



The Dignity Digest

Issue # 275

March 17, 2026

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.

Reflection

On this St. Patrick's Day, may the luck of the Irish bring comfort in difficult moments, joy in small victories, and gratitude for the caregivers, advocates, older adults, and people with disabilities who remind us every day that compassion is the greatest blessing of all.

Guide to news items in this week's *Dignity Digest*

Nursing Homes

- [More than half of US nursing homes changed owners during pandemic \(McKnights Long Term Care, March 15, 2026\)](#)

Housing

- [Elizabeth Warren's amazingly progressive housing bill \(Today on TAP, March 13, 2026\)](#)

Covid / Long Covid

- [Progressively Widening Healthcare Costs in Long COVID Over Five Years \(medRxiv, February 26, 2026\)](#)

Aging Topics

- [Aging into uncertainty \(*Boston Globe, March 15, 2026 \(Updated\)\)](#)

Veteran Topics

- [VA announces plan to put some veterans in guardianships \(Task & Purpose, March 15, 2026\)](#)

Covid / Long Covid

- [Progressively Widening Healthcare Costs in Long COVID Over Five Years \(medRxiv, February 26, 2026\)](#)

Longevity

- [Life expectancy gap between Black residents and other Bostonians has doubled over the past decade \(*Boston Globe, March 12, 2026\)](#)

Winter Paralympics

- [What should future Winter Paralympics look like? Bigger, better and maybe earlier \(The Athletic, March 16, 2026\)](#)
- [Meet the Aigners, the new Paralympic dynasty family that just won nine medals \(The Athletic, March 16, 2026\)](#)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jack Wallace becomes USA Hockey's newest star: 'This is what it's all about' (The Athletic, March 15, 2026) <p>State Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governor Healey Increases Home Heating Assistance Benefits for Tens of Thousands of Massachusetts Households (Office of Governor Maura Healey and Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll, March 10, 2026) <p>From Our Colleagues around the Country</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Center for Medicare Advocacy (Center for Medicare Advocacy, March 12, 2026) • In This Issue (Consumer Voice, March 10, 2026)
<p>Quotes</p>	<p><i>Long COVID affects millions worldwide, yet the long-term trajectory of healthcare costs remains poorly characterized.</i></p> <p>Progressively Widening Healthcare Costs in Long COVID Over Five Years (medRxiv, February 26, 2026)</p> <p><i>In 2025, baby boomers made up the largest slice of sellers [of homes], representing 53 percent, and were 42 percent of all buyers, according to data from the National Association of Realtors. Of any generation, it might appear that baby boomers — those born between 1946 and 1964 — enjoy more housing stability than any other age group.</i></p> <p>Aging into uncertainty (*Boston Globe, March 15, 2026 (Updated))</p> <p><i>“We keep thinking about this population in terms of statistics, and not thinking about this population as our grandparents and mothers and fathers. These are human beings that deserve to age with dignity, and right now do not have the ability to.”</i></p> <p>Alex Martin, marketing director for Rogerson Communities, Aging into uncertainty (*Boston Globe, March 15, 2026 (Updated))</p> <p><i>“I think there’s a stigma that if older people are in any way in need of something that they don’t have resources to get, it’s because of something they did wrong or something they didn’t do right and that’s usually not the case. It doesn’t take extreme circumstances to find yourself in need of affordable</i></p>

housing, or higher levels of care than you can afford. It's very expensive, and most people aren't prepared for it."

Alex Martin, marketing director for Rogerson Communities, [Aging into uncertainty](#) (*Boston Globe, March 15, 2026 (Updated))

The gap between how long Black residents are living compared to the rest of Boston has doubled. Black residents are twice as likely to die before age 65, largely due to preventable deaths, such as dying of drug overdose or cancer, according to a new [city report](#).

[Life expectancy gap between Black residents and other Bostonians has doubled over the past decade](#) (*Boston Globe, March 12, 2026)

Bigger, better and probably earlier ought to be the IPC's goals for future Winter Paralympics.


