



The Dignity Digest

Issue # 236

May 13, 2025

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

	*May require registration before accessing the 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>Governor Healey Signs Executive Order, Releases Updated State Plan for Supporting Older Adults in Massachusetts</u></p> <p>May 5, 2025</p> <p>On May 5, 2025, Governor Healey signed an <u>Executive Order</u> and released a new age-friendly state plan which will outline improved ways for Massachusetts agencies to serve older adults, following feedback gathered from across the state. In recognition of Older Americans Month, Governor Healey, Lieutenant Governor Driscoll and Aging & Independence Secretary Robin Lipson visited the Plymouth Center for Active Living to discuss how communities across the state can implement the new state plan.</p> <p>The Executive Order directs all offices across the executive branch to identify areas where age-friendly policies and practices can be embedded in their work to improve the health and wellbeing of aging adults in Massachusetts. The Executive Order also establishes a Governor's Advisory Group on Age-Friendly Policies and Practices to gather stakeholder and expert input on relevant areas such as transportation, housing, regional planning, economic security, retirement and other issues affecting older adults and aging populations.</p> <p>"Massachusetts isn't just the best state to go to school or start your career – it's also the best state to retire and live your happiest, healthiest life. But we know that far too many of our older residents are facing challenges, especially with affordability, housing and health care," said Governor Maura Healey. "To help ensure older adults in Massachusetts can live longer, healthier lives on their own terms, we are taking steps to make Massachusetts even more age- and dementia-friendly. We want all of our residents, as well as those who are making decisions about where to spend their retirement, to know that we are working every day to make life easier and more affordable for people of all ages."</p> <p>"1.7 million adults over the age of 60 call Massachusetts home — nearly a quarter of our population," said Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll. "Our administration is committed to making our state more affordable, competitive and equitable, and a key</p>

	<p>piece of that strategy is to empower our residents to make the best decisions for themselves when it comes to work, retirement and living a happy and healthy life right here in Massachusetts.”</p> <p>Additionally, Governor Healey today unveiled the state’s updated age- and dementia-friendly state plan, which provides a framework for both communities and state agencies to guide their age- and dementia-friendly actions for the next five years. “ReiMAging Aging 2030: The Massachusetts Plan” articulates the state’s vision and aspirations for growing older in Massachusetts. The plan, which includes an in-depth analysis of the state’s aging population, identifies challenges older residents face when aging in Massachusetts. Additionally, the plan outlines strategies and specific actions that state agencies, local communities, community-based organizations, and the private sector can implement to ensure Massachusetts continues to be a great place for everyone to grow old. The plan has been updated from the previous 2019 plan to reflect the most current priorities, needs, and aspirations of Massachusetts communities. This refreshed plan was developed with significant community and stakeholder input. Throughout 2024, the state hosted a series of community listening sessions to understand our residents’ priorities for the future. The following goals emerged from these sessions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Economic Opportunity & Security: Every older individual across Massachusetts can meet their basic financial needs 2. People & Communities: Older adults and families are empowered decision makers with meaningful connections to their communities 3. Places & Spaces: Natural and built environments enhance older adults’ mobility and livability 4. Health & Wellness: Older adults have optimal health for a high quality of life 5. Aging in All Policies: All local, regional, and statewide policies consider the implications for older adults 6. Information, Communication & Framing: Information is broadly accessible and reframes aging to value older adults <p>“Since Massachusetts released its first age-friendly plan five years ago, the Commonwealth – and country – have changed significantly, and some of the needs and goals of our older residents have changed with it,” said Health and Human Services Secretary Kate Walsh. “As we spoke to older adults to create this plan, we learned what matters most to today’s residents: serving them in their communities whenever possible, clear and effective communication, preventative care and mental health resources. This new plan is a guide to help us accomplish that.”</p> <p>“This plan is a fantastic resource for our municipalities and regional agencies to refer to when applying for age-friendly</p>
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	<p>grants,” said Aging and Independence Secretary Robin Lipson. “The Healey-Driscoll Administration and legislature continue to increase investments to Councils on Aging and senior centers, enabling our communities to innovate and expand their age-friendly actions. Our hope is that this plan will be used as a roadmap to guide these projects.”</p> <p>“With 47% of Plymouth’s population aged 50 and older—compared to approximately 38% statewide—it is essential that we remain dedicated to initiatives that support older adults in our community,” states Plymouth Town Manager Derek Brindisi. “We appreciate the ongoing commitment of the Healey-Driscoll administration to fostering age-friendly policies that enhance the quality of life for Plymouth’s seniors.”</p> <p>The purpose of this plan is to align the partners around a shared vision and provide a framework for our efforts over the next five years (2025-2030). A full digital version of the plan was also launched today and can be accessed here.</p> <p>Earlier this year, Massachusetts was named the top destination for older adults moving to a new state specifically for retirement in 2024.</p> <p>The Healey-Driscoll Administration has prioritized investments to make life more affordable for and improve the health and wellbeing of older residents, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor Healey signed the state’s first tax cuts in 20 years, which included doubling the Senior Circuit Breaker Tax Credit. Under this expansion, seniors were eligible to receive up to \$2,730 this year. The tax cuts package also created the most generous Child and Family Tax Credit in the country, which provides families with \$440 per dependent, including those who are 65 and older. • Governor Healey signed legislation that she had proposed to rename the Executive Office of Elder Affairs to the Executive Office of Aging & Independence to better represent and reflect the values of older adults in Massachusetts. • Governor Healey increased from \$1,500 to \$2,000 the maximum property tax abatement available to seniors who perform volunteer services. • Each year since Governor Healey took office, she and the Legislature have increased funding to Councils on Aging. • Governor Healey expanded Medicare Saving Program eligibility to allow more older residents to take advantage of benefits and save money on health care costs. The new guidelines allow for more Massachusetts residents to enroll in the program and save up to \$3,000 per year. • Earlier this year, the Healey-Driscoll Administration announced \$5.8M in grants to expand mobility for older adults, people with disabilities, and low-income individuals. Many grant recipients were Councils on Aging and/or Aging Services Access Points. <p>Statements of Support:</p>
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	<p>Senator Patricia D. Jehlen (D-Middlesex): "I am encouraged by the steps Governor Healey, Secretary Lipson, and Secretary Walsh have taken to highlight issues of aging across many of our agencies in order to help us all age with dignity, purpose, and access to quality care, housing and services."</p> <p>Senator Dylan A. Fernandes (D- Plymouth and Barnstable): "Massachusetts is taking real action to make sure people can grow older with dignity, purpose, and the support they need. The updated State Plan on Aging, the Governor's Executive Order, and the new public awareness campaign all show our commitment to making the Commonwealth the best place for our neighbors to age and live well. Here in Plymouth, the Center for Active Living sets a powerful example of how communities can support older adults in staying healthy, independent, and connected. I'm proud to support this work and the local leaders who bring it to life every day."</p> <p>Representative Michelle Badger (D-Plymouth): "As a town with more than 40% of residents over the age of 50, achieving dementia-friendly status is a meaningful step that reflects Plymouth's shared commitment to building supportive, inclusive communities where people can age with dignity, connection, and the care they need. To truly serve our aging population, towns and policymakers must embed age-friendly practices into everyday decision-making process—such as expanding affordable and accessible housing, ensuring safe pedestrian infrastructure, increasing access to transportation options, and integrating social engagement and caregiver support programs into community planning."</p> <p>Representative Kathleen R. LaNatra (D-Kingston): "It is critical that we as policymakers work to create a Commonwealth that better serves the needs of our older residents. Massachusetts should be a place where older residents can remain active members of their community for as long as they wish. This means improving affordability, creating more housing options for older adults, ensuring access to high-quality services, and making Massachusetts more accessible and welcoming for those with dementia. I am proud of the work local communities like Plymouth are doing in this space, the work of the Legislature, and am thankful to the Healey-Driscoll Administration for making critical investments into ensuring that older adults can continue to thrive in Massachusetts."</p> <p>Representative Thomas M. Stanley (D-Waltham): "I commend the Healey-Driscoll administration for taking these important steps to ensure the Commonwealth continues to support our aging population. Promoting age- and dementia-friendly policies and practices benefits us all, not just older adults."</p>
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	<p>James Fuccione, Executive Director, Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative:</p> <p>“Community voices from across Massachusetts drove this plan, which builds on years of incredible, innovative practices and policies at the state, regional and local levels that support older adults. Alongside our statewide, cross-sector network of partners, this plan will continue to empower communities and stakeholders to advance inclusive age and dementia friendly initiatives. We are grateful to the Governor and the Executive Office of Aging and Independence for their commitment and leadership in continuing to make Massachusetts a great place to grow up and grow old.”</p> <p>Caitlin Coyle PhD, Director, Center for Social & Demographic Research on Aging, Gerontology Institute and Michelle Putnam PhD, Director, Gerontology Institute:</p> <p>“For more than a decade, Massachusetts has been a national leader in advancing age-friendly communities. At the Gerontology Institute, we’ve proudly partnered with over 85 cities and towns across the Commonwealth—engaging residents, informing local decision-making, and supporting grassroots efforts to build communities where people of all ages can thrive. We’ve had the privilege of serving as both a thought partner within Massachusetts on issues like financial security, social isolation and access to services and a global translator of the innovative work happening here. This new plan represents a major milestone. It reflects the systems-level changes that now ensure residents at all life stages are both considered and celebrated. It’s a testament to the hard work taking place in neighborhoods, senior centers, and town halls across the state. And it sends a powerful message to residents of all ages: in Massachusetts, growing older is not just expected—it’s something to look forward to.”</p> <p>Beth Chandler, Executive Director, Point32Health Foundation:</p> <p>“As we ReiMAgine Aging for 2030, we build on the past successes of community organizations who are improving accessibility, affordability and connection for older adults every day. The strategies outlined in Massachusetts’ updated age- and dementia-friendly plan set the stage for continued investment in the systems that make the commonwealth a great place to grow up and grow old. On behalf of Point32Health Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Harvard Pilgrim Health Care and Tufts Health Plan, I would like to sincerely thank the community members and team who helped bring this plan to fruition.”</p>
Spotlight	<p><i>“ReiMAgine Aging 2030: The Massachusetts Plan”</i></p> <p>The Massachusetts Executive Office of Aging and Independence has issued a draft of a five-year plan regarding aging in Massachusetts.</p>


