The Dignity Digest

Issue # 309 November 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



https://caregiverdoc.com/national-family-caregivers-month/

National Family Caregivers Month: Moving Beyond Gratitude to Real Dignity and Support

November marks National Family Caregivers Month—a time traditionally set aside to acknowledge the millions of family members, partners, and friends who provide unpaid care every single day. Across the Commonwealth and the nation, family caregivers represent the true backbone of our long-term care infrastructure. Without their devotion, physical labor, and emotional endurance, our health and long-term support systems would collapse overnight.

Yet gratitude alone is not a care plan.

Too often, family caregiving is treated as an infinite, invisible resource. Caregivers routinely balance demanding full-time employment, complex medical coordination, direct personal assistance, and their own well-being—often at severe personal financial, emotional, and physical cost. They manage medications, navigate Byzantine MassHealth regulations, advocate across fractured hospital and community systems, and fill critical workforce voids caused by direct-care staffing shortages.

For dignity to have true meaning, our policies must actively protect and sustain the individuals who make community-based living possible:

- ***Real Economic Security**: Family caregivers sacrifice retirement savings, wages, and career advancement. We must expand paid family and medical leave, increase flexible respite options, and strengthen MassHealth reimbursement and supportive programs so families are*

	not forced into impoverishment simply for caring for a loved one. • ***Navigation and Respite Infrastructure**: High-stress caregiving cannot happen in isolation. True systemic dignity requires accessible, guaranteed adult day health programs, readily available in-home supports, and reliable respite care that prevents acute burnout before a crisis occurs.* • ***Caregivers as Essential Partners**: In clinical settings, assisted living communities, and long-term care facilities, family caregivers must be respected, consulted, and treated as indispensable care partners—not merely as visitors or afterthoughts.* • ***Protecting the Right to Live in the Community**: Real caregiver support directly reinforces the promise of the Olmstead decision. When caregivers have robust structural backing, older adults and people with disabilities can remain where they belong: in their own homes and neighborhoods, integrated and autonomous.* *As we reflect on Family Caregiver Month, let our appreciation be measured in legislative action, regulatory protections, and public investment. Dignity is not just something we extend to those receiving care; it must encompass the dedicated individuals standing beside them every step of the way.*
Guide to news items in this week's *Dignity Digest*	Nursing Homes • *A 48-hour regulatory deluge soaks skilled nursing operators … why?* **(McKnights Long-Term Care News,** November 11, 2026) • *Consumer groups to CMS: You don't need expanded authority to expel providers* **(McKnights Long-Term Care News,** September 2, 2026) Disability Topics • *Disability advocates fear Mass. health care violence bill goes too far* **(*Boston Globe,** November 12, 2026) • *'Being Heumann' offers a very human portrait of an activist* **(*Boston Globe,** November 12, 2026) Caregiving • *'See you at the funeral': Viral SNL 'Sister' sketch hits daughters where it hurts* **(*Boston Globe,** November 16, 2026) Private Equity / Corporate Health Care • *After Genesis, will billion-dollar skilled nursing deals become the norm?* **(McKnights Long-Term Care News,** November 15, 2026) • *Democrats unite against corporate health care* **(Axios,** November 12, 2026)

	End of Life • *Thoughts Near the End of a Life* **(New York Times,** November 15, 2026) Workforce • *Governor Healey Announces New Program for Military Medics to Transition to Civilian Health Care Careers* **(Office of Governor Maura Healey and Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll,** November 10, 2026) Office of Attorney General Andrea Campbell • *AG Campbell Issues 2026 Health Care Cost Trends Report Examining Primary Care Payments* **(Office of Attorney General Andrea Campbell,** November 10, 2026)
Quotes	*"Our experience is that the worst operators do not wait for a revocation — they collapse, declare bankruptcy or quietly reorganize before CMS [Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services] or a state can act, and then reappear under a new name with the same people involved and in charge. We urge CMS to extend comparable scrutiny, through the existing change-in-ownership provisions discussed below, to operators whose predecessor entity was never formally revoked but exited the program under circumstances that put residents and the Trust Funds at risk."* A joint comment letter authored by the Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care, the Center for Medicare Advocacy and four other organizations, *Consumer groups to CMS: You don't need expanded authority to expel providers* **(McKnights Long-Term Care News,** September 2, 2026) *"There's just something in your gut that bothers you when your pharmacy, your PBM [pharmacy benefits manager] and your insurance company are all owned by the same people."* Rep. Morgan Griffith, the top Republican on the House Energy and Commerce's Health Subcommittee, *Democrats unite against corporate health care* **(Axios,** November 12, 2026) *"Our veterans bring valuable skills, leadership and experience to the workforce, and we want to make*

sure those skills are recognized when they return to civilian life. This proposal is an important step toward helping military medics build careers in health care while addressing workforce needs across Massachusetts.

Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll, *Governor Healey Announces New Program for Military Medics to Transition to Civilian Health Care Careers* **(Office of Governor Maura Healey and Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll,** November 10, 2026)

[Laca Wong-Hammond, managing director and head of mergers and acquisitions at Lument] also noted the impact of state legislation targeting private equity endeavors, as well as the potential for negative publicity in potential turnarounds. Regulatory and reputational headwinds might keep some capital focused on "smaller, regional deals that fly under the political radar".

After Genesis, will billion-dollar skilled nursing deals become the norm? **(McKnights Long-Term Care News,** November 15, 2026)

Early Sunday morning Liz O'Donnell, the founder of Working Daughter, was awakened by a text. It was a link to "Sister," the John Mulaney sketch from the previous night's SNL, which, in less time than you can say "speak to pharmacist" into the CVS automated system has become the hottest, most viral thing in caregiving circles since, well, since forever.

See you at the funeral': Viral SNL 'Sister' sketch hits daughters where it hurts **(*Boston Globe,** November 16, 2026)

And while the 504 sit-in was successful, it's only the first step toward legislation like the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act. "Being Heumann" lets us know that a lot more work needed to be done to get where

	we are today. The film is also a reminder that many of those rights are currently in danger. *'Being Heumann' offers a very human portrait of an activist* **(*Boston Globe,** November 12, 2026) *And life does what it can with you, teaches you, as becoming more empathic proves. Things change. You change. Life is new, at once old and new. Above the river, terns swoop and squawk, looking down on all we do here, beginnings and ends. Old man's river. Old man's life.* *Thoughts Near the End of a Life* **(New York Times,** November 15, 2026)
Spotlight	***New Federal Data Indicate That 90% of U.S. Nursing Homes Understaffed – LTCCC Launches Enhanced Staffing Data Center*** **Long Term Care Community Connection** November 13, 2026 New federal data reveal that the overwhelming majority of U.S. nursing homes continue to operate with staffing levels below those expected to meet their residents' basic clinical needs. According to the Long Term Care Community Coalition's (LTCCC) analysis of federal staffing data for April–June 2026, 90% of nursing homes provided less nursing care than expected based on their residents' needs, with staffing averaging 24% below expected levels nationally. To help the public better understand and act on these findings, **LTCCC has launched a significantly enhanced nursing home staffing data page**, featuring interactive tools to explore staffing at individual nursing homes, compare states, and identify facilities operating below important staffing benchmarks. **Key Findings – Q2 2026** • **90% of nursing homes were understaffed.** Of the 13,985 facilities with sufficient data for comparison, 12,593 provided less total nursing staff time than expected based on their residents' care needs. • **RN staffing was particularly inadequate.** Approximately 85% of facilities provided less RN staffing than expected.

Numerous studies have shown that RN presence is a key indicator of safety and quality.

- **Residents received substantially less care than expected.** Nursing homes averaged 3.79 total nursing staff hours per resident day, compared with an expected 4.98 hours.
- **Nearly one-third reported no medical director time.** Of the 14,474 nursing homes reporting staffing data, 4,646 (32.1%) reported zero medical director staffing hours during the quarter. Medical directors play a critical role in overseeing clinical care and helping ensure resident safety. The widespread reporting of zero hours raises serious questions about the adequacy of clinical oversight.
- **Significant disparities persist across states.** Staffing relative to residents' needs ranged from 18.6% above expected levels in Alaska to 38% below expected levels in Illinois.

