



The Dignity Digest

Issue # 184

April 23, 2024

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.
DignityMA Zoom Sessions	Dignity Alliance Massachusetts participants meet via Zoom every other Tuesday at 2:00 p.m. Sessions are open to all. To receive session notices with agenda and Zoom links, please send a request via info@DignityAllianceMA.org .
Spotlight	<p><u>Biden administration finalizes controversial minimum staffing mandate at nursing homes</u></p> <p>CNN April 22, 2024 By Tami Luhby</p> <p>Nursing Home Staffing Mandate Finalized: Balancing Quality Care and Workforce Shortages</p> <p>The Biden administration has finalized the first-ever federal minimum staffing rule for nursing homes. This controversial mandate aims to address chronic understaffing and improve resident care but faces concerns from the industry about feasibility and potential closures.</p> <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minimum Staffing: Nursing homes must provide at least 3.48 hours of daily nursing care per resident, with defined portions from registered nurses (RNs) and nurse aides.• Phased Implementation: Rural communities will have more time to comply, and temporary exemptions are available for facilities facing workforce shortages.• Industry Pushback: Nursing home operators argue the mandate is unrealistic, citing existing staffing challenges and potential closures.• Cost and Workforce Concerns: The industry estimates hiring over 100,000 additional staff at a significant annual cost, while struggling to find qualified candidates.• Consumer Advocates Unsatisfied: Some consumer groups believe the minimum staffing level is still insufficient to ensure quality care.• Divided Opinions: Legislators are split, with some Democrats supporting the rule and Republicans opposing it due to potential closures.• Labor Unions and Consumer Groups Support Mandate: These groups see the rule as promoting resident and worker safety. <p>Comments about the rule:</p> <p>Sen. Elizabeth Warren, a Democrat of Massachusetts, has called for the administration to finalize the rule and strengthen it.</p>

“This would help improve the quality of care for residents at the same time that it’s improving conditions for the staff who provide this long-term care,” she said at a hearing of the Senate Special Committee on Aging last week.

Other Democratic lawmakers, including Sen. Bob Casey of Pennsylvania and Rep. Richard Neal of Massachusetts, praised the final rule on Monday, saying it will strengthen patient and worker safety.

The Debate:

The Biden administration argues the mandate is necessary to address widespread understaffing, which can lead to poor resident care. The minimum staffing levels are intended to ensure basic needs are met, resident safety is improved, and staff workload is manageable.

Opponents, primarily the nursing home industry, express concerns about the feasibility of the mandate. They argue the already strained workforce will not be able to meet the increased demand, potentially forcing facilities to close. Additionally, they emphasize the significant financial burden of hiring additional staff.

Looking Forward:

The final rule faces potential legal challenges and will require significant adjustments from the nursing home industry. Addressing workforce shortages through funding for recruitment and training programs is crucial for successful implementation. Balancing quality care for residents with the needs and capacity of the nursing home workforce remains a key challenge.

[Fact Sheet: Vice President Harris Announces Historic Advancements in Long-Term Care to Support the Care Economy](#)

The White House

April 22, 2024

Everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect and to have access to quality care. That’s why, today, Vice President Harris is announcing two landmark final rules that fulfill the President’s commitment to safety in care, improving access to long-term care and the quality of caregiving jobs. Ensuring that all Americans, including older Americans and people with disabilities, have access to care – including home-based care – that is safe, reliable, and of high quality is an important part of the President’s agenda and a part of the President’s broader commitment to care. Today’s announcements deliver on the President’s [promise in the State of the Union](#) to crack down on nursing homes that endanger resident safety as well as his historic [Executive Order on Increasing Access to High-Quality Care and Supporting Caregivers](#), which included the most comprehensive set of executive actions any President has taken to improve care for millions of seniors and people with disabilities while supporting care workers and family caregivers.

Cracking Down on Inadequate Nursing Home Care

Medicare and Medicaid pay billions of dollars per year to ensure that 1.2 million Americans that receive care in nursing homes are cared for,

yet too many nursing homes chronically understaff their facilities, leading to sub-standard or unsafe care. When facilities are understaffed, residents may go without basic necessities like baths, trips to the bathroom, and meals – and it is less safe when residents have a medical emergency. Understaffing can also have a disproportionate impact on women and people of color who make up a large proportion of the nursing home workforce because, without sufficient support, these dedicated workers can't provide the care they know the residents deserve. In his 2022 State of the Union address, President Biden pledged that he would “protect seniors’ lives and life savings by cracking down on nursing homes that commit fraud, endanger patient safety, or prescribe drugs they don’t need.”

The Nursing Home Minimum Staffing Rule finalized today will require all nursing homes that receive federal funding through Medicare and Medicaid to have 3.48 hours per resident per day of total staffing, including a defined number from both registered nurses (0.55 hours per resident per day) and nurse aides (2.45 per resident per day). This means a facility with 100 residents would need at least two or three RNs and at least ten or eleven nurse aides as well as two additional nurse staff (which could be registered nurses, licensed professional nurses, or nurse aides) per shift to meet the minimum staffing standards. Many facilities would need to staff at a higher level based on their residents’ needs. It will also require facilities to have a registered nurse onsite 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to provide skilled nursing care, which will further improve nursing home safety. Adequate staffing is proven to be one of the measures most strongly associated with safety and good care outcomes.

To make sure nursing homes have the time they need to hire necessary staff, the requirements of this rule will be introduced in phases, with longer timeframes for rural communities. Limited, temporary exemptions will be available for both the 24/7 registered nurse requirement and the underlying staffing standards for nursing homes in workforce shortage areas that demonstrate a good faith effort to hire.

Strong transparency measures will ensure nursing home residents and their families are aware when a nursing home is using an exemption.