[What should future Winter Paralympics look like? Bigger, better and maybe earlier](#) (The Athletic, March 16, 2026)

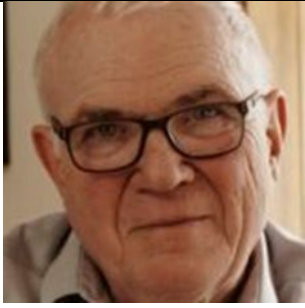
During the 2024-2025 heating season, the HEAP program provided financial assistance to more than 159,000 Massachusetts households.. The majority of households served by HEAP- 54 percent- are seniors living on fixed incomes.

[Governor Healey Increases Home Heating Assistance Benefits for Tens of Thousands of Massachusetts Households](#) (Office of Governor Maura Healey and Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll, March 10, 2026)

"Policies that expand legal authority over a veteran's decision making risk undermining trust between veterans and the systems designed to support them if they are not implemented with extreme care and transparency."

[VA announces plan to put some veterans in guardianships](#) (Task & Purpose, March 15, 2026)

	<p>According to federal data, 33,000 veterans are unhoused, out of more than 770,000 Americans who experience homelessness according to the 2024 point-in-time homelessness count.</p> <p>VA announces plan to put some veterans in guardianships (Task & Purpose, March 15, 2026)</p>
<p>Commentary Offered by DignityMA Participants</p>  <p>Margaret Morganroth Gullette is an internationally known cultural critic, an essayist, anti-ageist activist, and prize-winning writer of nonfiction. Her latest book, <i>American Eldercide: How It Happened, How to Prevent It</i> (2024) was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize and a National Book Award for Nonfiction. It won a MASS Cultural Council 2025 grant in Literature. She is a member of DignityMA's Coordinating Committee</p>	<p><i>It's just cruel to give stakeholders the assignment to cut MassHealth</i> *Boston Globe March 15, 2026 By Margaret Gullette Re "To make cuts, state asks those affected: Federal changes force hard choices for MassHealth" (Page A1, March 8): Jason Laughlin's article on the cuts to health care for people with disabilities and low-income residents is gut-wrenching. These Medicaid recipients have so little income that they have no other choices. What will people with personal care attendants do if they receive fewer hours of necessary care? Let the MIT expert sit in a chair for 12 to 18 hours waiting to be positioned or changed. People with low incomes who receive home care already get a severely limited number of hours per week. Why force them into expensive nursing facilities when they are more contentedly aging in place at a lower cost? The state put a few people with disabilities and disability rights activists on a working group, on the grounds that they are stakeholders, asking them to help determine where the program should be cut, but what leeway did these participants have? How could the state be so cruel? I expect knowledgeable legislators to protest and press state agencies to find other places to cut the budget.</p>
<p>Commentary Offered by DignityMA Participants</p>	<p>Pay the Village Generations Now March 12, 2026 By James Lomastro In his article "Pay the Village," James A. Lomastro argues for the formal compensation of grandparent caregivers, characterizing them as essential but unpaid public infrastructure. He highlights a stark economic disparity: while grandparent caregivers save taxpayers over \$4 billion annually by keeping children out of the foster care system, many of</p>



James A. Lomastro, PhD, is a member of the Coordinating Committee for Dignity Alliance Massachusetts and a surveyor for CARF International. He writes frequently on issues concerning nursing homes, home- and community-based services, private equity, artificial and augmented intelligence, and caregiving. He had an extensive career in healthcare administration and academia.

these seniors live in poverty or with disabilities and receive no financial support because they operate outside formal licensing systems. Lomastro contends that the current policy of providing "navigation services" rather than direct funding is a structural choice that exploits the most vulnerable caregivers. To rectify this, he proposes specific reforms, including a federal kinship caregiver payment program, a dedicated tax credit for grandparents on fixed incomes, and the use of opioid settlement funds to provide direct financial relief to the "village" that has long performed this vital public service for free.