"These data demonstrate the continuing failure to ensure that nursing home residents receive the staffing necessary for safe, dignified care," said Richard Mollot, LTCCC's Executive Director. "Most US nursing homes are run as for-profit companies, with enormous public funding. Yet the vast majority continue to operate below staffing levels expected to comply with federal care requirements. Residents, families, and taxpayers deserve more than empty promises – they deserve sufficient staffing and meaningful accountability when providers flout minimum standards to maximize profits."

Nursing Home Staffing, Q2 2026

How much care are residents getting? Look up any of the 14,474 U.S. nursing homes that reported staffing to CMS for April–June 2026, see how it compares to what its residents need, and compare states.

Massachusetts Data:

341 nursing homes · 33,284 residents on an average day
3.86total nurse HPRD (hours per resident day) · rank 25 of 52
0.62RN HPRD · rank 38 of 52
-22.6%vs. expected (4.99 HPRD)
4.6%contract nurse hours · rank 33 of 52
8.1%of homes meet their expected total nurse staffing
9.3%of homes meet their expected RN staffing
284 of 341 homes (83%)
averaged below Massachusetts's minimum staffing standard in Q2 2026.

	The standard: 3.58 hours of nursing care per resident per day, including 0.508 hours from registered nurses. 105 CMR 150.007 215 below on direct care hours · 244 below on RN hours **307** homes staffed below their expected total nurse staffing, and **303** below their expected RN staffing. See homes below the standard
Spotlight Invitation for submissions to a new column on caregiving.	From Beth Teitell of The Boston Globe: November 16, 2026 *We're launching a new column about caregiving, and we want you to help shape it. If an aging parent, a spouse, or another loved one depends on you for ongoing help, send your questions, dilemmas, and hard-won wisdom to beth.teitell@globe.com. Please put "caregiver" in the subject line.* *Early next year, the column will bring the complicated, sometimes absurd realities of caregiving into the open. So many of us do it, yet so much happens behind closed doors. We want to change that.* *Maybe you've spent an hour convincing your mother to let a home health aide through the door. Maybe your father won't take his medicine. Maybe you moved a parent into assisted living, only to find yourself managing everything from across the country. Or maybe you've discovered something that could help someone else.* *We want to hear about the standoffs, the breakthroughs, the guilt, and the small victories. No polished essay required. Tell us what's on your mind and whether you'd like your name withheld.* *We may feature your letter, invite readers to respond with advice, solidarity, or a bittersweet laugh, or explore your experience in a larger story.*
Celebration of Champions of Dignity and Care for 2026	Celebration of Champions of Dignity and Care for 2026 Hosted by Dignity Alliance Massachusetts Wednesday, November 18, 2026, 2:00 p.m. State House, Boston, Room 428 and virtually Virtual link: https://tinyurl.com/DignityChampions2026 Honoring Legislative 2026 Champions

	Senate – Senator Joanne Comerford House – Representative Sally Kerans Legislative Staff Champions Senate – Jamie Nathan, Office of Senator Joan Lovely House – Grace Simmons, Office of Representative Mindy Domb Legislative Professional Staff Champions Senate – Michael Hurley, Clerk of the Senate and his Staff House – Timothy Carroll, Clerk of the House and his Staff Legislative Service Champions (retiring Members) Senate – Senator Jason Lewis House – Representative Brad Jones, House Republican Leader
Recruitment	**See:** **Listings on MASSterList.com's Job Board** for all current listings
In Person and / or Online Events	1. ***Riders' Transportation Access Group*** Tuesday, November 17, 2026, 2:00 p.m. State Transportation Building, 2nd floor boardroom, 10 Park Plaza, Boston Riders' Transportation Access Group holds its semi-annual forum on accessibility of the MBTA. The T has been transitioning for the last year from fulfilling the obligations of the Daniels-Finegold settlement to the Next Generation Agreement. As part of the transition, RTAG has taken on a new role as community monitors of the T. Main topics for Tuesday's meeting are the T's new elevator contract, automatic bus camera enforcement rollout, municipal coordination efforts for the upcoming snow season, and accessibility concerns. THE RIDE is not discussed as part of this meeting, per RTAG. 2. ***Caregiver Nation Summit 2026 Livestream*** Wednesday, November 18, 2026, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Wednesday, caregivers, advocates, researchers, and policymakers will come together in Washington, D.C. with a shared purpose: making America's 63+ million family caregivers visible and building a future where they are better recognized, valued, and supported. And you don't have to be in Washington, D.C. to be part of the conversation. This National Family Caregivers Month, join us for the FREE Caregiver Nation Summit livestream and hear the conversations shaping the future of family caregiving in America. A Full Day of Conversations That Matter What will it take to build a future where family caregivers are better supported? At this year's Summit, we'll hear new perspectives, explore the latest research, and discuss opportunities to improve the lives of family caregivers across the country. Here's a look at just some of the conversations you can tune in for: • The Caregiver Health Gap