	<p>The plan defines Aging & Independence’s role as the statewide leader in addressing the needs of older adults and their caregivers across Massachusetts.</p> <p>This Massachusetts Draft State Plan on Aging, 2026–2029, is released in accordance with the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended. To promote transparency and encourage public participation, the Executive Office of Aging & Independence seeks feedback from consumers, stakeholders, and partners to help shape the goals, strategies, and services envisioned for older adults and their family caregivers in Massachusetts. Stakeholders are encouraged to review the draft and submit feedback by emailing:</p> <p>Aging.Conversation@MassMail.State.MA.US</p> <p>Comments are invited and should be submitted by Thursday, June 5, 2025.</p> <p>The draft plan is available at:</p> <p>https://www.mass.gov/doc/for-public-comment-state-plan-on-aging-2026-2029/download</p> <p>You can also view the most recent State Plan here: Massachusetts State Plan on Aging 2021-2025 (PDF).</p>
Quotes	<p><i>“And this is a perfect metaphor for disability dance: When we think about our bodies, we think about their possibilities and not their limitations.”</i></p> <p>Ben Levine, an interdisciplinary artist, With Telescoping Crutches and Hexapod Legs, Dance Goes New Places, *New York Times, May 7, 2025</p> <p><i>“If such testimony is accurate, it raises significant concerns as to the rate of remuneration being paid to Ms. [Dianne] Wilkerson by an institution in receivership”.</i></p> <p>Superior Court Judge Christopher Belezos, overseeing the Benjamin Healthcare Center receivership case, Former state senator defends position at nursing home in receivership, Commonwealth Beacon, May 8, 2025</p> <p><i>"Massachusetts is taking real action to make sure people can grow older with dignity, purpose, and the support they need. The updated State Plan on Aging, the Governor’s Executive Order, and the new public awareness campaign all show our commitment to making the Commonwealth the best place for our neighbors to age and live well."</i></p>

	<p>Senator Dylan A. Fernandes (D- Plymouth and Barnstable), Governor Healey Signs Executive Order, Releases Updated State Plan for Supporting Older Adults in Massachusetts, May 5, 2025</p> <p><i>“It’s a special kind of cruel to take food out of the mouths of hungry people to fund yet another tax break for the richest people in the country.”</i></p> <p>Massachusetts Congressman Jim McGovern, Cutting back Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is cruel, *Salem News, May 12, 2025</p> <p><i>“Provider taxes are an important tool in states’ toolboxes to fund the Medicaid programs; many states use the program. Providers pay a fee and the federal government matches that fee, and then that match is used to fund Medicaid in the state.”</i></p> <p>Clif Porter, CEO and president of the American Health Care Association/National Center for Assisted Living (AHCA/NCAL), House GOP Budget Proposal Calls for Moratoria on Nursing Home Staffing Mandate, New Provider Taxes, Skilled Nursing News, May 12, 2025</p> <p><i>“Despite its relationship to other well-resourced entities and individuals, Brighton’s alleged inability to pay should not constitute an absolute shield to its sentence. Without financial consequences to hold healthcare facilities and companies accountable, this type of fraud will continue to occur.”</i></p> <p>US Attorney for the Western District of Pennsylvania, Feds: Bankruptcy no reason to give two nursing homes pass on up to \$2.7M in restitution, McKnights Long Term Care News, May 11, 2025</p> <p><i>“I love working with the residents—they’re the reason I come in. But I shouldn’t have to work two jobs to make ends meet.”</i></p> <p>Western New York nursing home worker, More than 2,500 nursing home workers across WNY plan to strike, WKBW.com, May 11, 2025</p>
<p>Call for Presentations</p>	<p>Massachusetts Councils on Aging (MCOA) 2025 Fall Conference</p> <p>Call for Presentations</p> <p>Planning for the MCOA 2025 Fall Conference is now underway. This year's theme is "Facing the Future Together". MCOA's call for presentations is officially open. The organizers are looking for engaging, innovative, and impactful sessions to make this year’s conference the best one yet. If you</p>

	<p>have knowledge, insights, or creative solutions to share with the aging services network, you are encouraged to submit a proposal. Submissions are due by May 19, 2025.</p> <p>Learn More & Apply</p>
Recruitment	<p>See: Listings on MASsterList.com's Job Board for all current listings</p>
Reports	<p>Massachusetts Healthy Aging Data Report Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative May 2025</p> <p>The Massachusetts Healthy Aging Data Report is designed to help residents, agencies, providers and governments understand the older adults who live in their cities and towns – their ages, living arrangements, health status, strengths and vulnerabilities. The report was first released in January 2014, updated in March 2015 and December 2018, and most recently in May 2025.</p> <p>Explore the 2025 Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Explore the Highlights report ○ 386 community profiles with estimates of indicators with confidence intervals, and technical documentation ○ 165 maps listing community rates for each indicator (both ranked and alphabetized) ○ 18 interactive web maps ○ An infographic summarizing key findings
Guide to news items in this week's <i>Dignity Digest</i>	<p>Nursing Homes</p> <p>House committee proposes 10-year delay to nursing home staffing mandate (McKnights Long Term Care News, May 12, 2025)</p> <p>House GOP Budget Proposal Calls for Moratoria on Nursing Home Staffing Mandate, New Provider Taxes (Skilled Nursing News, May 12, 2025)</p> <p>Investigation Uncovers Food Insecurity in Nursing Homes (Elderlawanswers.com, May 12, 2025)</p> <p>Benjamin Healthcare Center</p> <p>Former state senator defends position at nursing home in receivership (CommonWealth Beacon, May 8, 2025)</p> <p>Health Care Topics</p> <p>10 Questions You Should Always Ask at Doctors' Appointments (Time, March 26, 2025)</p> <p>Disability Topics</p> <p>Paralyzed woman feels like "real Ironwoman" after implants help her take steps again (60 Minutes, May 11, 2025)</p> <p>With Telescoping Crutches and Hexapod Legs, Dance Goes New Places (*New York Times, May 7, 2025)</p> <p>Federal Policy</p> <p>Cutting back Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is cruel (*Salem News, May 12, 2025)</p> <p>Save the Spinal Cord Injury Research Program (United Spinal Association, May 5, 2025)</p> <p>From Around the Country</p> <p>Union pushes CT nursing home strike deadline back to May 27 (Hartford Business Journal, May 12, 2025)</p>