This rule will not only benefit residents and their families, it will also ensure that workers aren't stretched too thin by having inadequate staff on site, which is currently a common reason for worker burnout and turnover. Workers who are on the frontlines interacting with residents and understanding their needs will also be given a voice in developing staffing plans for nursing homes. The Biden-Harris Administration also continues to invest in expanding the pipeline of nursing workers and other care workers, who are so essential to our

	<p>economy, including through funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.</p> <p>Improving Access to Home Care and the Quality of Home Care Jobs</p> <p>Over seven million seniors and people with disabilities, alongside their families, rely on home and community-based services to provide for long-term care needs in their own homes and communities. This critical care is provided by a dedicated home care workforce, made up disproportionately by women of color, that often struggles to make ends meet due to low wages and few benefits. At the same time, home care is still very inaccessible for many Medicaid enrollees, with more than threequarters of home care providers not accepting new clients, leaving hundreds of thousands of older Americans and Americans with disabilities on waiting lists or struggling to afford the care they need.</p> <p>The “Ensuring Access to Medicaid Services” final rule, finalized today, will help improve access to home care services as well as improve the quality caregiving jobs through its new provisions for home care. Specifically, the rule will ensure adequate compensation for home care workers by requiring that at least 80 percent of Medicaid payments for home care services go to workers’ wages. This policy would also allow states to take into account the unique experiences that small home care providers and providers in rural areas face while ensuring their employees receive their fair share of Medicaid payments and continued training as well as the delivery of quality care. Higher wages will likely reduce turnover, leading to higher quality of care for older adults and people with disabilities across the nation, as studies have shown. States will also be required to be more transparent in how much they pay for home care services and how they set those rates, increasing the accountability for home care providers. Finally, states will have to create a home care rate-setting advisory group made up of beneficiaries, home care workers and other key stakeholders to advise and consult on provider payment rates and direct compensation for direct care workers.</p>
<p>Quotes</p>	<p><i>“With this [final rule on minimum nursing home staffing], the Biden Administration sends a powerful message: All nursing homes must be held accountable to minimum staffing standards that will keep residents and workers safe and ensure that public funding is spent in ways that allow caregivers to deliver the best care possible.”</i></p> <p>Mary Kay Henry, international president of SEIU, which represents nursing home workers, Biden administration finalizes controversial minimum staffing mandate at nursing homes, CNN, April 22, 2024</p>

“This [minimum staffing rule will] help improve the quality of care for residents at the same time that it’s improving conditions for the staff who provide this long-term care.”

U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren, [Biden administration finalizes controversial minimum staffing mandate at nursing homes](#), CNN, April 22, 2024

“Punishing people simply for not having a roof over their heads, often due to circumstances outside of their control, completely disregards their dignity and humanity. Criminalizing homelessness will only perpetuate the cycles of instability these individuals face.”

MA Attorney General Andrea Campbell, [AG Campbell Joins Supreme Court Brief Opposing The Criminalization Of Involuntary Homelessness](#), Office of the Massachusetts Attorney General, April 5, 2024

“We all have this universal experience where we’ll need to provide care or need to be cared for at some point. Why not start thinking about it now?”

Francesca Falzarano, assistant professor , University of Southern California Leonard Davis School of Gerontology, [‘Carefluencers’ Are Helping Older Loved Ones, and Posting About It](#), New York Times, April 3, 2024

According to [the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), the number of unpaid caregivers in the United States increased to about 53 million in 2020 from 43.5 million in 2015.

[‘Carefluencers’ Are Helping Older Loved Ones, and Posting About It](#), New York Times, April 3, 2024

“Whether that means helping people find and access appropriate community-based care or housing opportunities, we want everyone to feel empowered in making their own most informed decision.”

Kate Walsh, Secretary, MA Executive Office of Health and Human Services, [Easing exits from nursing homes](#), *Boston Globe, April 22, 2024

“For me, living in a nursing home is like living under martial law. I am determined to return to the community and pray the Agreement will get me a new home so I can leave here.”

Richard Caouette, who lives at a nursing facility in Worcester, [Easing exits from nursing homes](#), ***Boston Globe**, April 22, 2024

“[Bullying is] all across the state, and I bet it’s all across the country. Some people don’t open their mouths because they’re afraid if they say something they’re really going to lose their housing, and it’s wrong.”

State Senator Joan Lovely, [‘I hate where I live’](#), ***Salem News**, April 22, 2024

“I fear for my neighbors. I fear for myself. I fear for my dog.”

Patricia Post, a resident of Apple Village, a subsidized apartment complex in Beverly, who is a former police officer, [‘I hate where I live’](#), ***Salem News**, April 22, 2024

“Why should old people have to live the end of their life with this kind of thing? I hate where I live, and I used to love it.”

Rebecca McIntosh, a resident of Apple Village, a subsidized apartment complex in Beverly, [‘I hate where I live’](#), ***Salem News**, April 22, 2024

“The homeless crisis is a symptom of the housing crisis. We have very little housing and the housing we do have is very expensive, and that drives people onto the street.”

Doug Walker, a member of the Grants Pass, Oregon Housing Advisory Committee, [As Supreme Court takes up homeless ban, a city’s unhoused feel abandoned](#), ***Washington Post**, April 20, 2024

“I want our public spaces to be safe and clean and used as they were intended and I also want to make sure that homeless people have a place where they can be safe and sleep and get help if they want to get help. And I think we can have both, but not everybody thinks that.”

	<p>Grants Pass, Oregon Mayor Sara Bristol, As Supreme Court takes up homeless ban, a city's unhoused feel abandoned, *Washington Post, April 20, 2024</p> <p><i>“This combination of ordinances makes it unlawful for people to live outside on every inch of public property in Grants Pass [Oregon] 24 hours a day. It’s terrible policy, it’s morally wrong and it’s unconstitutional.”</i></p> <p>Ed Johnson, director of litigation at the Oregon Law Center and lead attorney for the plaintiffs in the pending Supreme Court case, As Supreme Court takes up homeless ban, a city's unhoused feel abandoned, *Washington Post, April 20, 2024</p> <p><i>Staff turnover is over 60%, pay is exceedingly low, staff are undervalued, and, if that wasn't enough, they are scapegoated for harms caused by owners' prioritizing profits over care. This mostly for-profit industry is made up of investors and equity interests, including so-called "related parties" who siphon off cash to make it appear as if the nursing home is losing money.</i></p> <p><i>A recent study titled "Tunneling and Hidden Profits in Health Care" proves this point. Lack of transparency in where the hundreds of billions of taxpayer dollars are actually going is a monumental problem</i></p> <p>Nursing home industry scare tactics must not derail long-overdue staffing rules, Des Moines Register, April 21, 2024</p> <p><i>“Antipsychotic medications are especially dangerous among the nursing home population because of their potentially devastating side effects, including death, and the use of antipsychotic medications among nursing home residents is an indicator of nursing home quality.”</i></p> <p>Per a CMS spokesperson as told to The Maine Monitor, Use of antipsychotics in Maine nursing homes climbs, The Maine Monitor, April 21, 2024</p>
<p>Guide to news items in this week’s Dignity Digest</p>	<p>FY 2025 State Budget House Budget Week (State House News, April 19, 2024) Nursing Homes</p>

