordable housing units located on the same lot as a single-family home. While recent efforts to legalize ADUs are proving successful,</p>

they can be expensive to construct, and inadequate financing options limit their expansion and development.

In this webinar, BPC will host a discussion with industry leaders and policy experts about the potential of ADUs to help address our nation's housing supply shortage, key barriers to ADU development and construction, and potential policy and private sector solutions to scale up effective models and empower homeowners to build ADUs.

Speakers

- **David Garcia** | Policy Director, Turner Center for Housing Innovation, UC Berkeley
- **Dan Hardcastle** | Policy Advisor, Office of the Secretary, HUD
- **Andrew Kalloch** | Policy Development Lead, Airbnb
- **Kelly Marrocco** | Director, Affordable Credit & Policy, Freddie Mac
- **Owen Minott** | Senior Policy Analyst, BPC (Moderator)

[Register Now](#)

6. Stanford Center on Longevity

The Longevity Book Club

Tuesday, May 2, 2023, 2:00 p.m.

A Conversation with Rob Schwartz

Morrie Schwartz, the beloved subject of the number one bestseller *Tuesdays with Morrie*, explores these questions and many more in a profound story of living and aging joyfully and creatively. **On May 2nd at 2 PM ET**, we're excited to welcome his son and editor of *The Wisdom of Morrie*, Rob Schwartz, to the Longevity Book Club. Martha and Ken will talk with Rob about insights from the book, his reflections on aging and living well, and the inspiration behind completing the project.

About the author and editor

Morrie Schwartz became an internationally renowned figure posthumously after Mitch Albom's *Tuesdays with Morrie* stayed number one on the New York Times nonfiction bestseller list for five years. Before that he was a beloved professor of sociology at Brandeis University and cherished therapist at Greenhouse in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Morrie wrote on a wide variety of topics. He dedicated his life to helping people understand their relationships to society, other people, and themselves. His groundbreaking 1954 book (with Alfred Stanton) *The Mental Hospital* made him a superstar in the field of sociology, earning Morrie a full professorship as his first university position. Morrie was dedicated to social justice and valuing every human being.

Rob Schwartz is a writer, producer, and entrepreneur. His work has appeared in *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Variety*, the *Hollywood Reporter*, *Interview*, and *Melody Maker*, among others. He was a script editor at NHK World TV for fourteen years and has been an Asia correspondent for *Billboard* magazine since 2008. In 2005 he founded the electro-rock crossover label *Dynastic Records* in Japan. Rob produces feature films, including *Putty Hill* (2010) and *Bernard and Huey* (2017); actively invests in tech-based start-ups; and is currently a partner in the virtual concert creation platform *Moshpit* (www.Moshpit.Live).

[Register now!](#)

Previously posted webinars and online sessions can be viewed at:

<https://dignityalliancema.org/webinars-and-online-sessions/>

<p>Nursing Homes</p>	<p>7. The Daily News April 24, 2023 <i>Nursing homes struggle amid staff shortages</i> By Christian M. Wade More than 3,000 beds in Massachusetts nursing homes remain unfilled amid chronic staffing shortages, which is leading to closures and a backlog of open beds in long-term care facilities, according to a new report. The report by the Massachusetts Senior Care Association, an industry group, highlighted that the state’s nursing homes and long-term care facilities are operating at an average of 93% capacity. More than half of the state’s nursing facilities have intermittently had to deny new admissions, the report’s authors noted. “The reality is that the staffing shortage is upsetting the entire healthcare system with a backlog of hospital patients awaiting discharge to skilled nursing facilities and family members who increasingly have limited choice or are simply unable to find access to 24-hour skilled nursing facility care within their local community,” MassCare President Tara Gregorio said. There are 8,000 job vacancies across the elder care system, which equals one in five positions, according to the report. The workforce crisis already has contributed to the closure of 25 nursing facilities since early 2020, Gregorio said, more than half of which shut down in the past eight months. . . Gov. Maura Healey filed a supplemental spending bill in March that calls for setting aside \$200 million for a “Critical Health and Human Services and Workforce Reserve” to temporarily staff nursing homes, group care settings, state hospitals and soldiers’ homes. Healey’s plan also calls for \$10 million to create a new “career ladder” for licensed practical nurses to “support nursing facilities and home- and community-based services providers. The program would offer no-interest loans and grants to cover the cost of attending certain nursing certification programs. . Gregorio acknowledged the additional funding, but said Beacon Hill needs to do more “to support an equitable healthcare workforce through wage increases for our deserving staff, hiring additional caregivers, and investing in programs that allow our frontline staff to grow their careers. We must also adopt greater controls, accountability, and transparency measures on temporary nursing agencies,” she said. “We look forward to continuing to work collaboratively with policymakers and stakeholders to achieve this outcome.” Nursing Homes Struggle</p> <p>8. Response to The Daily News article (April 24, 2023) April 24, 2023 <i>How Do We Know if Nursing Homes are Struggling?</i> By Former State Senator Richard T. Moore, Chair DignityMA Legislative Workgroup Tara Gregorio, who represents the nursing home industry in Massachusetts, called for “greater controls, accountability, and transparency measures on temporary nursing agencies,” she said. “We look forward to continuing to work collaboratively with policymakers and stakeholders to achieve this outcome.” But it’s not only temporary nursing agencies, some of which are owned by companies related to nursing home ownership, explained Richard T. Moore,</p>
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	<p>member of the Leadership Council for National Consumer Voice for Long-Term Care. “The entire nursing home industry needs greater controls, accountability, and transparency measures,” he stated.</p> <p>For greater transparency, a new report, by National Consumer Voice, entitled “Where Do Billions of Dollars Go? A Look at Nursing Home Related Party Transactions,” offers some revealing findings. The report¹ found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite billions of dollars being funneled through related party companies each year, there appears to be little to no scrutiny by the federal government on how this money is spent. • Nursing home owners and operators routinely pay their related parties in excess of reported costs, in some instances by nearly 1200%. • Related parties make nursing homes look less profitable, while a closer look reveals that profits may be hidden in related party transactions. • Cost reports do not capture enough information on related party transactions to enable CMS to fulfill its regulatory obligation to ensure taxpayer dollars are going towards care and not profits to owners and operators <p>Moore, a former State Senator who once chaired the Senate’s Health Care Financing Committee, said that Massachusetts may be well-positioned to determine the true picture of nursing home finances by analyzing nursing home costs reports if they comply with state regulations requiring related party financial reports.² He was the lead Senate negotiator on the state’s Health Care Cost Containment Law, the established the Center for Health Information and Analysis (CHIA) (C. 224 of the Acts of 2012), the agency that collects and analyzes nursing home cost reports.</p> <p>“A full analysis of nursing home cost reports, including charges by related parties, could determine whether and how much nursing homes really need to provide quality care for their residents, according to Moore. “At present,” he explained, “legislators really don’t know if they need additional public dollars to provide adequate, qualified caregiving staff.”</p> <p>Although the Legislature has mandated that 75% of funding for nursing homes be spent on hiring and retaining staff, no audit has been conducted to determine of those funds have actually gone to staff or into the pockets of owners and investors in nursing homes, according to Moore.</p>
Guardianship	<p>9. 1A NPR April 18, 2023 <i>Local Spotlight: The dangers of guardianship programs</i></p> <p>There are an estimated 1.5 million active adult guardianship cases across the country. It’s a massive industry, with guardians controlling an estimated \$50 billion in assets. Advocates for guardianship reform say a lack of oversight leads to many reported instances of fraud and abuse.</p> <p>Two new investigations from Bloomberg Law and WLRN News found guardianships can harm some of the most vulnerable members of society with little legal recourse. In South Florida, the Guardianship Program of Dade County sold at least a dozen homes of “incapacitated” people under their care to one Miami real estate company, Express Homes.</p> <p>Those houses were often resold for hundreds of thousands of dollars more than</p>

¹ [2023-Related-Party-Report.pdf \(theconsumervoice.org\)](#)

² [957 CMR 7 \(mass.gov\)](#)

the purchase value. Carlos Morales is the owner of Express homes and his wife is Miami City attorney Victoria Méndez. The couple has claimed any allegations of impropriety are baseless. Miami-Dade County has asked the Guardianship program to temporarily halt the sale of any new homes while they investigate their real estate practices.

The *Bloomberg Law* investigation underscores how essential rights of those in guardianship can be taken away, the vast amounts of money companies can gain from their clients, and the challenges of terminating a guardianship once it's begun.