	<p><u>Feds: Bankruptcy no reason to give two nursing homes pass on up to \$2.7M in restitution</u> (McKnights Long Term Care News, May 11, 2025)</p> <p><u>More than 2,500 nursing home workers across WNY plan to strike</u> (WKBW.com, May 11, 2025)</p> <p>Public Sessions</p> <p><u>Meeting</u>, (Public Health Council, Wednesday, May 14, 2025, 9:00 a.m.)</p> <p><u>Workforce Supports Subcommittee Meeting</u> (Commission on the , <u>Committee Meeting</u>, (Status of Persons with Disabilities, Thursday, May 15, 2025, 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.)</p> <p><u>Remote public hearing</u> (Executive Office of Health and Human Services, Friday, May 16, 2025, 10:00 a.m.)</p>
<p>DignityMA Study Sessions</p> <p><i>Special Focus on Changes in Federal Policies, Programs, and Services</i></p>	<p>Unprecedented public policy changes have been occurring since the onset of the Trump Administration three months ago. Programs, policies, and initiatives of importance to older adults, persons with disabilities, and caregivers are not exempted. The implications are starting to become known. The impacts will be experienced in the months and years ahead.</p> <p>No sector is being spared. Health care, social services, Social Security, civil rights, housing, and more are all under historic attack. Some areas are being “downsized,” some are being disrupted or radically modified, and others are being eliminated outright.</p> <p>Dignity Alliance Massachusetts has invited three nationally known experts regarding public policy and programs affecting older adults, persons with disabilities, and caregivers to share up-to-the-minute information, their analysis, and strategies for individuals and organizations to adopt in response.</p> <p>The presenters are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bob Blancato, National Coordinator of the bipartisan 3000-member Elder Justice Coalition • James Roosevelt, JD, former Associate Commissioner, U.S. Social Security Administration • Steven Schwartz, JD, Special Counsel, Center for Public Representation <p>See below for dates, times, details, and registration information.</p>
<p>DignityMA Study Session</p>  <p>Bob Blancato, National Coordinator, Elder Justice Coalition</p>	<p><i>Aging Policy Update: What We Know, What We Don't Know, and What We Should Fear</i></p> <p>Wednesday, May 21, 2025, 2:00 p.m.</p> <p>Presenter: Bob Blancato, National Coordinator of the bipartisan 3000-member Elder Justice Coalition</p> <p>Registration required:</p> <p><u>https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/kQRVG7FiR2iVrmQWN52M6g</u></p> <p>Bob discusses the current state of aging policy at the national level under the new Congress and Administration. This presentation will focus on key shifts in aging policy, identifies emerging challenges, and outlines advocacy opportunities that will protect and shape services for older Americans in the coming year.</p> <p>Bob is also the Executive Director of the National Association of Nutrition and Aging Service Programs. He spent 17 years on the staff</p>

	<p>of the U.S. House Select Committee on Aging and has participated in four White House Conferences on Aging, including as the Executive Director of the 1995 White House Conference on Aging.</p>
<p>DignityMA Study Session</p>  <p>James Roosevelt, former Associate Commissioner, U.S. Social Security Administration</p>	<p><i>Social Security: It's history, current issues, and advocacy options</i> Thursday, May 22, 2025, 2:00 p.m. Presenter: James Roosevelt, JD, former Associate Commissioner, U.S. Social Security Administration Registration required: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/t5wRZ6KJTVKqmn-T6RIRhA</p> <p>Jim advises health care payers, providers, trade associations, and service providers on business matters, legislative and regulatory issues, governance, and personnel matters. He regularly represents medical device and medical process startups, including with respect to telehealth, artificial intelligence, and treatment utilizing legal psychedelics. He is also a national speaker and author on the Affordable Care Act, Medicare and Medicaid policy, and Social Security.</p> <p>For more than 10 years, Jim was CEO of Tufts Health Plan, where he led a turnaround that nearly doubled the membership and achieved consistent profitability while attaining #1 ranking in the United States from the national accrediting organization. He was previously in-house General Counsel and was a former partner in the Health Care Practice Group of Choate, Hall and Stewart in Boston. Before joining Tufts Health Plan, he served as Associate Commissioner of the U.S. Social Security Administration.</p> <p>In 2016, Jim was a visiting fellow at the Institute of Politics of the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. He continues as a clinical instructor in the Public Health and Community Medicine Department of Tufts University School of Medicine.</p>
<p>DignityMA Study Session</p>  <p>Steven Schwartz, JD, Special Counsel, Center for Public Representation</p>	<p><i>The New Legal Landscape: The Administration's Campaign to Erase Disability Rights, Protections, and Protectors</i> Thursday, June 5, 2025, 11:00 a.m. Presenter: Steven Schwartz, JD, Special Counsel, Center for Public Representation Registration required: https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/WNnuimt0T3Sh64qXKJeZ2g</p> <p>This session will review the Trump Administration's coordinated attack on disability rights, through the issuance of executive orders that eliminate legal claims and disability rights, rescind disability regulations, and challenge important disability precedents. It will discuss strategies to oppose these efforts, particularly in light of the drastic reduction in civil rights enforcement by the Department of Justice.</p> <p>Steve serves as special counsel, after founding the Center in 1976 and then serving as its executive director for 38 years and litigation director for 13. After graduating from Harvard Law School in 1971, he represented thousands of people with disabilities over the past fifty years. He has testified before Congress on numerous occasions,</p>

	<p>successfully resolved a number of damage cases for institutionalized individuals with disabilities, and litigated dozens of class action cases that challenge the unnecessary segregation of people with disabilities in psychiatric hospitals, developmental disability institutions, nursing facilities, and juvenile justice settings.</p>
Personal Recognitions	<p>Congratulations to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Ford, Northeast Justice Center and Chair of DignityMA's Assisted Living Center and Member of the DignityMA Coordinating Committee is the recipient of the National Association of Elder Law Attorneys (NAELA) President's Award for 2025. • Recipients of awards presented at the Disability Law Center's Annual Meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boston Center for Independent Living, Rick Glassman Advocacy Award • Representative Jim O'Day, House Legislator of the Year • Senator Jo Comerford, Senate Legislator of the Year Award • Rick Glassman, Unsung Hero Award
May Recognitions 	<p><u>Mental Health Awareness Month</u></p> <p>Since 1949, Mental Health Awareness Month has been a driving force in addressing the challenges faced by millions of Americans living with mental health conditions.</p> <p><u>Older Americans Month 2025</u></p> <p>Every May, the Administration for Community Living (ACL) leads the nation's observance of Older Americans Month (OAM), a time to recognize older Americans' contributions, highlight aging trends, and reaffirm our commitment to serving older adults.</p> <p>The 2025 theme, Flip the Script on Aging, focuses on transforming how society perceives, talks about, and approaches aging. It encourages individuals and communities to challenge stereotypes and dispel misconceptions. This year, join us in honoring older adults' contributions, exploring the many opportunities for staying active and engaged as we age, and highlighting the opportunities for purpose, exploration, and connection that come with aging.</p> <p>On this site, find materials to help you celebrate, including this year's logo, poster, social media graphics, and activity ideas. Use #OlderAmericansMonth on social media to share your thoughts and activities and see what others are doing!</p>
Events	<p><u>Salute to Nurses</u></p> <p>The Boston Globe Tuesday, May 20, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. The Grand, 58 Seaport Blvd. #300, Boston In honor of The Boston Globe's annual Salute to Nurses section, Globe Events, in partnership with Keches Law, will host an in-person celebration for nurses.</p> <p><u>RSVP</u></p> <p><u>cCMV BRIEFING</u></p> <p>The Massachusetts cCMV Coalition and Sen. Joan Lovely Wednesday, May 14, 2025, 3:00 p.m. Room 428, State House, Boston and Virtual Access The Massachusetts cCMV Coalition and Sen. Lovely hold a briefing on congenital cytomegalovirus (cCMV), "the most common virus you never heard of" and the leading infectious cause of hearing loss and</p>