	• Staying Afloat: Lessons on Love, Care, and Survival • Caregiving, Illness, and What We Fail to See • Culture as a Catalyst for Care • The Road Ahead: What the Midterm Election Means for Care Policy • Care on Campus: The Hidden Lives of Student Caregivers • From Caregiving to Advocacy: Turning Your Voice Into Action Exclusive virtual session sponsored by Home Instead **REGISTER FOR THE CAREGIVER LIVESTREAM** **3.** ***Listening Session*** **LGBT Aging Commission** Wednesday, November 18, 2026, 1:00 p.m. A listening session on HIV/AIDS and healthcare access. *LGBT More Info and Access* **4.** ***Workforce Supports Subcommittee of the Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities*** Thursday, November 19, 2026, 11:00 a.m. Agenda includes a presentation about the direct care workforce from the Community Living Policy Center at Brandeis University. CommDisabiltiesAgenda and Zoom ***5.*** ***Autism Commission meets*** Thursday,November 19, 2026, 2:00 p.m. Agenda includes a review of subcommittee updates and priorities. For access, contact Carol.m.gracia@mass.gov. Autism More Info ***6.*** ***Disability Policy Consortium 30th Anniversary Gala*** Thursday, November 18, 2026, 6:00 p.m. Artists For Humanity, 100 West Second St., Boston and virtual Senate President Spilka delivers the keynote address as the Disability Policy Consortium marks its 30th anniversary. The group presents its Visionary Changemaker Award to Charlie Carr, a founder of the organization and its legislative liaison. DPC Register and Virtual Access
Webinars and Online Sessions	***7.*** ***Knowledge Is Power: Tools for Advocating for Better Nursing Home Care*** **Long Term Care Community Coalition** Tuesday, November 17, 2026, 1:00 p.m. In recognition of National Family Caregivers Month, join LTCCC for a special webinar focused on empowering families to advocate for quality nursing home care. We'll explore practical tools and strategies for identifying potential care concerns, understanding resident rights, and advocating for improvements. Attendees will also learn how to access and use LTCCC's free resources, including facility-level staffing, citations, and penalties data, to better understand nursing home quality and make informed decisions. Register for LTCCC's November 17 Webinar ***8.*** ***MassHealth: The Basics - 2026 Webinar*** Thursday, November 19, 2026, 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Massachusetts Medicaid Policy Institute

	This webinar will review key facts and data about MassHealth eligibility, benefits and delivery systems, costs, and recent reforms and changes. **DOWNLOAD THE CHART PACK** **Medicaid Basics REGISTER HERE**
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	**9. McKnights Long-Term Care News** November 11, 2026 *A 48-hour regulatory deluge soaks skilled nursing operators … why?* By Kimberly Marselas In this *McKnight's Long-Term Care News* editorial, the author critiques the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) for "flooding the zone" by releasing six major rules totaling thousands of pages over just two days (November 4–5), a move that overwhelmed skilled nursing operators and obscured critical changes behind the positive headlines of a new regulatory reduction rule (the CARE Rule). By embedding consequential nursing home provisions inside rules seemingly aimed at other healthcare sectors—such as placing expanded Medicare disenrollment and recoupment powers inside the Home Health final rule despite provider objections—CMS created a "sink-or-swim" compliance environment that undermines transparency and collaboration. To help providers navigate the deluge, the piece outlines the major hidden impacts on skilled nursing facilities: restored practice expense parity for SNF billers, 2029 drug-pricing negotiation priorities affecting long-term care pharmacies, further reductions to the surgical inpatient-only list that will shrink post-acute nursing home referrals, cuts to certain SNF therapy billing codes, and the introduction of new speech therapy codes. **10. McKnights Long-Term Care News** September 2, 2026 *Consumer groups to CMS: You don't need expanded authority to expel providers* In this *McKnight's Long-Term Care News* report, leading resident advocacy organizations—including the National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care and the Center for Medicare Advocacy—joined nursing home industry associations in pushing back against provisions in the proposed 2027 Home Health rule that expand the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services' (CMS) authority to revoke Medicare enrollment and extend payment clawbacks. While senior care industry groups warned that the overly broad rules lack objective standards and could punish legitimate providers for minor errors, consumer advocates argued in an August 28 comment letter that CMS does not need new rulemaking to crack down on chronically failing nursing homes because it already possesses robust existing enrollment, revocation, and change-of-ownership tools. Instead of waiting for new regulations to take effect, the advocacy groups urged CMS to immediately deploy its current enforcement authority to revoke billing privileges, uncover hidden