Sara Abbott in Indiana [was under guardianship for more than six years](#). A court appointed attorney took over as her guardian from her mother in 2021 and controlled all of the funds she received from social security. After years of fighting, she was able to terminate her guardianship last month.

Last month, the [Senate Special Committee on Aging](#) held a hearing focused on improving guardianships in response to the investigations.

<https://tinyurl.com/1ADangersOfGuardianship>

10. WLRN Miami

March 7, 2023

UNGUARDED: The Guardianship Program of Dade sells properties of 'incapacitated' people to a Miami realtor, who reaps big gains

By Daniel Rivero, Joshua Ceballos

[WLRN News](#)

11. Bloomberg Law

March 6, 2023

Guardians' Dark Side: Lax Rules Open the Vulnerable to Abuse

By Ronnie Greene and Holly Barker

The US adult guardianship industry is regulated loosely and ripe for exploitation of elderly and disabled people, Bloomberg Law found in a six-month investigation.

[Guardians Dark Side](#)

12. Bloomberg Law

March 7, 2023

Judge's Errors, Jail Threats Haunt Georgia Family's Guardianship

By Ronnie Greene

Judges approve petitions and provide oversight in adult guardianship cases. But what happens when their rulings are faulty? A Georgia family's guardianship case shows what can occur when judicial rulings collide with a family's intentions.

[The Judges](#)

13. Bloomberg Law

March 8, 2023

420 Cases, One Guardian: System Runs Amok on Just \$35 a Month

By Ronnie Greene

No national standards limit the number of cases guardians can juggle. In Indiana, one guardian has represented more than 400 clients in recent years, a telling snapshot of a system lacking rigor. The guardian says she must carry that caseload to survive.

[The Guardians](#)

14. Bloomberg Law

March 9, 2023

	<p><i>Peter Max's Bare Ledgers Show Guardianships Drain Even the Rich</i> By Ronnie Greene From state to state, legal fees can absorb huge portions of guardianship estates and deplete the funds of adults under court control. Two cases, worlds apart in locale and logistics, lay bare the chaos of the system, Bloomberg Law found. The Lawyers</p> <p>15. Bloomberg Law March 10, 2023 <i>Guardians' Abuses Persist as One State's Easy Fix Goes Unmatched</i> By Ronnie Greene Nevada has adopted a legal reform that eliminates unnecessary guardianships and seeks to prevent the type of fraud and abuses examined in a Bloomberg Law series. Why hasn't the rest of the country followed suit? A Solution</p> <p>16. American Bar Association December 2022 <i>Representation and Investigation in Guardianship Proceedings Statutory Revisions as of December 2022</i> State by state survey of right to counsel and required documentation in guardianship proceedings. 2022 ABA survey</p>
Disability Topics	<p>17. NPR April 24, 2023 <i>Edgy or insensitive? The Paralympics TikTok account sparks a debate</i> By Rachel Treisman The next Paralympic Games are more than a year away, but they are top of mind for many thanks to their official — and controversial — TikTok account. The account, which has over 3 million followers, posts highlight reels of Para athletes: world-class competitors with impairments that fall into 10 categories including limb deficiency, impaired muscle power and vision impairment. Some of the Paralympics TikToks explain how the equipment and adaptations work for different sports, like penalty kicks in blind football or the assisted boccia ball setup. Most are set to viral social media sounds or songs — and many show the athletes falling or crashing into each other. . . The reaction to the Paralympics TikTok videos has been overwhelmingly negative — but not entirely so. Those who run the account, and some of the athletes who have been featured on it, say it's an important way to increase visibility. . . André Ramos, a bronze medalist in boccia who was also the subject of a TikTok, told the outlet that "making fun with our handicaps is a sign that we accept ourselves as we are and that others do not see the disability as a difference." Edgy or insensitive</p> <p>18. NPR My Unsung Hero from Hidden Brain April 24, 2023 <i>After Mike fell on a busy sidewalk, a stranger helped in just the right way</i> In February 2000, Mike Huddleston was traveling for a training. He had flown from Maryland to San Francisco and needed to get to a rental car agency. But because of a degenerative neuromuscular condition that weakens his muscles, he wouldn't be able to climb the stairs of the shuttle bus. Instead, the car agency sent someone to pick him up. But as he was walking</p>