	<p>developmental disabilities in the United States, according to Sen. Lovely's office. One in 200 babies are born with cCMV, or over 400 babies in Massachusetts annually, yet less than 10% of women have ever heard of it, according to the coalition. A Sen. Lovely bill (S 1573) would require universal newborn screenings, prenatal education, and mandating reporting of the incidence of cCMV.</p> <p>Virtual access</p> <p>Arc of Massachusetts Thursday, May 15, 2025, 5:00 p.m. The Charles River Center, 59 E Militia Heights Dr., Needham Annual meeting and awards presentation. Sen. Cindy Friedman is the keynote speaker. Registration is required and tickets are \$50. Registration</p> <p>Disability Law Center Thursday, May 15, 2025, 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. UMass Club Boston, One Beacon Street, Boston Celebrating more than four decades of providing legal advocacy on disability issues that promote the fundamental rights of all people with disabilities to participate fully and equally in the social and economic life of Massachusetts. Honorees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karen Owen Talley, Individual Impact Leadership Award • Boston Center for Independent Living, Rick Glassman Advocacy Award • Representative Jim O'Day, House Legislator of the Year • Senator Jo Comerford, Senate Legislator of the Year Award • Rick Glassman, Unsung Hero Award • Nelson Mullins, Pro Bono Leadership Award <p>Tickets</p>
Webinars and Online Sessions	<p>Honoring Choices Massachusetts and the Massachusetts Health and Hospital Association Wednesday, May 14, 2025, 12:00 p.m. <i>Take a Simple Step: Become a Healthcare Planning Ambassador</i> A webinar about encouraging adults to designate a health care agent and fill out a health care proxy. The organizations want care professionals to be "healthcare planning ambassadors" who are able to "confidently engage adults in simple conversations using a structured process and free downloadable tool kit." Register</p> <p>Massachusetts Health and Hospital Association Wednesday, May 21, 2025, 12:00 to 1:30 p.m. <i>Diagnosis, Treatment & Care of Persons with Alzheimer's & Related Dementias in the Healthcare Setting</i> Presenters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erin Stevens, D.O., Palliative Care and Geriatric Physician • Anne Care, MSN-GNP, Palliative Care and Geriatric Nurse Practitioner <p>Attendees will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain an overview of Alzheimer's disease and related dementias in the U.S. and Massachusetts • Learn current guidelines for the diagnosis and treatment of Alzheimer's and related dementias.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the best practices for care and management of patients with Alzheimer's and related dementias. <p>Register</p> <p>Massachusetts Health and Hospital Association Tuesday, June 3, 2025, 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. <i>MassPACE Overview: All-Inclusive Elder Care</i> Presenter: Jennifer Maynard Batcheller, RN, Executive Director, MassPACE Association MassPACE will present an overview of the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) – a provider-based, fully integrated healthcare plan for individuals aged 55 and over with significant healthcare needs. PACE is an alternative to the nursing home; participants get all the care they need, all while staying in their communities where they feel comfortable. PACE is a resource for caregivers, housing providers, and others seeking to support older adults to age with dignity and respect in the setting of their choosing. Register</p>
Previously posted webinars and online sessions	Previously posted webinars and online sessions can be viewed at: https://dignityalliancema.org/webinars-and-online-sessions/
Nursing Homes	<p>1. McKnights Long Term Care News May 12, 2025 House committee proposes 10-year delay to nursing home staffing mandate By James M. Berklan This update reinforces the potential for significant changes in the long-term care landscape. The House committee's proposal to delay the federal nursing home staffing mandate for a decade is indeed a major win for providers who have voiced concerns about the rule's practicality and potential to force closures. The industry associations' initial reactions, while still cautious pending a thorough review, indicate their appreciation for this proposed reprieve. However, the other key element of the proposal – halting new or increased state provider taxes – introduces a layer of complexity. While providers may be relieved that the elimination of these taxes isn't on the table, the freeze could limit states' ability to generate additional Medicaid funding, which could indirectly impact nursing home payments in the future. This aspect is likely to be a point of concern and continued advocacy for the sector. The political framing of these proposals is also evident, with Republicans emphasizing the reversal of "nonsensical" rules and Democrats likely to raise concerns about potential impacts on vulnerable populations. As the budget reconciliation process moves forward, the final outcome for the nursing home industry and Medicaid funding will depend on negotiations between the House and Senate. The fact that parts of the staffing mandate are already in effect adds another dimension to the discussion, as the proposed delay would specifically target the yet-to-be-implemented components.</p> <p>2. Skilled Nursing News May 12, 2025 House GOP Budget Proposal Calls for Moratoria on Nursing Home Staffing Mandate, New Provider Taxes By Tim Mullaney</p>

Summary:

This House committee's budget proposal packs a one-two punch for the long-term care sector. On one hand, nursing homes are likely breathing easier with the proposed moratorium on the federal staffing mandate until 2035 and the fact that major Medicaid cuts like per capita caps seem to be off the table for now. The increase in home equity capitalization for long-term care eligibility is another potential positive.

However, the proposal to freeze existing state provider taxes and block new ones could create significant headwinds for Medicaid funding in many states, which could indirectly impact nursing home funding down the line. It's definitely a mixed bag with some immediate relief on staffing but potential long-term funding concerns brewing.

3. Elderlawanswers.com

May 12, 2025

[Investigation Uncovers Food Insecurity in Nursing Homes](#)

Takeaways

- A recent investigation found that many nursing homes spend less than \$10 per day on food per resident, raising concerns about malnutrition and food quality.
- There has been an increase in food-related sanctions, dietary complaints, and disease outbreaks in nursing homes.
- Residents report unappetizing food and inadequate portion sizes, highlighting a lack of accommodation for dietary needs.

Nutrition plays an essential role in the healthy aging. The [American Medical Association \(AMA\)](#) reports that healthy eating reduces mortality by 20 percent. Adequate nutrition is of particular importance for older adults with complex medical needs who reside in long-term care facilities. Yet, a recent [journalistic investigation](#) has identified problems with food in nursing homes across the United States. The report raises concerns that many long-term care residents are at risk of malnutrition, foodborne illness, and neglect that manifests as limited access to quality food options.

Many nursing homes — acquired by private equity firms in the wake of the pandemic — cut food costs, with more than a quarter of nursing home operators spending less than \$10 per day on food per resident and some spending as low as \$4 a day, according to the report published by NewJersey.com.

Long-term care facility operators may be cutting food costs because there is no federal minimum standard for food spending per resident. Operators may see food as a less-regulated area to reduce spending.

Nursing Homes

Many people rely on nursing homes for 24-hour care, as these facilities provide housing, medical assistance, and meals. The [Kaiser Family Foundation \(KKF\)](#) reports that over 1.2 million individuals reside in nursing homes in the United States. According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#), of the 15,300 nursing homes in the U.S., 70 percent were for-profit in 2020.