	ownership ties, and block troubled operators who quietly bankrupt or reorganize facilities from reentering the Medicare program under new corporate names.
Caregiving	**11. *Boston Globe** November 16, 2026 *'See you at the funeral': Viral SNL 'Sister' sketch hits daughters where it hurts* By Beth Teitel *The 'Saturday Night Live' skit roasts brothers who leave elder care to sisters, and it's going nuclear* A viral *Saturday Night Live* parody commercial titled "Sister," starring John Mulaney and Jane Wickline, has struck a massive chord across elder-caregiving communities by satirizing the disproportionate burden placed on adult daughters. Styled as an ad for a free, 24/7 live-in elder care solution—who is simply your exhausted sister—the sketch humorously exposes how brothers often avoid hands-on caregiving while sisters shoulder medical management, insurance battles, and daily care alongside their own careers and families. The video spread rapidly through caregiver support networks like Liz O'Donnell's *Working Daughter* group, where women shared both cathartic laughter and genuine frustration over being default "project managers" for aging parents while brothers offer empty platitudes like "keep me posted." Beyond the laughs, the sketch tapped into deep emotional truths, sparking everything from anonymous vents and "anticipatory resentment" among younger women to heartfelt public thank-yous from brothers acknowledging their sisters' quiet sacrifices. Notably, the sketch was actually written by a team of male *SNL* writers—including Streeter Seidell, who dedicated it to his own sister. While O'Donnell doubts a three-minute comedy bit will solve the systemic elder care crisis overnight, she views its massive viral reach as meaningful progress in bringing long-overdue public visibility to the women who quietly hold up the nation's caregiving infrastructure.
Private Equity / Corporate Health Care	**12. McKnights Long-Term Care News** November 15, 2026 *After Genesis, will billion-dollar skilled nursing deals become the norm?* By Kimberly Marselas Following the recent $1 billion bankruptcy bid for Genesis HealthCare, skilled nursing brokers and lenders are divided on whether ten-figure deals will become standard in the sector. Some industry advisors, like T7 Capital co-founder Josh Simpson, believe rising price-per-bed valuations and multi-year portfolio roll-ups will soon make billion-dollar transactions routine, noting heightened institutional appetite and recent blockbuster acquisitions by real estate investment trusts like Welltower and CareTrust. Conversely, Lument managing director Laca Wong-Hammond views Genesis as a distressed outlier and argues that $1 billion deals will remain rare because the market is still heavily fragmented, with true consolidation driven by smaller, regional bolt-on acquisitions rather than massive portfolios. Regardless of how frequently they occur, both experts emphasize that inflation and deal complexity are heavily reshaping large-scale skilled