	<p><u>Medicare audits 'ramping up' with isolation coding in the crosshairs</u> (McKnights Long-Term Care News, April 22, 2024) <u>Easing exits from nursing homes</u> (*Boston Globe, April 22, 2024) <u>Nursing home industry scare tactics must not derail long-overdue staffing rules</u> (Des Moines Register, April 21, 2024)</p> <p>Home and Community Based Services <u>Senators Hassan and Vance Introduce Continuous Skilled Nursing Quality Improvement Act</u> (Senator Maggie Hassan Press Release, April 17, 2024)</p> <p>Homelessness <u>As Supreme Court takes up homeless ban, a city's unhoused feel abandoned</u> (*Washington Post, April 20, 2024) <u>AG Campbell Joins Supreme Court Brief Opposing The Criminalization Of Involuntary Homelessness</u> (Office of the Massachusetts Attorney General, April 5, 2024)</p> <p>Bullying <u>'I hate where I live'</u> (*Salem News, April 22, 2024)</p> <p>Behavioral Health <u>Nature Rx</u> (The Healthy Aging and Resilient Places (HARP) Lab, University of Utah)</p> <p>Aging Topics <u>The City Looks Different When You're Older</u> (New York Times (interactive))</p> <p>Caregiving <u>'Carefluencers' Are Helping Older Loved Ones, and Posting About It</u> (New York Times, April 3, 2024)</p> <p>Transportation <u>Transportation for Seniors (T4S): Developing a New Accessibility Measure to Support Older Adults in a Post-Pandemic World</u> (The Healthy Aging and Resilient Places (HARP) Lab, University of Utah)</p> <p>From around the Country <u>Changing demographics in nursing homes across N.Y. state</u> (Spectrum News One, April 21, 2024) <u>Use of antipsychotics in Maine nursing homes climbs</u> (The Maine Monitor, April 21, 2024)</p>
<p>Listening Sessions</p>	<p>1. Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities <u>Statewide Housing Plan Regional Listening Sessions</u> Governor Healey has directed the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) to develop a five-year strategic Statewide Housing Plan – the first in MA in over 40 years! To ensure the Plan captures the voices of MA constituents and housing stakeholders, EOHLC is holding several Regional Listening Sessions across MA to seek input on the Plan.</p> <p>Regional Listening Sessions Agenda</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief overview of MA's housing environment • Breakout groups for attendees to discuss top housing challenges and potential solutions • Attendees reconvene for closing remarks <p>Schedule:</p>

	Date:	Location:	City:	Time:	RSVP:
	Thursday, April 11	North Shore Community College	Lynn	1pm-3pm	Register here
	Tuesday, April 23	Springfield Technical C.C.	Springfield	9am-11am	Register here
	Tuesday, April 30	UMass Dartmouth	Dartmouth	11am-1pm	Register here
	Friday, May 3	Massasoit Community College	Brockton	2pm-4pm	Register here
	Thursday, May 9	UMass Boston	Boston	10am-12pm	Register here
	Wed. May 15	Berkshire Community College	Pittsfield	2pm-4pm	Register here
	Thursday, May 16	Greenfield Community College	Greenfield	2pm-4pm	Register here
	Monday, May 20	Virtual	ZOOM	5:30pm- 7:30pm	Register here
	Tuesday, May 21	Blackstone Visitor Center	Worcester	10am-12pm	Register here
	Thursday, May 23	United Teen Equality Center (Utec)	Lowell	1pm-3pm	Register here
	Wed. May 29	Virtual	ZOOM	5:30pm- 7:30pm	Register here
	Friday, May 31	Framingham State University	Framingham	1pm-3pm	Register here
	Monday, June 3	Cape Cod Community College	Barnstable	10am-12pm	Register here
	Tuesday, June 4	Oak Bluffs Library	Martha's Vineyard	1pm-3pm	Register here
	Downloads <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statewide Housing Plan Regional Listening Sessions Overview Presentation • Data from North Shore Regional Listening Session 				
Public Appointment Opportunity	2. Massachusetts Board of Nursing Consumer Seat The MA Board of Nursing is seeking qualified individuals to be appointed to two vacant consumer seats on the Board. The statute which established the Board requires that the consumer board member be knowledgeable in consumer health concerns and shall neither be, nor				

	<p>ever have been, associated directly or indirectly with the provision of health care.</p> <p>Board members are appointed by the Governor to a term of three years. The Board meets monthly on the second Wednesday of the month and conducts a Complaint Committee meeting twice a month. The members are expected to attend the monthly Board meetings as well as at least three Complaint Committee meetings a year. Both the Board meeting and Complaint Committee meetings are held virtually. All meeting materials are distributed to the members via a secure electronic document sharing system two weeks in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>The full statute may be found at: General Law - Part I, Title II, Chapter 13, Section 13 (malegislature.gov)</p> <p>Apply via email to Heather Cambra, Executive Director, at heather.j.cambra@mass.gov indicating your interest in a consumer seat and provides. Attach your most recent resume/CV.</p>
Funding Opportunities	<p>3. National Council on Aging <i>National Falls Prevention Resource Center</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation in Falls Prevention, applications due April 30, 2024 • National Falls Prevention Fellowship Program, applications due May 10, 2024
Public Events	<p>4. The Arc of Massachusetts Saturday, April 27, 2024, 8:30 a.m.to 4:00 p.m. Worcester State University <i>2024 Transition Conference: The Transitions Journeys</i> The Transition Journeys will feature timely and relevant information about the transition from school programs to adult services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities or autism when they turn 22 years old. All attendees can choose from 17 workshops being offered across three sessions and can each attend three workshops total. Tickets are \$79 per person. Space is limited. REGISTER NOW</p> <p>5. Older Adult Behavioral Health Network (OABHN) Wednesday, May 8, 2024, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The Hogan Center, College of the Holy Cross, 1 College Street, Worcester <i>2024 OABHN Conference, "Leading Change: Making a Difference at the Intersection of Practice, Policy, and Lived Experience"</i> The annual conference offers an engaging day of plenary and workshop sessions to cultivate leaders from within the aging services workforce to influence policy, programs, and public understanding of the mental health needs of older adults. Join colleagues from around Massachusetts to learn to use your voice for positive change! REGISTER TODAY</p>
Recruitment	<p>6. The Price Center <i>Executive Director</i> The Price Center in Newton, MA empowers, encourages, and cares for individuals with special gifts, needs, and abilities. The Price Center offers Community Day Programs, Employment Services, Day Habilitation, and Community Living programs that foster self-confidence and maximize physical, emotional, and intellectual capabilities, while striving to help each individual live as independently as possible in the larger community.</p>