[Seven years later: What long-term care saw coming](#)

McKnights Long Term Care News

March 13, 2026

By James Lomastro

Seven years after a 2018 *McKnight's* article accurately predicted that external digital forces would disrupt healthcare's traditional hierarchies, the author revisits the argument to highlight how the long-term care (LTC) sector—often overlooked by Silicon Valley—possesses the essential "operational wisdom" required for successful AI integration. While early predictions about pattern recognition and external disruption proved correct, the rise of large language models and persistent data quality issues have refined the conversation, shifting the focus from speculative tech to practical tools that augment, rather than replace, human judgment. The author argues that LTC practitioners are "wisdom practitioners" whose intimate knowledge of complex resident needs is the ultimate safeguard against ineffective technology; therefore, the sector's success depends on insisting that AI tools are designed as "augmented intelligence" that prioritizes direct care worker input and relational trust over mere administrative efficiency.

Transitions
The Center for Living and Work, the center for independent living based in Worcester, has changed its name to **Your Access Advocates**. Their new web address is <http://www.youraccessadvocates.org/>. The email address for Meg Coffin, CEO, is mcoffin@youraccessadvocates.org.

Recruitment
See: [Listings on MASterList.com's Job Board](#) for all current listings

DignityMA Study Session
Dignity Alliance Massachusetts Study Session
Grassroots Advocacy Emerges from the Pandemic: From an Op-Ed to a Statewide Force
 Date: Wednesday, March 18, 2026 Time: 2:00 p.m.
 Zoom registration: <https://tinyurl.com/StudySessionMar18>

Join us for a dynamic study session exploring the evolution of grassroots advocacy in long-term care reform, inspired by the journey of Dignity Alliance Massachusetts—from a single op-ed to a statewide coalition driving legislative change. This session is based on a presentation made during the National Consumer Voice 50th Anniversary Conference held in November 2025 in Arlington, Virginia.

Speakers:

- Richard T. Moore, Co-Founder and Legislative Chair
- Paul Lanzikos, Co-Founder and Coordinator
- Margaret Morganroth Gullette, Coordinating Committee Member
- Jeni Kaplan, Coordinating Committee Member

Session Highlights:

- The power of consumer voice and coalition-building
- Lessons from the pandemic: mobilizing older adults and allies
- Strategies for legislative impact and media engagement
- Reflections from the National Consumer Voice 50th Anniversary Conference

Who Should Attend:

- Advocates, policymakers, caregivers, older adults, disability rights leaders, and anyone committed to dignity in care and systemic reform.
- If you've heard about Dignity Alliance and might consider participating in its meetings and activities, this session will provide a great introduction
- If you've attended some Dignity Alliance sessions in the past, this session is a great way to catch up on what we've been doing and our future plans.

Registration is required:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/X62--MTzSTWFSakQbcJ9xQ>

(Zoom link provided upon registration)

<p>Newsletter Subscription Opportunity</p>	<p>Massachusetts Guardianship Policy Institute <u>Beyond Guardianship</u></p> <p>The Massachusetts Guardianship Policy Institute has initiated a monthly publication — where policy, advocacy, and research meet. Each month, they will offer ideas, news, person-centered stories, and updates from across the guardianship landscape. The goal is to inform, connect, and advance a more ethical and effective model for guardianship. Subscribe</p>
<p>Webinars and Online Sessions</p>	<p>1. Long Term Care Community Coalition Tuesday, March 17, 2026, 1:00 p.m. <u>Failures in Advance Care Planning: Content Analysis of CPR-Related Immediate Jeopardy Citations in Nursing Homes.</u></p> <p>In this webinar, research nurse scientist Mary Ellen Dellefield will present research examining how nursing homes honor residents’ advance directives related to CPR. Using CMS deficiency data, the study identified 93 immediate jeopardy citations across four Midwestern states between 2019 and 2022, highlighting serious failures in emergency response. Learn about the regulatory implications, risks to resident safety, and recommendations to strengthen CPR practices and better uphold resident rights. LTCCC Registration</p> <p>2. National Alzheimer’s and Dementia Resource Center Tuesday, April 7, 2026, 2:00 p.m. <u>Meeting Communities Where They Are: Innovative Approaches to Dementia Supports and Services</u></p> <p>Addressing the unique support and service needs of communities is central to effective home- and community-based dementia care. While many dementia-specific interventions are grounded in research and best practices, they often require thoughtful adaptation to effectively reach underserved populations. Supports and services for people living with dementia, their caregivers, and their communities are most impactful when tailored to reflect cultural values, language, and lived experiences. This webinar will feature two specialized, community-based dementia programs, each focused on an underserved population—African American and Korean American communities. Both programs have adapted their approaches to reduce barriers to service acceptance, increase engagement, and address unmet needs. Together, they will demonstrate strategies for delivering strengths-based, dementia-specific services and supports while navigating and overcoming challenges. Direct questions to NADRC-Webinars@rti.org NADRC Registration</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>Nursing Homes</p>	<p>3. McKnights Long Term Care March 15, 2026</p>