	<p>outside to meet them, he fell. And due to his condition, he couldn't get up. . .</p> <p>Due to his condition, Huddleston needed something to push up on, like a bench or a chair. But there was nothing around that fit that description.</p> <p>Huddleston described what the man could do to help him get off the ground. Once he got him up, the man fetched Huddleston's baggage, which had rolled a few feet away when he fell. . .</p> <p>This encounter struck Huddleston. Not just because of the man's kindness, but also because of the way he offered that kindness. His unsung hero didn't step in and start helping when he saw Huddleston on the ground. He took a moment to ask Huddleston how he could help.</p> <p>Fell on Busy Sidewalk</p>
Older Workers	<p>19. U. S. Senate Special Committee on Aging April 20, 2023 <i>Beyond the 9 to 5: Dismantling Barriers and Building Economic Resilience for Older Workers</i></p> <p>On Thursday, April 20, U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging Chairman Bob Casey (D-PA) held a hearing entitled, "Beyond the 9 to 5: Dismantling Barriers and Building Economic Resilience for Older Workers," which examined the barriers older workers face in the workplace. Older Americans are working longer than ever before, many remaining in the workforce to make ends meet or regain income lost while caregiving.</p> <p>During the hearing, Chairman Casey highlighted his recently-introduced, bipartisan Protecting Older Workers Against Discrimination Act (POWADA), which would make it easier for employees to prove when they are a victim of age discrimination in the workplace. Older workers are currently required to meet a significantly higher burden of proof when alleging age discrimination than is required of workers alleging other forms of workplace discrimination.</p> <p>"Far too many older Americans face barriers to advance their careers or save for retirement because of age discrimination," said Chairman Casey. "We can level the playing field for older workers and restore safeguards against age-based discrimination by passing my <i>Protecting Older Workers Against Discrimination Act</i>, as well as by strengthening unions and bolstering workplace protections. As we build a better economy, we must ensure older Americans are given the support and protection they need to reach economic security."</p> <p>Older workers are more likely to have a work-limiting health condition or a disability. While many aging workers occupy and can perform jobs without accommodation, others face challenges in applying for, accepting, or maintaining jobs due to a health condition or disability that may not always be obvious to managers and coworkers. These include physical barriers, such as inaccessible work locations and equipment, as well as workplace procedures or practices, such as rules pertaining to when work can be performed.</p> <p>According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, only 61 percent of workers have access to a defined contribution plan through their employers. Coverage is even lower among workers in low-wage and part-time jobs, and among those who work for small employers. Career disruptions due to a disability, health shocks, caregiving responsibilities, or unemployment are also common barriers to retirement plan access, participation, and contribution.</p> <p>Chairman Casey invited Dave McLimans, a retired steelworker from Parkesburg, PA, to testify about his experience supporting older workers' transitions into</p>

	<p>retirement. He testified, “I didn’t serve my country, work, and pay taxes for 44 years just to let my voice fade away or see younger generations lose benefits I fought for my whole life...I urge you to not cut or change benefits for Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. We are the richest democracy on earth, we can afford to allow workers to retire with dignity.”</p> <p>Beyond 9 to 5</p>
Covid	<p>20. The PRX Exchange April 18, 2023 <i>The COVID Tracking Project Part 1</i> The United States has 4% of the world’s population but 16% of COVID-19 deaths. This series investigates the failures by federal agencies that led to over 1 million Americans dying from COVID-19 and what that tells us about the nation’s ability to fight the next pandemic. Epidemiologist Jessica Malaty Rivera is the host for this three-part series. Artis Curiskis and Kara Oehler produced and reported. The first episode takes us back to February 2020, when reporters Rob Meyer and Alexis Madrigal from The Atlantic were trying to find solid data about the rising pandemic. They published a story that revealed a scary truth: The U.S. didn’t know where COVID-19 was spreading because few tests were available. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also didn’t have public data to tell citizens or federal agencies how many people were infected or where the outbreaks were happening. https://beta.prx.org/stories/468936</p> <p>21. The PRX Exchange April 20, 2023 <i>The COVID Tracking Project Part 2</i> This is the second episode in our three-part series taking listeners inside the failed federal response to COVID-19. In episode two, series host Jessica Malaty Rivera, along with reporters Artis Curiskis and Kara Oehler, asks a profound question: Why was there no good U.S. data about COVID-19? In March 2020, White House Coronavirus Task Force coordinator Dr. Deborah Birx had a daunting task for healthcare technologist Amy Gleason, a new member of her data team. Her job was to figure out where people were testing positive for COVID-19 across the country, how many were in hospitals and how many had died from the disease. Accounting for national numbers about the disease was extremely difficult, because when COVID-19 hit, the federal government had no system set up to get data from each state. Gleason was shocked to find that data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention wasn’t reflecting the immediate impact of the coronavirus. At the same time, the country was suffering from another huge shortfall: a lack of COVID-19 tests. As a congressional hearing in March 2020 clearly exposed, the CDC had created only 75,000 tests and had no plans to create the millions needed to make testing available nationwide. Dr. Birx and the Task Force also faced national shortages of medical supplies like masks and ventilators and lacked basic information about COVID-19 hospitalizations that would help them know where to send supplies. Realizing that the federal government was failing to collect national data, reporters at The Atlantic formed The COVID Tracking Project. Across all 50 states, hundreds of volunteers began gathering crucial information on the</p>