Webinars and Other Online Sessions	Apply: https://apptrkr.com/5132648
	<p>7. The Studio at Harvard Chan School Wednesday, April 24, 2024, 1:00 p.m. <i><u>A reexamination of aging: Living longer, happier, and healthier</u></i> <i>A Dr. Lawrence H. and Roberta Cohn Forum</i> Thanks to advances in medicine and technology, middle-aged and younger people in many countries can anticipate living years longer than previous generations. But what do these additional years imply for personal health, finances, relationships, and sense of purpose — and for societal structures and public policy? In this panel discussion, experts will explore what it means not just to age, but to live long and well, both for individuals and for their communities.</p> <p>Speakers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marisol Amaya, Executive Director, La Alianza Hispana • Caitlin Coyle, Director, Center for Social & Demographic Research on Aging, UMass Boston • Andrew Scott, Professor of Economics at London Business School; HSPH-appointed Research Collaborator; Author, <i>The Longevity Imperative: Building a Better Society for Healthier, Longer Lives</i> • Ashwin Vasani, New York City Health Commissioner • Moderator, Kay Lazar, Reporter, <i>The Boston Globe</i> <p>Register to receive a link to watch and submit your questions.</p> <p>8. National Council on Aging Thursday, April 25, 2024, <i><u>Addressing the Shortage: The Current State of the Direct Care Workforce</u></i> Join us for an insightful webinar addressing the critical issue of the direct care workforce shortage, current policy initiatives and solutions to address it. Hosted by the Direct Care Workforce Strategies Center and the Bipartisan Policy Center, the session aims to equip participants with dynamic insights and innovative strategies, empowering them to effectively combat the dire shortage of direct care workers. With a deep dive into research and data collection efforts, we will discuss reported findings as well as social impact, the value of career development for workers, and promising initiatives. Additionally, a panel discussion will feature experts from various Strategies Center partners to share their perspectives on ensuring supportive environments, growing the workforce, and improving data collection. Tune in April 25 @ 2 p.m. ET</p> <p>9. National Council on Aging <i><u>7th annual Older Adult Mental Health Awareness Day Symposium</u></i> The National Council on Aging is proud to host the 7th annual Older Adult Mental Health Awareness Day Symposium. This event is co-sponsored with the U.S. Administration for Community Living, the Health Resources and Services Administration, and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Registration is free and includes a full day of sessions on how to best meet the mental health needs of older adults. In partnership with Rush University's E4 Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health Disparities in Aging, NCOA anticipates offering free continuing education credit for several professions. Please visit the Continuing Education page for more information.</p>

	<p>Be sure to join us on May 2 starting at 10:00 am EST for the welcome and keynote speaker, Jenifer Lewis.</p> <p>Register</p>
<p>Previously posted webinars and online sessions</p>	<p>Previously posted webinars and online sessions can be viewed at: https://dignityalliancema.org/webinars-and-online-sessions/</p>
<p>FY 2025 State Budget</p>	<p>10. State House News April 19, 2024 House Budget Week The House bangs into its annual budget deliberations Wednesday, and after top legislators overestimated tax collections, it will be interesting to see how much debate centers around the revenue-related amendments that kick off the multi-day session. Representatives have 1,495 amendments to sift through, or at least Ways and Means Chairman Aaron Michlewitz and his staff do. It's a week when a good relationship with the budget chairman and potential next speaker could prove fruitful. There's an average of 9.3 amendments per representative, basically the same volume of amendments filed for the past couple years. More than 70 percent of the proposed add-ons are spending earmarks, according to a Mass. Taxpayers Foundation review. The House tacked on \$129.7 million via amendment during last year's budget session, but this year could see more attention to a strict bottom line. Gov. Maura Healey's fiscal 2025 spending plan called for \$58.1 billion in appropriations while House leadership's initial proposal, rolled out a couple weeks ago, currently stands at \$57.9 billion ahead of next week's amend-a-thon. Around 400 of the amendments are policy sections, the MTF found. With many communities on edge due to the Steward Health Care crisis, and many residents around the state fired up about government spending on the migrant housing crisis, this year's budget session perhaps might see some extended debate around those topics, some forced roll calls that might make incumbents uncomfortable in an election year, or an opportunity for House leaders to give incumbents from purple districts an assist with their reelection efforts. The budget week, less aptly named than usual, starts a couple days later this year to keep the first couple nights of Passover clear.</p>
<p>Nursing Homes</p>	<p>11. McKnights Long-Term Care News April 22, 2024 Medicare audits 'ramping up' with isolation coding in the crosshairs By Josh Henreckson Increased Scrutiny on Nursing Home Isolation Coding During Audits Focus on Documentation: Medicare is ramping up audits of nursing homes, with a particular focus on how they document isolation protocols for residents. This comes amidst a staffing shortage in long-term care facilities, raising concerns about potential errors in documentation due to time constraints. Risks of Improper Coding: Incomplete or inaccurate documentation can lead to reduced reimbursements for nursing homes. Isolation coding is a high-risk area because it impacts payments significantly.</p> <p>12. *Boston Globe April 22, 2024 Easing exits from nursing homes</p>

By Jason Laughlin

Mass. commits \$1b to pay for thousands to leave the facilities after settlement

Nursing home residents should find it dramatically easier to return to their communities after Massachusetts committed to spending \$1 billion over the next eight years for new housing and community support for people seeking to leave long-term care facilities.

The commitment was part of a settlement in a lawsuit filed in US District Court by the Massachusetts Senior Action Council and seven nursing home residents who wanted to return to their communities but could not find housing to accommodate them. The plaintiffs had physical or mental disabilities but could live outside a nursing home setting with some supports, said Steven Schwartz, a lawyer from the Center for Public Representation and one of the attorneys for the plaintiffs. He estimated that a majority of the state's 21,000 Medicaid recipients receiving long-term care at nursing facilities would be eligible to leave for community settings. . .

The settlement would apply to all nursing home residents on Medicaid, who make up the vast majority of those in long-term residential care. . . The reforms should allow at least 2,400 Medicaid recipients in nursing homes to transition to different residences over eight years, the state Executive Office of Health and Human Services said. The state agreed to use an array of tools, including subsidized housing, expanded access to 24-hour residential care, and \$100,000 dedicated to significant accessibility modifications to at least 120 residences, allowing some people to return to their homes. . .

In a key condition of the settlement, the state also committed to an education program to inform nursing home residents of their expanded living options and help those who want to move plan for their transitions. The plan would bring transition liaisons to nursing homes weekly to meet with residents and provide visits to alternative living arrangements in the community, giving them in-person experience with other residential options. Residents would have access to culturally sensitive consultations in their native language.