	<p><u>More than half of US nursing homes changed owners during pandemic</u> By Kimberly Marselas More than half of US nursing homes (57.8%) saw a change in ownership during the first three years of the pandemic, with rates approaching 63% among for-profit entities. That was a staggering increase over previous estimates that suggested 7% to 13% of all nursing homes changed hands annually between 1993 and 2010, according to a new study by epidemiologists at the University of Saskatchewan. Their findings indicate that 22.7% of government-owned nursing homes included in a sample of more than 12,000 nursing homes converted to for-profit status between March 2020 and March 2023. Another 7.1% converted to privately held nonprofits, meaning nearly one-third of the nation's public nursing homes were wiped out by COVID-era pressures. . . In addition, Pittman and colleagues found that a nursing home's average overall Five-Star rating ranged from a low of 2.8 among for-profit facilities with an ownership change, to a high of 3.6 among nonprofit facilities without an ownership change. Total fines issued by CMS also were higher among nursing homes that experienced an ownership change.</p>
<p>Housing</p>	<p>4. Today on TAP March 13, 2026 <u>Elizabeth Warren's amazingly progressive housing bill</u> By Robert Kuttner In a rare display of legislative harmony amidst a polarized Capitol Hill, Senator Elizabeth Warren secured a landslide 89-to-10 victory for the <u>most expansive housing bill</u> in nearly four decades by masterfully bridging populist economic goals with Republican interests. Warren's strategy relied on a "Venn diagram" approach, identifying specific areas where progressive priorities—like curbing private equity's grip on single-family homes—overlapped with the GOP's desire to signal support for affordable housing. By partnering with Senator Tim Scott, the Republican Chair of the Senate Banking Committee, and framing the 303-page bill as a mix of federal investment and regulatory "streamlining" of zoning laws, she created a bipartisan coalition that even gained the President's signature, effectively outmaneuvering traditional corporate interests to pass what critics at <i>The Wall Street Journal</i> have labeled a "housing coup."</p>
<p>Covid / Long Covid</p>	<p>5. medRxiv February 26, 2026 <u>Progressively Widening Healthcare Costs in Long COVID Over Five Years</u> By Jingya Cheng, MB; Alaleh Azhir, MD, MSc; Jiazi Tian, M.Sc.; Jeffrey G. Klann, MEng, PhD; Shawn N. Murphy, MD; Hossein Estiri, PhD A large retrospective cohort study found significant healthcare cost increases for Long COVID over five years. The study was shared as a preprint in <u>medRxiv</u> and included the records of over 143,000 people. Researchers found that people with Long COVID used healthcare significantly more than those without the disease, and usage increased over time. Over five years, total costs for people with Long COVID were</p>