	<p>number of cases, deaths, and hospitalizations. Each day, they compiled the state COVID-19 data in a massive spreadsheet, creating the nation’s most reliable picture of the spread of the deadly disease.</p> <p>https://beta.prx.org/stories/469942</p>
End of Life	<p>22. *New York Times April 23, 2023 <i>Talking With Patients About Death</i> Letters to the Editor in response to “As a Doctor, I Know Being Ready to Die Is an Illusion,” by Dr. Sunita Puri (Opinion guest essay, April 2) NYT Letters to the Editor</p>
Loneliness / Social Isolation	<p>23. *The Washington Post April 22, 2023 <i>How — and why — you should increase your social network as you age</i> By Judith Graham What can older adults who have lost their closest friends and family members do as they contemplate the future without them? If, as research has found, good relationships are essential to health and well-being in later life, what happens when connections are forged over the years end? It would be foolish to suggest these relationships can be easily replaced: They cannot. There’s no substitute for people who’ve known you a long time, who understand you deeply. Still, opportunities to create bonds with other people exist. “It’s never too late to develop meaningful relationships,” said Robert Waldinger, a clinical professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and director of the Harvard Study of Adult Development. That study, now in its 85th year, has shown that people with strong connections to family, friends and their communities are “happier, physically healthier, and live longer than people who are less well connected,” according to “The Good Life: Lessons From the World’s Longest Scientific Study of Happiness,” a new book describing its findings, co-written by Waldinger and Marc Schulz, the Harvard study’s associate director. . . Research confirms that virtual connections have benefits as well as drawbacks. On one hand, older adults who routinely connect with other people via cellphones and computers are less likely to be socially isolated than those who don’t, several studies suggest. . . But when face-to-face contact with other people diminishes significantly — or disappears altogether, as was true for millions of older adults in the past three years — seniors are more likely to be lonely and depressed, other studies have found. . . Meanwhile, millions of seniors — disproportionately those who are low-income, represent racial and ethnic minorities, or are older than 80 — cannot afford computers or broadband access or aren’t comfortable using anything but the phone to reach out to others. Social Networks as You Age</p>
Elder abuse / scams	<p>24. *Boston Herald April 24, 2023 <i>Boston Police sound alarm on new round of scams impacting seniors: ‘Don’t give out your personal information’</i> The “Paving Contractor” or “Home Improvement” scams may look like door-to-door solicitation for building work with classic warning signs — offering</p>