Nursing homes are expensive, with costs representing a significant financial responsibility for individuals and their families. In 2024, the [national median cost](#) of a private room in a nursing home ranged from \$9,733 (\$320 a day) to \$10,645 per month. While Medicaid covers the cost of a Medicaid-certified nursing home care for individuals who qualify

	<p>based on need, these individuals often reside in lower-quality nursing homes, per research published by the National Library of Medicine. People residing in nursing homes constitute a vulnerable population with complex medical needs that make independent living more challenging. According to the Alzheimer's Association, almost half — 48 percent — of nursing home residents have Alzheimer's or related dementias. Given the vulnerability of those in nursing homes and the high cost of long-term care, it is surprising and heartbreaking that food insecurity is a real concern in nursing homes across the country.</p> <p>Highlights From the Investigation</p> <p>Reporters reviewed thousands of federal cost reports filed with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. They worked with Rutgers University academics and data experts to identify several troubling findings in addition to low food-spending in nursing homes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write-ups for food-related sanctions tripled from 2021 to 2024. • Dietary complaints to ombudsman offices increased by more than 50 percent from 2020 to 2023. • Disease outbreaks, such as E. coli, listeria, and salmonella, are on the rise in nursing homes nationwide. This is worrisome as foodborne illnesses can be especially harmful to older adults • Residents interviewed commonly complained that the food was unappetizing — even when it met nutritional standards. One resident commented that the food in prison tasted better. Another resident stocked up on canned goods in his room. <p>Food access was another concern the investigation highlighted, with facilities offering small portions — such as a single ravioli or a rationed cup of milk. This is particularly troubling as individuals who live in nursing homes already face a greater risk of malnutrition and dehydration. The investigation also found a pattern of facilities not accommodating residents' needs, such as failing to provide soft food for those without teeth and not providing bananas to a woman who needed more potassium per her doctor's orders.</p> <p>The report suggests that many nursing homes have significant room to improve how they feed residents. For those navigating long-term care options, these findings are concerning. Older adults considering long-term care and their families may wish to consider how much a nursing home spends per resident on food, whether fresh fruits and vegetables are available, and how the facility accommodates dietary needs and restrictions.</p>
<p>Benjamin Healthcare Center</p>	<p>4. Commonwealth Beacon May 8, 2025 Former state senator defends position at nursing home in receivership By Gintautas Dumcius <i>Judge overseeing receivership rejects Wilkerson's effort to 'clarify' testimony</i></p> <p>Dianne Wilkerson, the former state senator who now works at a financially struggling Boston nursing home, defended her salary after a Superior Court judge raised concerns.</p> <p>A year ago, after the Benjamin Healthcare Center was placed into receivership to avoid closing the long-term care facility, the court-appointed receiver hired Wilkerson as his executive assistant. But her role at the facility, located in Boston's Mission Hill neighborhood, has come under scrutiny over the last several months. Christopher</p>

	<p>Belezos, the judge overseeing the receivership case, asked for more details about her salary information, citing testimony she had given in response to “allegations of nepotism and self-dealing.”</p> <p>The judge’s concerns, outlined in an April 22 filing, came days after a court hearing in which Wilkerson and Joseph Feaster, the court-appointed receiver, took the stand to deny allegations of financial mismanagement and nepotism. Separately, the nursing home’s administrator, Delicia Mark, also complained that Feaster and Wilkerson created a hostile work environment, an allegation which Feaster categorically denied.</p> <p>Feaster has known Wilkerson since their days on Beacon Hill in the Dukakis administration. Wilkerson, once considered a rising political star, resigned in 2008 from the state Senate seat she held for 15 years after she was indicted on federal corruption charges. Asked about her hiring and her history last year, Feaster said Wilkerson had “served her time” between 2011 and 2013 in prison.</p> <p>Noting that Wilkerson testified under the pains and penalty of perjury, Judge Belezos pointed to Wilkerson’s statement that she earned \$82 an hour and worked 90 hours per week. Last September, Wilkerson told <i>CommonWealth Beacon</i> that she worked “probably 70 to 80 hours a week.”</p> <p>“If such testimony is accurate, it raises significant concerns as to the rate of remuneration being paid to Ms. Wilkerson by an institution in receivership” and projected to lose roughly \$4.4 million in 2025, Judge Belezos wrote in his filing, asking for tax forms and her most recent paystubs.</p> <p>Wilkerson filed a May 3 affidavit in response saying she wanted to “clarify” her testimony. Her testimony of “90 hours” was meant to be in reference to 90 hours over a two-week pay period, and she worked an average of 45 to 50 hours per week, she wrote. She added that as a salaried employee, she is not paid overtime.</p> <p>She also submitted a lengthy list of her job responsibilities, including negotiating contracts with vendors, working with a bookkeeper to collect money owed to the Benjamin, and serving as a point of contact for information and document requests from banks, state, and federal officials looking into the facility’s former administrator’s financial activity before receivership.</p> <p>Her paystub and other salary information were filed under seal for privacy reasons.</p> <p>But Belezos, in a response he filed this week, ripped Wilkerson for what she said in her affidavit. “Ms. Wilkerson’s attempt to unilaterally re-frame, and amplify, her own testimony is rejected,” he wrote.</p> <p>He added that it is “entirely improper for a witness to engage in a post hearing effort to influence” a judge’s assessment of the credibility of testimony delivered under oath.</p> <p>He called her assertion on the stand that she works 90 hours per week “very clear, albeit not very credible.”</p> <p>In her affidavit, Wilkerson reiterated her denials of nepotism and self-dealing. The allegations were sparked by an anonymous letter from employees pointing to the hiring of Wilkerson relatives to work in the facility, as well as a snow removal contract given to a company run by two of her sons. When she was on the stand last month, Wilkerson said she was not involved in the hiring of her relatives, and the hiring of the</p>
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	<p>relatives was not a conflict of interest. She defended the hiring of her sons' snow removal company, citing a "flash snowstorm" during the Benjamin's 2024 Christmas party.</p> <p>The questions about her role were raised as Feaster, the receiver, is talking to companies interested in taking over the 164-bed facility, which will turn 100 years old in 2027. It is the only nursing home in the Northeast serving predominantly Black residents.</p> <p>The terms and conditions of any takeover include keeping the Benjamin name and ensuring the real estate that the building sits on remains dedicated to the facility. There is no mortgage on the facility, according to Feaster.</p> <p>Proposals were originally due May 8, but Feaster has extended it to June 5.</p> <p>Any sale requires approvals from the state's highest court, the state attorney general, and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. The next court date is set for May 15 in Suffolk Superior Court.</p>
Health Care Topics	<p>5. Time March 26, 2025 10 Questions You Should Always Ask at Doctors' Appointments</p> <p>This is great advice! It's so important for patients to feel empowered to ask questions and actively participate in their healthcare. It's easy to feel overwhelmed or intimidated in a doctor's office, but these questions are really helpful in opening up a meaningful dialogue.</p> <p>Here's a quick recap of the key questions patients should consider asking their doctors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "What screenings should I get?" (Tailored to individual needs and including mental health.) • "What vitamins and supplements might be helpful?" (To avoid harmful or ineffective options.) • "How many people with my condition have you treated?" (To gauge experience and potential need for a specialist.) • "What are my treatment options, and how do they compare?" (Considering both efficacy and quality of life.) • "Are there any new treatments, clinical trials, or emerging research that apply to my condition?" (To stay informed about the latest advancements.) • "What should I do if my symptoms get worse or don't improve?" (Understanding red flags and expectations.) • "When can I expect my test results, and how will I receive them?" (To manage anxiety and know what to expect.) • "Can you explain that in a way that's easier to understand?" (Ensuring clear communication.) • "What kind of financial support is available?" (Exploring options to manage costs.) • "If this were your family member, what would you do?" (Tapping into the doctor's empathy and best judgment.) <p>It's a good reminder that the doctor-patient relationship is a partnership, and asking these kinds of questions can lead to better understanding, more informed decisions, and ultimately, better health outcomes.</p>
Disability Topics	<p>6. 60 Minutes May 11, 2025 Paralyzed woman feels like "real Ironwoman" after implants help her take steps again</p>