13. Des Moines Register

April 21, 2024

[Nursing home industry scare tactics must not derail long-overdue staffing rules](#)

By Dean Lerner

Nursing Homes: Balancing Profit and Care

This passage highlights the debate surrounding staffing mandates in nursing homes.

A Shortage of Caregivers:

A critical issue is the lack of sufficient care for residents. Research suggests 4.1 hours of daily care per resident is optimal, including dedicated time from registered nurses (RNs), licensed practical nurses (LPNs/LVNs), and certified nursing assistants (CNAs).

The Proposed Solution:

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) proposes minimum staffing standards: 0.55 RN hours and 2.45 CNA hours per resident per day. However, this doesn't address LPN/LVN staffing.

Cost Concerns:

	<p>The industry argues these mandates will increase costs, despite estimates suggesting an increase of less than 5% in annual government payments to nursing homes. The author suggests potential cost savings from reduced caregiver turnover and litigation expenses.</p> <p>The Role of Lobbying: The American Health Care Association (AHCA), a powerful lobbying group for nursing homes, opposes the staffing mandates. The author criticizes the AHCA's use of taxpayer-funded membership dues to fight for less government oversight and questions why taxpayer dollars would support lobbying against policies designed to protect seniors.</p> <p>The Takeaway: The passage highlights a tension between the desire for increased care for the elderly and concerns about the financial burden on nursing homes. It also raises questions about the influence of lobbying groups in shaping healthcare policy.</p> <p><i>Dean Lerner retired after 30 years of Iowa public service as an assistant attorney general, chief deputy secretary of state, and deputy director of the Iowa Department of Inspections and Appeals.</i></p>
<p>Home and Community Based Services</p>	<p>14. Senator Maggie Hassan Press Release April 17, 2024 Senators Hassan and Vance Introduce Continuous Skilled Nursing Quality Improvement Act</p> <p>Senators Maggie Hassan (D-NH) and JD Vance (R-OH) introduced the Continuous Skilled Nursing Quality Improvement Act, which would redefine “private duty nursing services” as “continuous skilled nursing services,” remove outdated provider red tape, and mandate that the Secretary of Health and Human Services convene a working group to establish national quality standards of care for these services. “The care provided by continuous skilled nursing allows patients to remain at home while getting the care they need,” said Senator Hassan.</p>
<p>Homelessness</p>	<p>15. *Washington Post April 20, 2024 As Supreme Court takes up homeless ban, a city's unhoused feel abandoned</p> <p>By Reis Thebault and Ann E. Marimow <i>Supreme Court Case Tests Limits of Cities' Power to Address Homelessness: Grants Pass in Spotlight</i></p> <p>Grants Pass, Oregon, a small city grappling with a growing homeless population, is at the center of a landmark Supreme Court case with national implications. The case hinges on whether cities can enforce anti-camping ordinances against people with nowhere else to go.</p> <p>A City Divided: Laura Gutowski, once a resident who raised her children in Grants Pass, now finds herself homeless, living in a tent at a local park. John Babb, another resident facing homelessness, seeks solace near the river where his twin brother died. These are just two faces of a crisis that has divided the city.</p> <p>The Legal Battleground: The lawsuit, filed by homeless individuals, contends that the city's anti-camping regulations violate the Eighth Amendment's protection against cruel and unusual punishment. The city argues these measures are</p>

	<p>necessary to maintain public spaces and safety. The Biden administration suggests a middle ground, allowing bans only if shelter is available.</p> <p>National Stakes: The case has drawn national attention, with hundreds of legal briefs filed by cities, states, advocacy groups, and lawmakers. Over 600,000 people are homeless nationwide, with many sleeping outside due to a lack of shelter beds. A decision in favor of the homeless could restrict cities' abilities to address the issue, while a ruling for Grants Pass could lead to more punitive policies.</p> <p>Challenges on Both Sides: Homeless residents face limited shelter options and a lack of affordable housing. The city contends with complaints about public space conditions and potential public safety concerns.</p> <p>Uncertain Future: The Supreme Court's decision, expected in late June, will have a significant impact on how cities across the nation approach homelessness. Grants Pass residents, like Gutowski and Babb, face an uncertain future as they wait for a resolution and grapple with their daily struggles.</p> <p>Looking Beyond the Case: While the legal battle garners attention, local organizations like MINT (Mobile Integrative Navigation Team) strive to fill service gaps and provide support for the homeless community.</p> <p>A Complex Issue with No Easy Answers: The Grants Pass case highlights the complexity of the homelessness crisis. The Supreme Court's ruling will hopefully pave the way for a more humane and effective approach to addressing this national challenge.</p> <p>16. Office of the Massachusetts Attorney General April 5, 2024 <u>AG Campbell Joins Supreme Court Brief Opposing The Criminalization Of Involuntary Homelessness</u> <i>AG Campbell joins multistate amicus brief arguing that it is unconstitutional to punish someone for sleeping on public property when they have nowhere else to sleep</i> Attorney General Andrea Joy Campbell announced that she has joined a coalition of attorneys general in filing a Supreme Court <u>amicus brief</u> supporting the respondents, two homeless individuals, in <i>City of Grants Pass v. Gloria Johnson and John Logan</i>. The brief argues that the Constitution's ban on cruel and unusual punishment prohibits punishing people for sleeping on public property when they have no other place to lawfully sleep. . . In the brief, the coalition argues that punishing a person who is homeless for sleeping on public property is not meaningfully different than punishing them from being homeless, since the only way for such a person to comply with the City's anti-sleeping ordinance is for them to leave the City altogether.</p>
Bullying	<p>17. *Salem News April 22, 2024 <u>'I hate where I live'</u> By Paul Leighton <i>Senior Housing Turns Sour: Apple Village Erupts in Bullying Allegations</i></p>