	<p>\$7,124 higher per person than those without. The authors concluded that their findings suggest “Long COVID behaves as a chronic, progressive condition with accumulating healthcare needs, rather than a post-acute state with resolving symptoms.”</p>
<p>Aging Topics</p>	<p>6. *Boston Globe March 15, 2026 (Updated) Aging into uncertainty By Lindsay Crudele Of any generation, it might appear that baby boomers — those born between 1946 and 1964 — enjoy more housing stability than any other age group. Younger generations find themselves priced out of the market. But in 2025, baby boomers made up the largest slice of sellers, representing 53 percent, and were 42 percent of all buyers, according to data from the National Association of Realtors. Of any generation, it might appear that baby boomers — those born between 1946 and 1964 — enjoy more housing stability than any other age group. Younger generations find themselves priced out of the market. But in 2025, baby boomers made up the largest slice of sellers, representing 53 percent, and were 42 percent of all buyers, according to data from the National Association of Realtors. In Massachusetts, more residents than ever are aging into the 65+ bracket. They now make up 23 percent of the population — nearly double the 2010 rate — according to the Massachusetts Healthy Aging Data Report. Baby boomers stayed in their homes longer than any other age cohort — about 20 years before downsizing. But instead of finding a safety net as they age, a wealth gap means that many are aging into uncertainty. Housing needs grow more complex over time, including memory care and assisted living, and even homeownership and planning can’t insulate from unexpected disruptions.</p>
<p>Veteran Topics</p>	<p>7. Task & Purpose March 15, 2026 VA announces plan to put some veterans in guardianships By Nicholas Slayton In an investigative report from March 16, 2026, <i>Task & Purpose</i> highlights a critical vulnerability for veterans in the VA’s fiduciary program, where court-appointed guardians intended to protect “incompetent” veterans often inadvertently drive them into homelessness. The article details how administrative delays, rigid financial controls, and a lack of coordination between the VA and local probate courts can leave veterans unable to access their own funds for emergency repairs or rent increases, leading to evictions even when they have significant savings. While the VA’s fiduciary program manages over \$3 billion for approximately 150,000 veterans, advocates argue the system’s paternalistic structure lacks the flexibility needed to address the immediate housing crises of those it is meant to serve. To address these systemic failures, the report suggests that the VA must</p>

	<p>reform its oversight mechanisms to prioritize housing stability and provide more direct intervention when a veteran's fiduciary relationship begins to jeopardize their residency.</p>
<p>Longevity</p>	<p>8. *Boston Globe March 12, 2026 <u>Life expectancy gap between Black residents and other Bostonians has doubled over the past decade</u> By Lauren Albano and Scooty Nickerson A March 12, 2026, report from the Boston Public Health Commission reveals a stark and widening life expectancy gap for Black Bostonians, which has doubled over the past decade. While the city's overall life expectancy has reached an all-time high of 82.2 years, Black residents live an average of only 76.2 years—a 6-year disparity compared to the rest of the population. The gap is most severe for Black men, who live approximately 9.3 fewer years than other men in the city, primarily due to preventable causes such as drug overdoses, heart disease, and cancer. Health officials and community leaders attribute these persistent inequities to systemic barriers in healthcare access and social determinants of health in neighborhoods like Roxbury, Dorchester, and Mattapan, emphasizing that without immediate, equity-centered interventions, these life expectancy disparities are projected to persist for at least another decade.</p>
<p>Winter Paralympics</p>	<p>9. The Athletic March 16, 2026 <u>What should future Winter Paralympics look like? Bigger, better and maybe earlier</u> By Liam Tharme On March 16, 2026, following the conclusion of the Milano Cortina Winter Paralympics, <i>The Athletic</i> examined the evolving landscape and future of the Games, highlighting a growing debate over their timing and integration with the Olympics. The report noted that while the 2026 Games set records for athlete participation and female representation, the traditional three-week gap between the Olympics and Paralympics continues to present challenges, including deteriorating course conditions for "soft-snow" sports like para-alpine skiing and a natural dip in global media momentum. Looking ahead to the French Alps in 2030 and Salt Lake City in 2034, organizers and athletes are increasingly discussing "New Era" scheduling models that could see the events held closer together or even partially overlapping to ensure equitable field conditions and sustained commercial interest. Despite these logistical hurdles, the 2026 Games were hailed as a success, with 55 nations competing and 27 countries earning medals—a new record that underscores the increasing international competitiveness and professionalization of para-winter sports.</p> <p>10. The Athletic March 16, 2026 <u>Meet the Aigners, the new Paralympic dynasty family that just won nine medals</u> By Liam Tharme</p>