	<p>By Anderson Cooper, Aliza Chasan, Nichole Marks, John Gallen</p> <p>The provided text details the groundbreaking work of Swiss neurosurgeon Dr. Jocelyne Bloch and French neuroscientist Gregoire Courtine in developing a "digital bridge" technology to help paralyzed individuals regain movement. This technology involves implanting a device in the brain that records neural activity related to movement and wirelessly transmits these signals to a spinal cord stimulator. The stimulator then delivers electrical pulses to activate muscles in the paralyzed limbs.</p> <p>The article highlights the experiences of three individuals who have benefited from this technology:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marta Carsteanu-Dombi: Paralyzed after a severe bike accident during a 2018 Ironman race, doctors initially told her she would never walk again. As the most severely paralyzed patient in the clinical trial for walking, she was able to take a few steps on her own with a walker after the implantation of the digital bridge and months of training. • Gert-Jan Oskam: The first person to receive the digital bridge four years prior, this Dutch man can now walk up to 450 feet with the aid of a walker and a headpiece that powers the implant. • Arnaud Robert: Paralyzed from the neck down after a fall, this Swiss journalist regained some movement in his left arm after eight months of training with the digital bridge, allowing him to perform tasks like holding a glass and typing. <p>The researchers believe that the training with the digital bridge may also stimulate the growth of new nerve connections in the spinal cord, leading to some improvement in movement even when the system is turned off. While the technology is still in the early stages of development and requires further research, Bloch and Courtine are hopeful about its potential to restore movement for paralyzed individuals in the future and plan to launch clinical trials in the United States.</p> <p>7. *New York Times May 7, 2025 <u><i>With Telescoping Crutches and Hexapod Legs, Dance Goes New Places</i></u> By Margaret Fuhrer <i>A new work by Axis Dance Company, "Kinematic/Kinesthetic," uses mobility technologies to reshape ideas about moving and about the devices themselves.</i></p> <p>This article highlights how the Axis Dance Company, in collaboration with artists and engineers, is challenging the conventional understanding of mobility devices like crutches. Instead of solely viewing them as medical solutions to a problem, they explore the creative and expressive possibilities inherent in these tools.</p> <p>The core of the article revolves around their performance piece "Kinematic/Kinesthetic," which features dancers using innovative mobility technologies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telescoping crutches: These crutches can extend and retract, opening up new movement possibilities beyond simple support. The dancers utilize them for partnering, as extensions of their bodies, and even as sculptural elements. • Hexapod robot: This device gives the user six legs, offering a completely different mode of movement.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hands-free Omeo wheelchair: Controlled by body weight, this wheelchair allows for new forms of interaction and partnering in dance. <p>The creators emphasize that by involving dancers, who have a deep understanding of their bodies, and people with disabilities, who have extensive experience with technology, in the design process, they can shift the focus from limitations to possibilities. This collaboration leads to the development of devices that are not just functional but also inspire new ways of moving and interacting with the world.</p> <p>Ben Levine, the interdisciplinary artist behind the project, hopes this work will broaden our understanding of the relationship between bodies and machines. Nadia Adame, the artistic director of Axis, points out that technology designed with input from disabled individuals can benefit society as a whole.</p> <p>While the development process faced challenges, such as breaking prototypes and limitations in time and funding, the project ultimately offers a glimpse into a future where mobility devices are seen as tools for artistic expression and the exploration of "superhuman, species-atypical" movement, rather than just aids for disability.</p>
Federal Policy	<p>8. *Salem News May 12, 2025 <u>Cutting back Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is cruel</u> This article criticizes the proposed Republican cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), arguing that they are cruel and disproportionately harm vulnerable populations to fund tax cuts for the wealthy. Key points include: The proposed cuts: Republicans in the House are aiming to cut over \$230 billion from SNAP, which provides food assistance to over 40 million low-income Americans, including a significant number of children. The impact: These cuts would lead to increased hunger, particularly among children, seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities. The political motivation: The cuts are seen as a way to fund tax cuts for the wealthy, shifting the financial burden onto states and away from the federal budget. The widespread need: SNAP benefits are utilized in both Republican and Democrat-leaning states, indicating that hunger is a nationwide issue, especially in rural areas. Criticism from advocates: Figures like Congressman Jim McGovern and chef Jose Andres have condemned the proposed cuts, highlighting the cruelty and the negative impact on already struggling communities. The hope: there is some hope that Republican leaders are beginning to understand the negative effects these cuts will have on their constituents. The core issue: The core issue is that people all over the united states need food, no matter what political party they are affiliated with.</p> <p>9. United Spinal Association May 5, 2025 <u>Save the Spinal Cord Injury Research Program</u> By Steve Lieberman, Senior Director, Advocacy & Policy, United Spinal Association On March 15th, the Spinal Cord Injury Research Program at the Department of Defense was eliminated. There was no notice. There was no debate. At the last minute, in the fine print of the must-pass bill to keep the government open, language was</p>

	<p>slipped in, which resulted in the entire \$40 million budget for SCI research at the DOD - in place since 2009 - being zeroed out for 2025. This program (also known by its acronym of SCIRP) has been the gold standard of SCI research in the United States. Its targeted and efficient administration, with unparalleled opportunities for people with lived experience to provide input and comments on the research being conducted, has been a shining example of how the SCI community, clinicians, and researchers can come together to work towards innovative projects with real-world applications.</p> <p>We are asking Congress to restore funding for SCIRP in Fiscal Year 2026. As SCIRP represented approximately one third of the total SCI research funding in the United States, it is critical that this funding be restored.</p> <p>Please take a moment and click on the orange button above to contact your members of Congress to ask them to support restoring SCI research funding!</p> <p>Save the Spinal Cord Injury Research Program</p>
<p>From Around the Country</p>	<p>10. Hartford Business Journal May 12, 2025 Union pushes CT nursing home strike deadline back to May 27 By Keith M. Phaneuf, CT Mirror</p> <p>Summary:</p> <p>Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont announced that the state's largest health care workers' union, SEIU 1199NE, has agreed to postpone its strike deadline for 51 nursing homes from May 19 to May 27. This delay came at the request of the Lamont administration, which acknowledges that the current wages of nursing home and group home workers do not reflect the value of their work and supports their efforts to secure better compensation.</p> <p>Union president Rob Baril stated that the union has clearly communicated its concerns regarding wages and benefits, specifically seeking a starting pay of \$25 per hour for caregivers with a future goal of around \$30 per hour for most employees (currently earning between \$18 and \$22). While negotiations are technically between the private nursing homes and the union, the state often plays a crucial role due to the significant portion of nursing home revenue coming from state and federal Medicaid funds (over 80%).</p> <p>The Lamont administration has indicated it is working to identify the necessary resources to improve wages and benefits, and the union is taking them at their word. SEIU 1199NE estimates that an additional \$550 million in Medicaid payments over the next two fiscal years would be required to fund their demands, translating to an annual state cost of approximately \$137.5 million after federal reimbursement.</p> <p>However, securing these funds will be challenging as Lamont and fellow Democrats are already struggling to create a new state budget within constitutional spending limits, especially given the uncertainty surrounding potential federal Medicaid cuts. Congress is aiming for significant Medicaid cuts over the next decade, which could cost Connecticut a substantial amount annually.</p> <p>Matthew Barrett, representing the Connecticut Association of Health Care Facilities, expressed gratitude for the continued efforts to avert a strike, emphasizing the harm and trauma caused by separating nursing home residents from their caregivers and highlighting the importance of</p>

workforce development, including improved wages and benefits, to address the needs of the aging population.

11. WKBW.com

May 11, 2025

[More than 2,500 nursing home workers across WNY plan to strike](#)

By Kristen Mirand

This situation in Western New York highlights the ongoing tensions surrounding staffing, wages, and benefits in the nursing home industry. The fact that over 2,500 caregivers across 15 facilities have voted to authorize a strike underscores the level of dissatisfaction and the urgency these workers feel about their working conditions.

Their demands for better staffing levels directly relate to the quality of care they can provide, while fair wages, affordable health insurance, pension improvements, and childcare benefits address their personal well-being and financial stability. The union's assertion of stalled negotiations despite months of talks suggests a significant disconnect between the workers' needs and the employers' offers.

The facilities, particularly The McGuire Group, express disappointment and accuse the union of choosing confrontation over collaboration. However, the workers' statements about struggling to make ends meet and feeling overwhelmed by their job demands paint a different picture, emphasizing the real human impact of these issues.