	<p>For ten years, Susan Lukas considered Apple Village, a subsidized senior housing complex, a peaceful haven. However, recent events have painted a vastly different picture. A bitter feud has erupted among residents, escalating into a courtroom battle filled with accusations of bullying and harassment.</p> <p>A Microcosm of National Issue: The situation at Apple Village reflects a growing national concern: bullying within public housing. State Senator Joan Lovely has proposed legislation specifically addressing this issue, requiring anti-bullying training for residents and staff. Lovely contends that power imbalances within public housing create a breeding ground for bullying, with residents fearing eviction for speaking out against management or fellow tenants.</p> <p>Eviction Battle at the Center of Conflict: The current drama centers on Donna Lee, a 76-year-old resident facing eviction for allegedly disrupting the "quiet enjoyment" of others. Lee's supporters portray her as a community organizer who throws holiday parties and helps neighbors. However, her detractors claim she bullies others and insists on controlling resident activities.</p> <p>Management Under Fire: Former property manager Ed Roaf, at the center of many resident complaints, was recently removed from his position. Residents accused Roaf of retaliating against them for forming a tenants' association and shutting down the resident store operated by Lee. They also claimed he intimidated residents and misused the term "Section 8" in a derogatory manner. Roaf, however, denied these allegations, stating he was proud of his work with Section 8 housing.</p> <p>No Easy Resolution: While Roaf is gone, the conflict remains. Lee's eviction is still on the table, with both sides agreeing to mediation with a court housing specialist.</p> <p>Uncertain Future: The outcome for Apple Village remains unclear. The residents, once living in a peaceful community, now face an uncertain future. This case highlights the need for proactive measures to address bullying within public housing, ensuring a safe and supportive environment for all residents.</p>
<p>Behavioral Health</p>	<p>18. The Healthy Aging and Resilient Places (HARP) Lab, University of Utah <u>Nature Rx</u> This pilot project focuses on identifying older people's unique challenges and needs when designing nature-based mental health interventions for older adults. With the rising rates of mental health problems, there have been growing interests in "nature prescription." Nature prescription is an emerging concept where doctors prescribe their patients to spend time in nature to promote health and wellbeing. The existing nature prescription models are often centered around healthy, able-bodied individuals, lacking consideration of older people's unique challenges and needs. This project brings together an interdisciplinary team to develop frameworks and methods for a larger clinical study of nature prescriptions for older adults in Utah and the Intermountain West. Using qualitative methods, we will explore barriers and facilitators to implementing and sustaining nature prescriptions to improve mental health in older adults.</p>

<p>Aging Topics</p>	<p>19. New York Times (interactive) <u><i>The City Looks Different When You're Older</i></u> By Andy Hong <i>This article is part of "<u>Can America Age Gracefully?</u>," a series on how the country should prepare for the next big demographic shift.</i> For many of us, leaving our homes and navigating the outside world doesn't require much effort. But for older adults, our towns and cities are filled with obstacles — stairs, unsafe sidewalks and crossings, inadequate lighting — that grow increasingly difficult for them as they age. On top of that, most American cities lack robust public transportation. These challenges combine to keep many older Americans at home, isolated from social and cultural activities that are proven to keep conditions like dementia at bay, from essential medical care, from the world around them. As America grows older, the demand for age-friendly infrastructure will grow, too. The New York Times asked people over 65 to share some of the difficulties they face navigating their towns and cities. The solutions that would help them — and so many others — are often quite simple but require seeing the world around us from a different point of view.</p>
<p>Caregiving</p>	<p>20. New York Times April 3, 2024 <u><i>'Carefluencers' Are Helping Older Loved Ones, and Posting About It</i></u> By Frank Rojas <i>On TikTok and Instagram, people are sharing what it's like to take care of relatives who have reached their final years.</i> This article explores the growing trend of "carefluencers," caregivers who share their experiences with elderly loved ones on social media. Mardonia Galeana, an 89-year-old woman in San Jose, California, has become an online celebrity thanks to her grandson Yosimar Reyes, who chronicles their life together on a private Instagram account. Reyes, a poet and artist, acts as Ms. Galeana's primary caregiver, managing her medications and daily needs. The term "carefluencer" was coined by Francesca Falzarano, a gerontologist who sees social media as a valuable support system for caregivers. It allows them to connect with others facing similar challenges, share information and experiences, and find a sense of community. Chris Punsalan and Jacquelyn Revere are two other caregivers who have found solace and support online. Punsalan documented his journey caring for his grandmother on YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok until her passing in January 2024. Revere used social media to connect with other caregivers after becoming the primary caregiver for her mother and grandmother in 2016. While some viewers express concern about potentially exploitative content featuring vulnerable older adults, Professor Falzarano believes the benefits outweigh the risks. Carefluencers raise awareness about chronic illness and caregiving realities, topics often lacking readily available resources. Ms. Galeana, despite having no clear path to US citizenship, has found a new kind of home online. Reyes, who aspires to be an artist, sees sharing their story as a way to bring joy to his grandmother's life. The love and care they share resonate with the online community who have come to know Ms. Galeana as "la abuelita" (the grandmother).</p>

<p>Transportation</p>	<p>21. The Healthy Aging and Resilient Places (HARP) Lab, University of Utah <u>Transportation for Seniors (T4S): Developing a New Accessibility Measure to Support Older Adults in a Post-Pandemic World</u> Accessibility plays a fundamental role in the day-to-day lives of individuals. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the gross inequality in older people’s accessibility to health care and essential services. Months of staying inside, with limited social interactions, reduced opportunities for physical activity, and limited access to health and social care has accelerated the aging process for large numbers of older people and taken a huge toll on their physical and mental health. Furthermore, older people have unique mobility challenges as they typically experience loss of mobility, for example, when they restrict their walking or driving due to physical or cognitive decline associated with aging. Older adults who do not drive or live in places with limited public transportation services are isolated and disadvantaged. Although older people’s accessibility may be substantially different from the general population, common practices in transportation planning use a relatively simple measure of accessibility centered around healthy, able-bodied individuals, lacking consideration of older people’s unique vulnerabilities. This project aims to develop a new measure of accessibility for older adults by adopting more nuanced approaches to understanding accessibility based on older people’s perceptions and circumstances.</p>
<p>From Around the Country</p>	<p>22. Spectrum News One April 21, 2024 <u>Changing demographics in nursing homes across N.Y. state</u> By JoDee Kenney Upstate New York Lawmaker Pushes for Culturally Competent Elder Care Research Focus: Dr. Carolyn McLaughlin, an Albany County Legislator, studied quality of life and disparities in elder care for her doctorate. A key area was understanding the needs of Black residents in nursing homes. Challenges: Nursing homes, designed for a mostly white population, struggle to adapt to a more diverse resident base. Dr. McLaughlin sees a need for culturally competent care that addresses the unique needs of Hispanic, Asian, and African American residents. Combating Ageism: Dr. McLaughlin calls for a shift in how society views aging. Replacing terms like "senior moment" with language highlighting accumulated wisdom can empower older adults and facilitate knowledge sharing. Supporting Seniors at Home: Financial assistance is crucial to allow seniors to age in place. Dr. McLaughlin emphasizes preventing property taxes from forcing people out of their homes and ensuring access to essential services like transportation and social activities. Social isolation, research suggests, can be as detrimental to health as smoking.</p> <p>23. The Maine Monitor April 21, 2024 <u>Use of antipsychotics in Maine nursing homes climbs</u> By Rose Lundy</p>

After an initial crackdown and decline, the rate of the powerful medications given to nursing home residents has ticked back up in recent years.