	<p>The Aigner family of Austria cemented their status as a historic alpine skiing dynasty at the 2026 Milano Cortina Winter Paralympics, concluding the Games on March 15 with a remarkable collective medal haul. Led by siblings Veronika, Johannes, and Barbara, who all compete in the visually impaired category with their respective sighted guides, the family dominated the slopes to help propel Austria toward the top of the medal standings. Veronika Aigner, guided by her sister Elisabeth, successfully defended her giant slalom and slalom titles, while their brother Johannes added multiple golds to his career total, further proving their technical superiority in technical and speed events alike. Beyond their podium finishes, the Aigners' story has become a central narrative of the 2026 Games, highlighting the unique bond of sibling guides and the professionalization of para-alpine skiing on a global stage.</p> <p>11. The Athletic March 56, 2026 <u>Jack Wallace becomes USA Hockey's newest star: 'This is what it's all about'</u> By Charlotte Carroll</p> <p>On March 15, 2026, the United States sled hockey team secured its sixth consecutive Paralympic gold medal at the Milano Cortina Games, punctuated by a dominant 5-1 victory over Canada. The standout performance of the final came from 27-year-old defenseman Jack Wallace, who recorded a historic hat trick to cement the American dynasty. Wallace, a New Jersey native who lost his right leg in a boating accident at age 10, opened the scoring in the first period with a powerful slap shot and added two more goals in the second and third frames, showcasing the offensive versatility that has made him a cornerstone of the roster.</p> <p>The victory was not just a personal triumph for Wallace but a testament to the program's enduring depth; despite facing a rejuvenated Canadian squad that had narrowed the gap in recent world championships, the U.S. defense, anchored by Wallace and goaltender Jen Lee, remained nearly impenetrable throughout the tournament. Team captain Josh Misiewicz and veteran star Declan Farmer also contributed key assists, but the story of the gold-medal game was Wallace's clinical finishing. With this win, the U.S. extends a golden streak that began in 2010, further professionalizing the sport and setting a high bar for the 2030 Games in the French Alps. For Wallace, the hat trick serves as a career-defining moment, elevating him into the top tier of all-time Paralympic hockey greats and ensuring the U.S. remains the undisputed global power in sled hockey.</p>
<p>State Policy</p>	<p>12. Office of Governor Maura Healey and Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll March 10, 2026 <u>Governor Healey Increases Home Heating Assistance Benefits for Tens of Thousands of Massachusetts Households</u></p> <p>In a March 2026 announcement, Governor Maura Healey increased benefits for the federally funded Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) to support tens of thousands of Massachusetts households</p>

	<p>struggling with an exceptionally cold winter and rising fuel costs. The administration raised the maximum fuel benefit from \$1,000 to \$1,400 for those using deliverable fuels like oil and propane and increased the utility benefit from \$850 to \$925 for natural gas and electric customers. These adjustments were triggered by data showing that over 70% of program participants had nearly exhausted their original benefits midway through the heating season. Leveraging \$15 million in anticipated federal funding, the move aims to protect vulnerable residents—including the roughly 150,000 households that rely on the program—from having to choose between heating their homes and paying for other essentials like food or medicine.</p>
<p>From Our Colleagues around the Country</p>	<p>13. Center for Medicare Advocacy March 12, 2026 Center for Medicare Advocacy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know Jimmo Home Health Coverage Requires Individual Review March 12, 2026 • New Issue Brief Retiree Auto Enrollment in Medicare Advantage March 12, 2026 • State-Level Nursing Home Staffing Mandates Improve Staffing without Harming Finances or Causing Closures March 5, 2026 • CMS Updates “Moon” Notice about Observation Status in the Acute Care Hospital March 5, 2026 • CMA Sues SSA and CMS Over Lack of Transparency Regarding Medicare Eligibility Restrictions under H.R. 1 March 5, 2026 • Medicare’s Home Health Payment Model Doesn’t Reflect the Care Many Patients Need March 5, 2026 • Mouths Matter in Medicare March 5, 2026 <p>14. Consumer Voice March 10, 2026 In This Issue</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of Updates to Chapters 5 and 7 of the State Operations Manual • Promising Practices from NASHP’s State Nursing Home Learning Collaborative • New Podcast & Fact Sheet on the Essential Caregivers Act • Champion Your Health This May for Older Americans Month • Join Us as a Presenter at the 2026 Consumer Voice Annual Conference • <input type="checkbox"/> Consumer Voice in Action
<p>A Raise for Mom: Campaign to Increase the Personal Needs Allowance (PNA)</p>	<p><i>The Campaign to Increase the Personal Needs Allowance (PNA)</i></p> <p>For nearly 20 years, the Personal Needs Allowance for Nursing Home and Rest Home residents has been stuck at \$72.80 per month. If inflation had been factored since the amount was last set, the allowance should now be about \$113.42. Costs for everything have increased over the last two decades, but the PNA has remained unchanged. That means that folks residing in nursing homes and rest homes have been paying ever higher prices for their personal needs – items not covered within the care, room, and board required to be provided by nursing and rest homes. These residents are obligated to pay almost all their monthly Social Security and other income for their basic care leaving the PNA to cover all other life’s</p>