With the strike looming on May 20th, the coming days will be critical to see if a resolution can be reached. The activation of contingency plans by the nursing homes indicates they are preparing for a potential work stoppage, but the disruption to patient care remains a significant concern. The union's upcoming news conference will likely shed more light on their strategy and demands. This situation mirrors the broader challenges facing the long-

12. McKnights Long Term Care News

May 11, 2025

[Feds: Bankruptcy no reason to give two nursing homes pass on up to \\$2.7M in restitution](#)

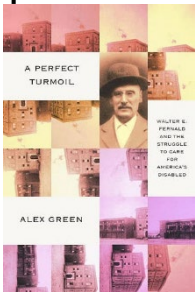
By Kimberly Marselas

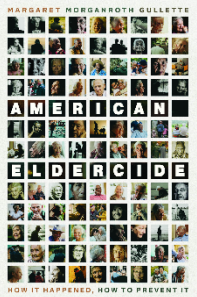
Summary:

This case highlights the serious consequences of healthcare fraud in nursing homes, particularly concerning understaffing and falsification of records. Despite the convicted nursing homes' claims of bankruptcy and inability to pay, the federal government is rightly pushing for substantial penalties. Their argument that failing to impose significant fines and restitution would incentivize illegal operating strategies in the healthcare industry is compelling.

The government's point about the facilities potentially facing admission pauses and losing federal funding had the accurate staffing levels been transparent strengthens their case for restitution. It underscores that the fraud wasn't a victimless crime. The fact that CMS officials testified during the trial further emphasizes the gravity of the situation from a regulatory standpoint.

Even though the individuals involved were acquitted, holding the companies accountable through financial penalties seems to be the remaining avenue for justice and deterrence in this case. The court's decision on the government's request will be a significant indicator of how seriously such fraudulent practices will be treated.

<p>Public Sessions</p>	<p>13. Public Health Council Wednesday, May 14, 2025, 9:00 a.m. <i>Meeting</i> Department of Public Health Commissioner Robbie Goldstein gives an update. There will be informational presentations about DPH data and the DPH Heat Education Alert Tool. (Wednesday, 9:00 a.m.) Agenda and Livestream</p> <p>14. Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities Thursday, May 15, 2025, 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Workforce Supports Subcommittee Meeting This is a meeting of the Workforce Supports Subcommittee of the permanent Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities. This subcommittee will collect data and analyze initiatives that address the workforce crisis for people who provide services to individuals with disabilities. Agenda 1. Welcome, Roll Call 2. Attorney General Guidance: Information for MA Healthcare Providers regarding immigration enforcement and access to care and assistance programs presentation by Ethan Marks, Deputy Division Chief of Healthcare Division, MA Office of the Attorney General 3. Update on the youth and young adults with disabilities, job coaching, and inclusive employment pathways event 4. Adjournment</p> <p>15. Executive Office of Health and Human Services Friday, May 16, 2025, 10:00 a.m. <i>Remote public hearing</i> Agenda: increasing the rates for certain independent living communities and services that are provided to people on public health insurance. The services are purchased by the Massachusetts Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, MassAbility and the Department of Mental Health. The total annualized cost will be about \$849,000. More Info and Access</p>
<p>Books by DignityMA Participants</p>  <p>About the Author: Alex Green teaches political communications at Harvard Kennedy School and is a visiting fellow at the Harvard Law School Project on Disability and a visiting scholar at Brandeis University Lurie Institute for Disability Policy. He is the author of legislation to create a first-of-its-kind, disability-led human rights commission to investigate the</p>	<p><u><i>A Perfect Turmoil: Walter E. Fernald and the Struggle to Care for America's Disabled</i></u> By Alex Green</p> <p>From the moment he became superintendent of the nation's oldest public school for intellectually and developmentally disabled children in 1887 until his death in 1924, Dr. Walter E. Fernald led a wholesale transformation of our understanding of disabilities in ways that continue to influence our views today. How did the man who designed the first special education class in America, shaped the laws of entire nations, and developed innovative medical treatments for the disabled slip from idealism into the throes of eugenics before emerging as an opponent of mass institutionalization? Based on a decade of research, <i>A Perfect Turmoil</i> is the story of a doctor, educator, and policymaker who was unafraid to reverse course when convinced by the evidence, even if it meant going up against some of the most powerful forces of his time.</p> <p>In this landmark work, Alex Green has drawn upon extensive, unexamined archives to unearth the hidden story of one of America's largely forgotten, but most complex, conflicted, and significant figures.</p>

<p>history of state institutions for disabled people in Massachusetts.</p> <p>Books by DignityMA Participants</p>  <p>About the Author: Margaret Morganroth Gullette is a cultural critic and anti-ageism pioneer whose prize-winning work is foundational in critical age studies. She is the author of several books, including <i>Agewise</i>, <i>Aged by Culture</i>, and <i>Ending Ageism, or How Not to Shoot Old People</i>. Her writing has appeared in publications such as the <i>New York Times</i>, <i>Washington Post</i>, <i>Guardian</i>, <i>Atlantic</i>, <i>Nation</i>, and the <i>Boston Globe</i>. She is a resident scholar at the Women's Studies Research Center, Brandeis, and lives in Newton, Massachusetts.</p>	<p>Buy the book here</p> <p>American Eldercide: How It Happened, How to Prevent It By Margaret Morganroth Gullette</p> <p>A bracing spotlight on the avoidable causes of the COVID-19 Eldercide in the United States.</p> <p>Twenty percent of the Americans who have died of COVID since 2020 have been older and disabled adults residing in nursing homes—even though they make up fewer than one percent of the US population. Something about this catastrophic loss of life in government-monitored facilities has never added up. Until now. In <i>American Eldercide</i>, activist and scholar Margaret Morganroth Gullette investigates this tragic public health crisis with a passionate voice and razor-sharp attention to detail, showing us that nothing about it was inevitable. By unpacking the decisions that led to discrimination against nursing home residents, revealing how governments, doctors, and media reinforced ageist or ableist biases, and collecting the previously little-heard voices of the residents who survived, Gullette helps us understand the workings of what she persuasively calls an eldercide.</p> <p>Gullette argues that it was our collective indifference, fueled by the heightened ageism of the COVID-19 era, that prematurely killed this vulnerable population. Compounding that deadly indifference is our own panic about aging and a social bias in favor of youth-based decisions about lifesaving care. The compassion this country failed to muster for the residents of our nursing facilities motivated Gullette to pen an act of remembrance, issuing a call for pro-aging changes in policy and culture that would improve long-term care for everyone.</p> <p>Buy the book here.</p> <p>Bringing People Home: The Marsters Settlement</p> <p>Webpages: https://www.centerforpublicrep.org/court_case/marsters-et-al-v-healey-et-al/ https://marsters.centerforpublicrep.org/</p> <p>Support Dignity Alliance Massachusetts</p> <p>Please Donate!</p> <p>Dignity Alliance Massachusetts is a grassroots, volunteer-run 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to transformative change to ensure the dignity of older adults, people with disabilities, and their caregivers. We are committed to advancing ways of providing long-term services, support, living options and care that respect individual choice and self-determination. Through education, legislation, regulatory reform, and legal strategies, this mission will become reality throughout the Commonwealth.</p> <p>As a fully volunteer operation, our financial needs are modest, but also real. Your donation helps to produce and distribute <i>The Dignity Digest</i> weekly free of charge to almost 1,000 recipients and maintain our website, www.DignityAllianceMA.org, which has thousands of visits each month.</p> <p>Consider a donation in memory or honor of someone. The names of those recognized will be included in The Dignity Digest and posted on the website.</p>
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	https://dignityalliancema.org/donate/ Thank you for your consideration!	
Dignity Alliance Massachusetts Legislative Endorsements	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 Questions or comments can be directed to Legislative Work Group Chair Richard (Dick) Moore at rmoores8473@charter.net .	
Websites		
Blogs		
Podcasts		
YouTube Channels		
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/	
Contact information for reporting complaints and concerns	Nursing home	Department of Public Health 1. Print and complete the Consumer/Resident/Patient Complaint Form 2. Fax completed form to (617) 753-8165 Or Mail to 67 Forest Street, Marlborough, MA 01752 Ombudsman Program
MassHealth Eligibility Information	MassHealth / Massachusetts Medicaid Income & Asset Limits for Nursing Homes & Long-Term Care Table of Contents (Last updated: December 16, 2024) Massachusetts Medicaid Long-Term Care Definition Income & Asset Limits for Eligibility Income Definition & Exceptions Asset Definition & Exceptions Home Exemption Rules Medical / Functional Need Requirements Qualifying When Over the Limits Specific Massachusetts Medicaid Programs How to Apply for Massachusetts Medicaid	
Money Follows the Person	MassHealth Money Follows the Person The Money Follows the Person (MFP) Demonstration helps older adults and people with disabilities move from nursing facilities, chronic disease or rehabilitation hospitals, or other qualified facilities back to the community. Statistics as of March 31, 2025: 344 people transitioned out of nursing facilities in 2024 49 transitions in January and February 2025 910 currently in transition planning Open PDF file, 1.34 MB, MFP Demonstration Brochure	