	nursing mergers and acquisitions. Asset inflation over the past five years has pushed nominal real estate prices past the $1 billion mark even when portfolio sizes haven't grown, while opportunistic sellers are looking to capitalize on short-term profitability and stabilized government funding. However, underwriting massive, multi-facility deals introduces significant friction—ranging from complex financing partnerships and regulatory due diligence to state legislation targeting private equity—which increases the risk of deal disruptions, renegotiations, or buyers retreating to smaller transactions that draw less political scrutiny. **13. Axios** November 12, 2026 *Democrats unite against corporate health care* By Caitlin Owens Newly elected Democrats from conservative states are spearheading a populist push to lower health care costs by targeting corporate practices among insurers, hospitals, and drugmakers rather than pursuing sweeping government-run overhauls like Medicare for All. Recognizing that major federal expansions are unlikely under President Trump, these incoming lawmakers—alongside established progressives—are coalescing around once-fringe policies such as breaking up vertically integrated health conglomerates, banning private-equity hospital ownership, curbing pharmacy benefit managers, and expanding Medicare drug price negotiations. Despite expected pushback from powerful industry groups, Democrats see this anti-corporate approach as a unifying message for voters and a potential area for bipartisan cooperation with Republicans and the Trump administration, particularly on curbing prescription drug prices and insurer-pharmacy consolidation.
End of Life	**14. New York Times** November 15, 2026 *Thoughts Near the End of a Life* By Roger Rosenblatt In this reflective essay, author Roger Rosenblatt contemplates aging, purpose, and mortality while watching a tugboat on New York's East River each morning, imagining it as Charon waiting to carry him out to the open sea of the afterlife. Looking back on his life, he measures his worth not by grand fame, but by whether he has made a meaningful "ripple" by being useful to others—especially through practicing "active empathy," such as regularly writing to bereaved friends so they feel seen and valued. While acknowledging that old age brings nights filled with regret and self-recrimination, he concludes that those burdens are outweighed by a profound gratitude for loved ones, the natural world, and life itself, ultimately accepting mortality with calm resilience and the timeless advice to simply take what life gives you and do what you can with it.
Workforce	**15. Office of Governor Maura Healey and Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll** November 10, 2026 *Governor Healey Announces New Program for Military Medics to Transition to Civilian Health Care Careers* *Pilot program would help veterans put their military medical training to work while supporting Massachusetts' health care workforce*

	Governor Maura Healey, alongside the Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Executive Office of Veterans Services (EOVS), announced the launch of the **Military to Medicine** pilot program—a regulatory initiative introduced at the November 10, 2026 Public Health Council meeting to help former military medics and hospital corpsmen transition their clinical training into civilian health care careers while easing hospital workforce shortages. Modeled on a Veterans Health Administration framework and scheduled for public comment, the pilot will allow up to 10 eligible veterans at participating DPH-licensed hospitals to perform specific medication administration tasks without broadly altering state licensing or scope-of-practice laws. Evaluated by EOVS to assess how military medical experience translates to civilian settings, the program builds on broader administration efforts—such as the 2024 HERO Act's Vet-Hire Tax Credit, fee-free veteran apprenticeships, and MassHire priority services—to remove credentialing barriers that frequently force skilled veteran medics out of medicine or into entry-level roles.
Disability Topics	**16. *Boston Globe** November 12, 2026 *Disability advocates fear Mass. health care violence bill goes too far* By Jason Lauglin Massachusetts lawmakers are currently reconciling two versions of a bill aimed at curbing a sharp rise in workplace violence against health care workers, sparking strong pushback from disability and mental health advocates who fear the measures will unfairly criminalize involuntary behaviors. Driven by hospital data showing mistreatment occurs every 38 minutes—mostly in overcrowded emergency departments—the House version would make injuring a health care worker a felony punishable by up to 10 years in prison, while the Senate version expands police authority to make warrantless arrests for misdemeanor assaults. Although health care leaders and nurses support the bills for adding vital safety protections, anti-retaliation shields, and prevention mandates, families of individuals with profound autism and mental health advocates warn that applying these penalties to hospitals and state-run group homes risks arresting, traumatizing, and derailing recovery for vulnerable patients who act out in distress rather than malicious intent. **17. *Boston Globe** November 12, 2026 *'Being Heumann' offers a very human portrait of an activist* By Odie Henderson In this glowing review of *Being Heumann*—directed by *CODA* filmmaker Siân Heder and starring Ruth Madeley—the critic praises the film as a feisty, unsentimental biographical drama about disability rights pioneer Judy Heumann and the historic 1977 San Francisco "504 Sit-in." Anchored by Madeley's complex, unapologetic performance and supported by an ensemble cast of actors with disabilities, the movie chronicles how Heumann and 150 diverse activists occupied a federal building for 25 days to force Health, Education, and Welfare Secretary Joseph Califano (Mark Ruffalo) to enact Section 504 of the