	<p>necessities. Amplifying this situation, Massachusetts has the highest cost of living of any state in the continental United States – meaning these vulnerable residents can afford less each and every year.</p> <p>Three similar bills have been filed in the Massachusetts Legislature this year and are awaiting a public hearing with the Joint Committee on Health Care Financing, chaired by Senator Cindy Friedman and Representative John Lawn. The bills to raise the PNA are Senate Bill 887 by Senator Joan Lovely and others; Senate Bill 482 by Senators Patricia Jehlen and Mark Montigny and others; and House Bill 1411 by Representative Thomas Stanley and others. As of the middle of May, twenty-nine legislators (11 senators, 16 representatives) have already co-sponsored one or more of these bills. DignityMA, AARP Massachusetts, and LeadingAge Massachusetts are among the statewide organizations that have indicated support of the PNA legislation. There’s still time for other legislators to become co-sponsors. Please contact your state senator and representative using this link: https://dignityalliancema.org/take-action/#/25. It literally takes less than a minute to deliver the message.</p> <p>If you are a nursing or rest home resident, family member, or caregiver and have a story about the inadequacy of the current PNA, your story can help put an important human face on why this raise is so necessary. Please submit your story via https://tinyurl.com/ForgetMeNotPNA or you can email your story to Dignity Alliance MA (info@DignityAllianceMA.org), noting at least your first name and town where you live so that we can include your story in the testimony submitted to the Legislature.</p> <p><i>*We selected the Forget-me-not as our symbol to encourage legislators to remember older adults in nursing and rest homes who have gone so long without a raise in the PNA.</i></p>
<p>Books by DignityMA Participants</p>	<p><u>A Perfect Turmoil: Walter E. Fernald and the Struggle to Care for America’s Disabled</u> By Alex Green <u>Buy the book here</u></p> <p>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 history of state institutions for disabled people in Massachusetts.</p> <p><u>American Eldercide: How It Happened, How to Prevent It</u> By <u>Margaret Morganroth Gullette</u> <u>Buy the book here.</u></p> <p>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>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/ Marsters data for the calendar year 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 499 people who have returned and are active in the community • Efforts to validate status of 63 others who are in the community

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target for 2025 and 2026 is 600 transitions • 1,369 currently enrolled • 100 AHVP vouchers issued for transitions: 71 used, 10 in process. The Alternative Housing Voucher Program (AHVP) is a state-funded rental assistance program in Massachusetts specifically designed for non-elderly (under age 60) people with disabilities who have low incomes.
<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> <p>https://dignityalliancema.org/donate/</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration!</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 dickmoore1943@gmail.com.</p>
<p>Websites</p>	
<p>Blogs</p>	
<p>Podcasts</p>	
<p>YouTube Channels</p>	
<p>Previously recommended websites</p>	<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>
<p>Previously posted funding opportunities</p>	<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	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/ Recent approval: Town of Nantucket – Long Term Care Substantial Capital Expenditure Approved May 5, 2025	
List of Special Focus Facilities	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 CMS has published a new list of Special Focus Facilities (SFF). SFFs are nursing homes with serious quality issues based on a calculation of deficiencies cited during inspections and the scope and severity level of those citations. CMS publicly discloses the names of the facilities chosen to participate in this program and candidate nursing homes. To be considered for the SFF program, a facility must have a history (at least 3 years) of serious quality issues. These nursing facilities generally have more deficiencies than the average facility, and more serious problems such as harm or	