	<p>unrealistic discounts, putting pressure on buyers, and asking for checks to individuals instead of companies. The scams escalate from \$1,500 paving or masonry repair to tens of thousands of dollars of “foundational damage,” the BPD notice said.</p> <p>These scams are just some of many that can hit elderly residents particularly hard — listed with telemarketing, Medicare and health insurance fraud on the National Council on Aging site.</p> <p>With the wide range of scams, protection against them can be tricky. Tip-offs to the latest “Home Improvement” scams in the Boston area may include door-to-door solicitation or slick flyers with uninspired business names, discounts because of “left over materials” from neighborhood jobs and threatening or intimidating demeanor after initial work, the police listed.</p> <p>Police Sound Alarm</p>
	*May require registration before accessing article.
Dignity Alliance Massachusetts Legislative Endorsements	<p>Information about the legislative bills which have been endorsed by Dignity Alliance Massachusetts, including the text of the bills, can be viewed at: https://tinyurl.com/DignityLegislativeEndorsements</p> <p>Questions or comments can be directed to Legislative Work Group Chair Richard (Dick) Moore at rmoore8473@charter.net.</p>
Websites	<p>AARP Fraud Watch AARP Fraud Watch</p> <p>The AARP Fraud Watch Network™ is a free resource for all. With AARP as your partner, you’ll learn how to proactively spot scams, get guidance from our fraud specialists if you’ve been targeted, and feel more secure knowing that we advocate at the federal, state, and local levels to protect consumers and enforce the law.</p> <p>Better Business Bureau Scam Tracker https://www.bbb.org/scamtracker/lookupscam</p> <p>You can search the scamtracker database using one or many options available under the "Lookup Scam By" section.</p>
Previously recommended websites	The comprehensive list of recommended websites has migrated to the Dignity Alliance MA website: https://dignityalliancema.org/resources/ . Only new recommendations will be listed in <i>The Dignity Digest</i> .
Previously posted funding opportunities	For open funding opportunities previously posted in <i>The Tuesday Digest</i> please see https://dignityalliancema.org/funding-opportunities/ .
Websites of Dignity Alliance Massachusetts Members	See: https://dignityalliancema.org/about/organizations/
Nursing homes with admission freezes	<p>Massachusetts Department of Public Health <i>Temporary admissions freeze</i></p> <p>On November 6, 2021 the state announced that it would require certain high risk nursing homes and rest homes to temporarily stop all new admissions to protect the health and safety of residents and prevent further COVID-19 transmission.</p> <p>Stopping admissions enables homes to focus resources such as staff and PPE on the health and safety of its current residents and enables the home to stabilize before taking on new residents. Homes that meet certain criteria will be required to stop any new admissions until the Department of Public Health has determined that conditions have improved, and the facility is ready to safely</p>

care for new residents. The Commonwealth will work closely with homes during this time and provide supports as needed to ensure resident health and safety.

- There are a number of reasons why a facility may be required to stop admissions, and the situation in each facility is different. Some of the factors the state uses to make this decision include:
- Number of new COVID-19 cases within the facility
- Staffing levels
- Failure to report a lack of adequate PPE, supplies, or staff
- Infection control survey results
- Surveillance testing non-compliance

Facilities are required to notify residents’ designated family members and/or representatives when the facility is subject to an admissions freeze. In addition, a list of facilities that are currently required to stop new admissions and the reason for this admissions freeze will be updated on Friday afternoons, and as needed when the Department of Public of Health determines a facility can be removed from the list.

Updated on April 20, 2023. Red font – newly added

Name of Facility	City/Town	Date of Freeze	Qualifying Factor	Star Rating
Baker-Katz Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation Center	Haverhill	4/18/2023	Cases	2
Sancta Maria Nursing Facility	Cambridge	3/29/2023	Cases	3

List of Special Focus Facilities

Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services

List of Special Focus Facilities and Candidates

<https://tinyurl.com/SpecialFocusFacilityProgram>

Updated March 29, 2023

CMS has published a new list of Special Focus Facilities (SFF). SFFs are nursing homes with serious quality issues based on a calculation of deficiencies cited during inspections and the scope and severity level of those citations. CMS publicly discloses the names of the facilities chosen to participate in this program and candidate nursing homes.

To be considered for the SFF program, a facility must have a history (at least 3 years) of serious quality issues. These nursing facilities generally have more deficiencies than the average facility, and more serious problems such as harm or injury to residents. Special Focus Facilities have more frequent surveys and are subject to progressive enforcement until it either graduates from the program or is terminated from Medicare and/or Medicaid.

This is important information for consumers – particularly as they consider a nursing home.

What can advocates do with this information?

- Include the list of facilities in your area/state when providing information to consumers who are looking for a nursing home. Include an explanation of the SFF program and the candidate list.
- Post the list on your program’s/organization’s website (along with the explanation noted above).
- Encourage current residents and families to check the list to see if their facility is included.
- Urge residents and families in a candidate facility to ask the administrator what is being done to improve care.
- Suggest that resident and family councils invite the administrator to a

council meeting to talk about what the facility is doing to improve care, ask for ongoing updates, and share any council concerns.