	MFP Demonstration Brochure - Accessible Version MFP Demonstration Fact Sheet MFP Demonstration Fact Sheet - Accessible Version
Nursing Home Closures	List of Nursing Home Closures in Massachusetts Since July 2021: https://dignityalliancema.org/2025/04/07/nursing-home-closures-since-july-2021/
Determination of Need Projects	List of Determination of Need Applications regarding nursing homes since 2020: https://dignityalliancema.org/2025/04/07/list-of-determination-of-need-applications/ Pending: Town of Nantucket – Long Term Care Substantial Capital Expenditure
List of Special Focus Facilities	<p>Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services <i>List of Special Focus Facilities and Candidates</i> https://www.cms.gov/files/document/sff-posting-candidate-list-march-2025.pdf Updated March 26, 2025</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>This is important information for consumers – particularly as they consider a nursing home.</p> <p>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. <p>Massachusetts facilities listed (updated) Newly added to the listing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salem Rehab Center, Salem https://www.adviniacare.com/adviniacare-salem/ <p>Nursing home inspect information: https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225644/ </p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall River Healthcare https://www.nextstephpc.com/fallriver Nursing home inspect information: https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225723/ • Massachusetts facilities which have graduated from the program • 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 • Somerset Ridge Center, Somerset https://somersestridgerehab.com/ Nursing home inspect information: https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225747 • Tremont Healthcare Center, Wareham https://thetremontrehabcare.com/ Nursing home inspect information: https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225488/ • Massachusetts facilities that are candidates for listing (months on list) • AdviniaCare Newburyport (13) https://www.adviniacare.com/adviniacare-country-center/ Nursing home inspect information: https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225332 • Brandon Woods of New Bedford (1) https://brandonwoodsnewbedford.com/ Nursing home inspect information: https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225264/ • Cape Cod Post Acute, Brewster (9) https://capecodrehabhc.com/ Nursing home inspect information: https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225667/ • Charwell House Health and Rehabilitation, Norwood (37) https://tinyurl.com/Charwell Nursing home inspect information: https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225208 • Life Care Center of Merrimack Valley, Billerica (2) https://lcca.com/locations/ma/merrimack-valley/ Nursing home inspect information: https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225546/ • Medway Country Manor Skilled Nursing & Rehabilitation, Medway (1) https://www.medwaymanor.com/ Nursing home inspect information: https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225412 • Pine Knoll Nursing Center, Lexington, (3) https://www.longtermcentersgroup.com/About-Pine-Knoll-Nursing-Center-Rehab Nursing home inspect information: https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225049/ • RegalCare at Glen Ridge (20) https://www.genesishcc.com/glenridge Nursing home inspect information: https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225523 • West Newton Healthcare, West Newton (9)
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	https://www.nextstephc.com/westnewton Nursing home inspect information: https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/homes/h-225324/ No longer operating <ul style="list-style-type: none">South Dennis Healthcare, South Dennis https://tinyurl.com/SpecialFocusFacilityProgram																																																
Nursing Home Inspect	ProPublica Nursing Home Inspect Data updated April 23, 2025 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?) <table><tr><th>Deficiency Tag</th><th># Deficiencies</th><th># Facilities</th><th>MA facilities cited</th></tr><tr><td>B</td><td>315</td><td>222</td><td>Tag B</td></tr><tr><td>C</td><td>106</td><td>82</td><td>Tag C</td></tr><tr><td>D</td><td>7,445</td><td>1,401</td><td>Tag D</td></tr><tr><td>E</td><td>2,133</td><td>767</td><td>Tag E</td></tr><tr><td>F</td><td>676</td><td>314</td><td>Tag F</td></tr><tr><td>G</td><td>517</td><td>339</td><td>Tag G</td></tr><tr><td>H</td><td>58</td><td>35</td><td>Tag H</td></tr><tr><td>I</td><td>3</td><td>2</td><td>Tag I</td></tr><tr><td>J</td><td>53</td><td>28</td><td>Tag J</td></tr><tr><td>K</td><td>27</td><td>9</td><td>Tag K</td></tr><tr><td>L</td><td>9</td><td>3</td><td>Tag L</td></tr></table> Updated April 23, 2025	Deficiency Tag	# Deficiencies	# Facilities	MA facilities cited	B	315	222	Tag B	C	106	82	Tag C	D	7,445	1,401	Tag D	E	2,133	767	Tag E	F	676	314	Tag F	G	517	339	Tag G	H	58	35	Tag H	I	3	2	Tag I	J	53	28	Tag J	K	27	9	Tag K	L	9	3	Tag L
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Nursing Home Compare	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: <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. 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.																																																

	https://tinyurl.com/NursingHomeCompareWebsite		
Data on Ownership of Nursing Homes	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.		
DignityMA Call Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	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		
Participation opportunities with Dignity Alliance Massachusetts Most workgroups meet bi-weekly via Zoom. Interest Groups meet periodically (monthly, bi-monthly, or quarterly). Please contact group lead for more information.	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
	Communications	Lachlan Forrow	lforrow@bidmc.harvard.edu
	Facilities (Nursing homes and rest homes)	Jim Lomastro Arlene Germain	jimlomastro@comcast.net agermain@manhr.org
	Home and Community Based Services	Meg Coffin	mcoffin@centerlw.org
	Legislative	Richard Moore	rmoore8743@charter.net
	Legal Issues	Stephen Schwartz	sschwartz@cpr-ma.org
	Interest Group	Group lead	Email
	Housing	Bill Henning	bhenning@bostoncil.org
	Veteran Services	James Lomastro	jimlomastro@comcast.net
	Transportation	Frank Baskin Chris Hoeh	baskinfrank19@gmail.com cdhoeh@gmail.com
	Covid / Long Covid	James Lomastro	jimlomastro@comcast.net
	Incarcerated Persons	TBD	info@DignityAllianceMA.org
Bringing People Home: Implementing the	Website: https://marsters.centerforpublicrep.org/ Center for Public Representation 5 Ferry Street, #314, Easthampton, MA 01027		

Marsters class action settlement	413-586-6024, Press 2 bringingpeoplehome@cpr-ma.org Newsletter registration: https://marsters.centerforpublicrep.org/7b3c2-contact/
REV UP Massachusetts	REV UP Massachusetts advocates for the fair and civic inclusion of people with disabilities in every political, social, and economic front. REV Up aims to increase the number of people with disabilities who vote. Website: https://revupma.org/wp/ To join REV UP Massachusetts – go to the SIGN UP page .
The Dignity Digest	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
Note of thanks	Thanks to the contributors to this issue of <i>The Dignity Digest</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judi Fonsh • Wynn Gerhardt • Steve Lieberman, Senior Director, Advocacy & Policy, United Spinal Association Special thanks to the MetroWest Center for Independent Living for assistance with the website and MailChimp versions of <i>The Dignity Digest</i> . If you have submissions for inclusion in <i>The Dignity Digest</i> or have questions or comments, please submit them to Digest@DignityAllianceMA.org .
<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>	