	injury to residents. Special Focus Facilities have more frequent surveys and are subject to progressive enforcement until it either graduates from the program or is terminated from Medicare and/or Medicaid.																																																
Nursing Home Inspect	<p>ProPublica <i>Nursing Home Inspect</i> Data updated October 15, 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 (July 1, 2022 through September 30, 2025). Massachusetts listing: https://projects.propublica.org/nursing-homes/state/MA Deficiencies By Severity in Massachusetts (What do the severity ratings mean?)</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Deficiency Tag</th> <th># Deficiencies</th> <th>in # Reports</th> <th>MA facilities cited</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>B</td> <td>257</td> <td>187</td> <td>Tag B</td> </tr> <tr> <td>C</td> <td>77</td> <td>63</td> <td>Tag C</td> </tr> <tr> <td>D</td> <td>5,993</td> <td>1,193</td> <td>Tag D</td> </tr> <tr> <td>E</td> <td>1,872</td> <td>630</td> <td>Tag E</td> </tr> <tr> <td>F</td> <td>446</td> <td>226</td> <td>Tag F</td> </tr> <tr> <td>G</td> <td>420</td> <td>278</td> <td>Tag G</td> </tr> <tr> <td>H</td> <td>54</td> <td>30</td> <td>Tag H</td> </tr> <tr> <td>I</td> <td>2</td> <td>1</td> <td>Tag I</td> </tr> <tr> <td>J</td> <td>64</td> <td>31</td> <td>Tag J</td> </tr> <tr> <td>K</td> <td>30</td> <td>9</td> <td>Tag K</td> </tr> <tr> <td>L</td> <td>7</td> <td>2</td> <td>Tag L</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Updated October 15, 2025</p>	Deficiency Tag	# Deficiencies	in # Reports	MA facilities cited	B	257	187	Tag B	C	77	63	Tag C	D	5,993	1,193	Tag D	E	1,872	630	Tag E	F	446	226	Tag F	G	420	278	Tag G	H	54	30	Tag H	I	2	1	Tag I	J	64	31	Tag J	K	30	9	Tag K	L	7	2	Tag L
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Nursing Home Compare	<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. 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>																																																
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	<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</p>																																																

	Website: www.DignityAllianceMA.org		
<p>Participation opportunities with Dignity Alliance Massachusetts</p> <p>Most workgroups meet bi-weekly via Zoom.</p> <p>Interest Groups meet periodically (monthly, bi-monthly, or quarterly).</p> <p>Please contact group leaders for more information.</p>	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	jimlomastro@comcast.net
	Home and Community Based Services	Meg Coffin	mcoffin@centerlw.org
	Legislative	Richard Moore	Dickmoore1943@gmail.com
	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
	<i>Bringing People Home: Implementing the Marsters class action settlement</i>	Website: https://marsters.centerforpublicrep.org/ Center for Public Representation 5 Ferry Street, #314, Easthampton, MA 01027 413-586-6024, Press 2 bringingpeoplehome@cpr-ma.org Newsletter registration: https://marsters.centerforpublicrep.org/7b3c2-contact/	
<i>REV UP Massachusetts</i>	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 .		
<i>The Dignity Digest</i>	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"> • Margaret Gullette • Suzanne Lanzikos • James Lomastro • Dick Moore 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 *The Dignity Digest* or have questions or comments, please submit them to Digest@DignityAllianceMA.org.

Dignity Alliance Massachusetts is a broad-based coalition of organizations and individuals pursuing fundamental changes in the provision of long-term services, support, and care for older adults and persons with disabilities. Our guiding principle is the assurance of dignity for those receiving the services as well as for those providing them. The information presented in "The Dignity Digest" is obtained from publicly available sources and does not necessarily represent positions held by Dignity Alliance Massachusetts.

Previous issues of The Tuesday Digest and The Dignity Digest are available at: <https://dignityalliancema.org/dignity-digest/>

For more information about Dignity Alliance Massachusetts, please visit www.DignityAllianceMA.org.