- For long-term care ombudsmen representatives: Meet with the administrator to discuss what the facility is doing to address problems and share any resources that might be helpful.

Massachusetts facilities listed (updated March 29, 2023)

Newly added to the listing

- Somerset Ridge Center, Somerset
<https://somersestridgerehab.com/>
Nursing home inspect information:
<https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225747>
- South Dennis Healthcare
<https://www.nextstephc.com/southdennis>
Nursing home inspect information:
<https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225320>

Massachusetts facilities not improved

- None

Massachusetts facilities which showed improvement

- Marlborough Hills Rehabilitation and Health Care Center, Marlborough
<https://tinyurl.com/MarlboroughHills>
Nursing home inspect information:
<https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225063>

Massachusetts facilities which have graduated from the program

- The Oxford Rehabilitation & Health Care Center, Haverhill
<https://theoxfordrehabhealth.com/>
Nursing home inspect information:
<https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225218>
- Worcester Rehabilitation and Health Care Center, Worcester
<https://worcesterrehabcare.com/>
Nursing home inspect information:
<https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225199>

Massachusetts facilities that are candidates for listing (months on list)

- Charwell House Health and Rehabilitation, Norwood (15)
<https://tinyurl.com/Charwell>
Nursing home inspect information:
<https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225208>
- Glen Ridge Nursing Care Center (1)
<https://www.genesishcc.com/glenridge>
Nursing home inspect information:
<https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225523>
- Hathaway Manor Extended Care (1)
<https://hathawaymanor.org/>
Nursing home inspect information:
<https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225366>
- Medway Country Manor Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation, Medway (1)
<https://www.medwaymanor.com/>
Nursing home inspect information:
<https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225412>
- Mill Town Health and Rehabilitation, Amesbury (14)
No website

	<p>Nursing home inspect information: https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225318</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plymouth Rehabilitation and Health Care Center (10) https://plymouthrehab.com/ <p>Nursing home inspect information: https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225207</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tremont Health Care Center, Wareham (10) https://thetremontrehabcare.com/ <p>Nursing home inspect information: https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225488</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vantage at Wilbraham (5) No website <p>Nursing home inspect information: https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225295</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vantage at South Hadley (12) No website <p>Nursing home inspect information: https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225757 https://tinyurl.com/SpecialFocusFacilityProgram</p>																								
<p><i>Nursing Home Inspect</i></p>	<p>ProPublica <i>Nursing Home Inspect</i> Data updated November 2022 This app uses data from the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. Fines are listed for the past three years if a home has made partial or full payment (fines under appeal are not included). Information on deficiencies comes from a home’s last three inspection cycles, or roughly three years in total. The number of COVID-19 cases is since May 8, 2020, when homes were required to begin reporting this information to the federal government (some homes may have included data on earlier cases). Massachusetts listing: https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/state/MA Deficiencies By Severity in Massachusetts (What do the severity ratings mean?)</p> <table border="0"> <thead> <tr> <th># reported</th> <th>Deficiency Tag</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>250</td> <td>B</td> </tr> <tr> <td>82</td> <td>C</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7,056</td> <td>D</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1,850</td> <td>E</td> </tr> <tr> <td>546</td> <td>F</td> </tr> <tr> <td>487</td> <td>G</td> </tr> <tr> <td>31</td> <td>H</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>I</td> </tr> <tr> <td>40</td> <td>J</td> </tr> <tr> <td>7</td> <td>K</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>L</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	# reported	Deficiency Tag	250	B	82	C	7,056	D	1,850	E	546	F	487	G	31	H	1	I	40	J	7	K	2	L
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<p>Nursing Home Compare</p>	<p>Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) <i>Nursing Home Compare Website</i> Beginning January 26, 2022, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is posting new information that will help consumers have a better understanding of certain staffing information and concerns at facilities.</p>																								