Maine Nursing Homes See Rise in Antipsychotic Medication Use for Residents

This report details a concerning trend in Maine's nursing homes: a rise in antipsychotic medication use for residents.

The Problem:

- Antipsychotic medications are powerful drugs with potentially severe side effects for older adults, including sedation, falls, and even death.
- Their purpose is to treat psychosis and delusions, typically associated with schizophrenia or bipolar disorder.
- However, they are increasingly prescribed in nursing homes to manage challenging behaviors in residents with dementia.

Historical Context:

- Maine previously saw a significant reduction in antipsychotic use through a collaborative effort (2012) involving training, resources, and a focus on alternative approaches.
- This success story positioned Maine as a national leader in reducing overreliance on these medications.

Current Situation:

- The percentage of Maine nursing home residents receiving antipsychotics has risen again, exceeding the national average.
- Experts attribute this to several factors:
 - Staffing shortages and reliance on temporary workers who may lack training in de-escalation techniques.
 - Diminished focus on the issue, particularly during the pandemic.
 - Difficulty managing challenging behaviors without adequate resources.
- Some experts believe the issue extends beyond antipsychotics, suggesting overuse of mood stabilizers and sleeping pills for resident sedation.

Potential Solutions:

- Renewed focus on resident-centered care that emphasizes understanding their needs rather than forcing them to conform.
- Reintroducing training programs for staff to equip them with de-escalation skills and build relationships with residents.
- Addressing the underlying staffing shortage and ensuring better working conditions to retain qualified personnel.

Looking Forward:

- Stakeholders, including the ombudsman's office and nursing home associations, plan to re-launch training programs focused on effective practices.
- The state health department recognizes the issue and encourages collaboration to address it.
- The ultimate goal is to return Maine to its leadership position in providing high-quality care for residents by minimizing unnecessary medication use.

This story was originally published by [The Maine Monitor](#), a nonprofit and nonpartisan news organization. To get regular coverage from the Monitor, sign up for a free Monitor newsletter [here](#).

<p>Public Sessions</p>	<p>COMMUNITY HEALTH EQUITY</p> <p>Department of Public Health holds a webinar on resources for using data from the 2023 Community Health Equity Survey. Participants will learn how to use a "racial justice frame" to interpret the data as they look to advance health equity. The survey examines the root causes of health inequities in communities such as immigrants, older adults, parents, individuals who identify as LGBTQ+, and people of color. (Wednesday, April 24, 2024, 2:00 p.m. Register)</p> <p>RIDERS TRANSPORTATION ACCESS</p> <p>The Riders' Transportation Access Group meets virtually to discuss transportation issues affecting older adults and people of all ages who have disabilities. (Thursday, April 25, 5:30 p.m. Register)</p> <p>MASSHEALTH COPAYS</p> <p>Division of Medical Assistance holds hearing on the emergency adoption of amendments to state regulations on MassHealth financial requirements (130 CMR 506.000), MassHealth financial eligibility (130 CMR 520.000), and administration and billing (130 CMR 450.000). The regulatory changes up for discussion went into effect on an emergency basis on April 1, the division's public posting said, and will bump up aggregate MassHealth expenditures by around \$4.8 million annually. "These proposed amendments will eliminate all copayments for MassHealth members. ... This will promote access to prescription drugs for MassHealth members, as well as ensuring full payment for providers," the hearing notice said. (Friday, April 26, 2024, 10:00 a.m., Zoom or Dial (646) 558-8656 and enter meeting ID 935 397 8200# More Info)</p> <p>HEALTH SAFETY NET COPAYS</p> <p>The Executive Office of Health and Human Services holds a hearing on the emergency adoption of regulatory changes dealing with Health Safety Net services (101 CMR 613.00). The amendments "eliminate all copayments for HSN patients," according to EOHHS. "These copayments had been temporarily eliminated through March 31, 2024; the amendments will eliminate copayments permanently. This will promote access to prescription drugs for HSN patients." The changes went into effect April 1, according to a hearing notice, and are expected to increase annual aggregate Health Safety Net expenditures by around \$700,000. (Friday, April 26, 2024, 11:00 a.m., Zoom or Dial (646) 558-8656 and enter meeting ID 935 397 8200# More Info)</p>
<p>Dignity Alliance Massachusetts Legislative Endorsements</p>	<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 rmoores8473@charter.net.</p>
<p>Websites</p>	<p>Association of Developmental Disability Providers https://www.addp.org/</p> <p>The Association of Developmental Disabilities Providers (ADDP) is a state-wide association that focuses exclusively on issues relating to developmental/intellectual disabilities, brain injury services and autism. ADDP is comprised of over 130 member organizations throughout Massachusetts.</p>

	<p>The Robert N. Butler-Jack Rosenthal Age Boom Academy - Columbia University http://ageboom.columbia.edu/about.html</p> <p>Age Boom is a forum in which to train journalists about the complex health, social, and economic issues facing our aging population. The goal of the Age Boom Academy is to engage and train working members of the media in current science and policies related to longevity. This is the sole training for a competitively selected group of journalists to focus on current housing issues through the lens of healthy longevity.</p>	
Blogs	<p><u>Can America Age Gracefully?</u> New York Times</p> <p>The series addresses concerns on caregiving, housing, social isolation, and older adults' access to useful innovations in technology. On Sunday, September 10, <i>The New York Times</i> featured a full-page publisher's editorial as part of a special six-part series exploring the question "Can America Age Gracefully?"</p> <p>Related articles in the series (available via a NYT subscription) provide solution-oriented examples. Several delve into topics that align with the Foundation's areas of interest and highlight innovative approaches to address these critical concerns, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>An Aging America Needs Flexible Housing</i> • <i>An Aging America Needs Caregivers Who Are Cared For</i> • <i>An Aging America Needs Entrepreneurs Who Pay Attention</i> 	
Podcasts	<p>The Consumer Voice maintains an extensive library of podcasts covering an array of long-term care topics.</p> <p>Consumer Voice Podcast Library</p>	
Previously recommended websites	<p>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>.</p>	
Previously posted funding opportunities	<p>For open funding opportunities previously posted in <i>The Tuesday Digest</i> please see https://dignityalliancema.org/funding-opportunities/.</p>	
Websites of Dignity Alliance Massachusetts Members	<p>See: https://dignityalliancema.org/about/organizations/</p>	
Contact information for reporting complaints and concerns	Nursing home	<p>Department of Public Health</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Print and complete the Consumer/Resident/Patient Complaint Form 2. Fax completed form to (617) 753-8165 <p>Or</p> <p>Mail to 67 Forest Street, Marlborough, MA 01752</p> <p>Ombudsman Program</p>
Nursing Home Closures (pending)	<p>Massachusetts Department of Public Health <i>Benjamin Healthcare Center, Roxbury</i> Closure date: July 1, 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice of Intent to Close (PDF) (DOCX) • Draft of Closure and Relocation Plan (PDF) (DOCX) <p><i>Bridgewater Nursing & Rehab, Bridgewater</i> Closure date: May 24, 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notice of Intent to Close (PDF) (DOCX) • Draft of Closure and Relocation Plan (PDF) (DOCX) 	