	<p>This information will be posted for each facility and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff turnover: The percentage of nursing staff as well as the number of administrators who have stopped working at a nursing home over the past 12-month period. • Weekend staff: The level of weekend staffing for nurses and registered nurses at a nursing home over a three-month period. <p>Posting of this information was required as part of the Affordable Care Act, which was passed in 2010. In many facilities, staffing is lower on weekends, often meaning residents have to wait longer or may not receive all the care they need. High turnover means that staff are less likely to know the residents, recognize changes in condition, or implement preferred methods of providing care. All of this contributes to the quality-of-care residents receive and their quality of life.</p> <p>https://tinyurl.com/NursingHomeCompareWebsite</p>		
Data on Ownership of Nursing Homes	<p>Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services <i>Data on Ownership of Nursing Homes</i> CMS has released data giving state licensing officials, state and federal law enforcement, researchers, and the public an enhanced ability to identify common owners of nursing homes across nursing home locations. This information can be linked to other data sources to identify the performance of facilities under common ownership, such as owners affiliated with multiple nursing homes with a record of poor performance. The data is available on nursing home ownership will be posted to data.cms.gov and updated monthly.</p>		
Long-Term Care Facilities Specific COVID-19 Data	<p>Massachusetts Department of Public Health <i>Long-Term Care Facilities Specific COVID-19 Data</i> <i>Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) reports related to long-term care facilities in Massachusetts.</i></p> <p>Table of Contents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • COVID-19 Daily Dashboard • COVID-19 Weekly Public Health Report • Additional COVID-19 Data • CMS COVID-19 Nursing Home Data 		
DignityMA Call Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MA Senate released a report in response to COVID-19. Download the DignityMA Response to Reimagining the Future of MA. • Advocate for state bills that advance the Dignity Alliance Massachusetts' Mission and Goals – State Legislative Endorsements. • Support relevant bills in Washington – Federal Legislative Endorsements. • Join our Work Groups. • Learn to use and leverage Social Media at our workshops: Engaging Everyone: Creating Accessible, Powerful Social Media Content 		
Access to Dignity Alliance social media	<p>Email: info@DignityAllianceMA.org Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/DignityAllianceMA/ Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/dignityalliance/ LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/company/dignity-alliance-massachusetts Twitter: https://twitter.com/dignity_ma?s=21 Website: www.DignityAllianceMA.org</p>		
Participation opportunities with Dignity	Workgroup	Workgroup lead	Email
	General Membership	Bill Henning Paul Lanzikos	bhenning@bostoncouncil.org paul.lanzikos@gmail.com

<p>Alliance Massachusetts</p> <p>Most workgroups meet bi-weekly via Zoom.</p> <p>Interest Groups meet periodically (monthly, bi-monthly, or quarterly).</p> <p>Please contact group lead for more information.</p>	Behavioral Health	Frank Baskin	baskinfrank19@gmail.com
	Communications	Pricilla O'Reilly Lachlan Forrow	prisoreilly@gmail.com lforrow@bidmc.harvard.edu
	Facilities (Nursing homes, rest homes, assisted living)	Arlene Germain	agermain@manhr.org
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	Covid / Long Covid	James Lomastro	iimlomastro@comcast.net
	Incarcerated Persons	TBD	info@DignityAllianceMA.org
	The Dignity Digest	<p>For a free weekly subscription to <i>The Dignity Digest</i>: https://dignityalliancema.org/contact/sign-up-for-emails/ Editor: Paul Lanzikos Primary contributor: Sandy Novack MailChimp Specialist: Sue Rorke</p>	
Note of thanks	<p>Thanks to the contributors to this issue of <i>The Dignity Digest</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chris Hoeh • Dick Moore <p>Special thanks to the MetroWest Center for Independent Living for assistance with the website and MailChimp versions of <i>The Dignity Digest</i>. <i>If you have submissions for inclusion in <u>The Dignity Digest</u> or have questions or comments, please submit them to Digest@DignityAllianceMA.org.</i></p>		
<p><i>Dignity Alliance Massachusetts is a broad-based coalition of organizations and individuals pursuing fundamental changes in the provision of long-term services, support, and care for older adults and persons with disabilities. Our guiding principle is the assurance of dignity for those receiving the services as well as for those providing them. The information presented in "The Dignity Digest" is obtained from publicly available sources and does not necessarily represent positions held by Dignity Alliance Massachusetts.</i></p> <p><i>Previous issues of The Tuesday Digest and The Dignity Digest are available at: https://dignityalliancema.org/dignity-digest/</i></p> <p><i>For more information about Dignity Alliance Massachusetts, please visit www.DignityAllianceMA.org.</i></p>			