	<p>For more information about each individual facility, please use the Massachusetts Nursing Home Survey Performance Tool and the CMS Nursing Home Compare website.</p>
Nursing Home Closures	<p>Massachusetts Department of Public Health <i>Savoy Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, New Bedford</i> Closure date: April 3, 2024 <i>New England Sinai Hospital Transitional Care Unit</i> Closure date: April 2, 2024 <i>South Dennis Health Care, Dennis</i> Closure date: January 30, 2024 <i>Arnold House Nursing Home, Stoneham</i> Closure date: September 22, 2023 <i>Willimansett East, Chicopee</i> Closure date: June 6, 2023 <i>Willimansett West, Chicopee</i> Closure date: June 6, 2023 Chapin Center Springfield Closure date: June 6, 2023 Governors Center, Westfield Closure date: June 6, 2023 Stonehedge Rehabilitation and Skilled Care Center, West Roxbury Closure February 10, 2022 Heathwood Healthcare, Newton Closure date: January 5, 2022 Mt. Ida Rest Home, Newton Closure date: December 31, 2021 Wingate at Chestnut Hill, Newton, MA Closure date: October 1, 2021 Halcyon House, Methuen Closure date: July 16, 2021 Agawam HealthCare, Agawam Closure date: July 27, 2021 Wareham HealthCare, Wareham Closure date: July 28, 2021 Town & Country Health Care Center, Lowell Closure date: July 31, 2021</p>
Nursing homes with admission freezes	<p>Massachusetts Department of Public Health <i>Temporary admissions freeze</i> There have been no new postings on the DPH website since May 10, 2023.</p>
Massachusetts Department of Public Health Determination of Need Projects	<p>Massachusetts Department of Public Health <i>Determination of Need Projects: Long Term Care 2023</i> Navigator Homes of Martha's Vineyard, Inc. – Long Term Care Substantial Capital Expenditure Royal Wayland Nursing Home, LLC – Conservation Long Term Care Project 2022 Ascentria Care Alliance – Laurel Ridge Ascentria Care Alliance – Lutheran Housing</p>

	<p><u>Ascentria Care Alliance – Quaboag</u> <u>Berkshire Healthcare Systems, Inc. – Windsor Long Term Care Conservation</u> <u>Fairlawn Rehabilitation Hospital-Hospital/Clinic Substantial Capital Expenditure</u> <u>Long Term Centers of Lexington – Pine Knoll – Long Term Care Conservation</u> <u>Long Term Centers of Wrentham – Serenity Hill – Long Term Care Conservation</u> <u>Next Step Healthcare LLC-Conservation Long Term Care Project</u> <u>Royal Falmouth – Conservation Long Term Care</u> <u>Royal Norwell – Long Term Care Conservation</u> <u>Wellman Healthcare Group, Inc</u> 2020 <u>Advocate Healthcare, LLC Amendment</u> <u>Campion Health & Wellness, Inc. – LTC - Substantial Change in Service</u> <u>Heywood Healthcare, Inc. – Hospital/Clinic Substantial Capital Expenditure</u> <u>Notre Dame Health Care Center, Inc. – LTC Conservation</u> 2020 <u>Advocate Healthcare of East Boston, LLC.</u> <u>Belmont Manor Nursing Home, Inc.</u></p>
<p>List of Special Focus Facilities</p>	<p>Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services <i>List of Special Focus Facilities and Candidates</i> <u>https://tinyurl.com/SpecialFocusFacilityProgram</u> Updated March 29, 2023 CMS has published a new list of <u>Special Focus Facilities</u> (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?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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://somersetridgerehab.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.geneshcc.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
 Nursing home inspect information:
<https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225318>
- Plymouth Rehabilitation and Health Care Center (10)

	<p>https://plymouthrehab.com/ 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/ Nursing home inspect information: https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225488 • Vantage at Wilbraham (5) No website Nursing home inspect information: https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225295 • Vantage at South Hadley (12) No website Nursing home inspect information: https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225757 https://tinyurl.com/SpecialFocusFacilityProgram 																								
<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. 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 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> Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) reports related to long-term care facilities in Massachusetts.</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 Alliance Massachusetts	Workgroup	Workgroup lead	Email
	General Membership	Bill Henning Paul Lanzikos	bhenning@bostoncil.org paul.lanzikos@gmail.com
	Assisted Living	John Ford	jford@njc-ma.org
	Behavioral Health	Frank Baskin	baskinfrank19@gmail.com

<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>	Communications	Lachlan Forrow	lforrow@bidmc.harvard.edu
	Facilities (Nursing homes and rest homes)	Arlene Germain	agermain@manhr.org
	Home and Community Based Services	Meg Coffin	mcoffin@centerlw.org
	Legislative	Richard Moore	rmoore8743@charter.net
	Legal Issues	Jeni Kaplan	jkaplan@cpr-ma.org
	Interest Group	Group lead	Email
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	Veteran Services	James Lomastro	jimlomastro@comcast.net
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	Covid / Long Covid	James Lomastro	jimlomastro@comcast.net
Incarcerated Persons	TBD	info@DignityAllianceMA.org	
<i>The Dignity Digest</i>	<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"> • Wynn Gerhard • Dick Moore • Norma Swenson <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 The Dignity Digest 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.</i></p> <p><i>Our guiding principle is the assurance of dignity for those receiving the services as well as for those providing them.</i></p> <p><i>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:</i> https://dignityalliancema.org/dignity-digest/</p> <p><i>For more information about Dignity Alliance Massachusetts, please visit www.DignityAllianceMA.org.</i></p>			