	Rehabilitation Act. By refusing to pander for audience pity, highlighting internal tactical disagreements among the activists, and naturally portraying disability alongside romance and humor, *Being Heumann* succeeds as both an inspiring historical portrait of the groundwork that led to the Americans with Disabilities Act and an urgent reminder of ongoing threats to disability rights. For more information about "Being Heumann" see: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Being_Heumann
Office of Attorney General Andrea Campbell	**18. Office of Attorney General Andrea Campbell** November 10, 2026 *AG Campbell Issues 2026 Health Care Cost Trends Report Examining Primary Care Payments* *Report Finds Disparities in Commercial Primary Care Payments and Recommends Increased Transparency into Supplemental Payments* Massachusetts Attorney General Andrea Joy Campbell's *2026 Health Care Cost Trends Report* reveals significant commercial payment disparities across the state's primary care market, finding that non-claim "supplemental payments" (such as infrastructure and incentive funds) flow disproportionately to a handful of large provider systems and widen the funding gap against safety-net providers serving lower-income communities. Analyzing 2024 market data—which also showed that self-insured employer plans cover nearly two-thirds of primary care visits for one major insurer—the Attorney General's Office recommends improving market-wide transparency on how supplemental funds are distributed, directing targeted investments toward advanced primary care and independent practices without breaching the state health care cost growth benchmark, monitoring access disparities by payer and region, and engaging self-insured employers in statewide primary care reform.
A Raise for Mom: Campaign to Increase the Personal Needs Allowance (PNA)	***The Campaign to Increase the Personal Needs Allowance (PNA)*** 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 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. 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. 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. **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.*
Books by DignityMA Participants	***A Perfect Turmoil: Walter E. Fernald and the Struggle to Care for America's Disabled*** By Alex Green **Buy the book here** 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. ***American Eldercide: How It Happened, How to Prevent It*** By Margaret Morganroth Gullette **Buy the book here.** **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 *Agewise*, *Aged by Culture*, and *Ending Ageism, or How Not to Shoot Old People*. Her writing has appeared in publications such as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Guardian*, *Atlantic*, *Nation*, and the *Boston Globe*. She is a resident scholar at the Women's Studies Research Center, Brandeis, and lives in Newton, Massachusetts.
Bringing People Home: The Marsters Settlement	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: • 499 people who have returned and are active in the community • Efforts to validate status of 63 others who are in the community • 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.

Support Dignity Alliance Massachusetts **Please Donate!**	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. **As a fully volunteer operation, our financial needs are modest, but also real. Your donation helps to produce and distribute *The Dignity Digest* weekly free of charge to almost 1,000 recipients and maintain our website, www.DignityAllianceMA.org, which has thousands of visits each month.** **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.** **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 dickmoore1943@gmail.com.
Websites	
Blogs	***Risking Old Age in America*** **https://okayboomer.substack.com/** By Harry Margolis With 65 million Baby Boomers becoming older by the day, the United States is facing a looming elder care crisis. This blog explores how the nation and individuals can prepare for it.
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 *The Dignity Digest.*
Previously posted funding opportunities	For open funding opportunities previously posted in *The Tuesday Digest* 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/ 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** *List of Special Focus Facilities and Candidates* *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	**ProPublica** ***Nursing Home Inspect*** **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?) 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 **Updated October 15, 2025**
Nursing Home Compare	**Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)** *Nursing Home Compare Website* 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
Data on Ownership of Nursing Homes	**Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services** *Data on Ownership of Nursing Homes* 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	• **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
	Workgroup / **Workgroup lead** / **Email**

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="14">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 leaders for more information.</td><td>General Membership</td><td>Bill Henning
Paul Lanzikos</td><td>bhenning@bostoncil.org
paul.lanzikos@gmail.com</td></tr>
<tr><td>Assisted Living</td><td>John Ford</td><td>jford@njc-ma.org</td></tr>
<tr><td>Behavioral Health</td><td>Frank Baskin</td><td>baskinfrank19@gmail.com</td></tr>
<tr><td>Communications</td><td>Lachlan Forrow</td><td>lforrow@bidmc.harvard.edu</td></tr>
<tr><td>Facilities (Nursing homes and rest homes)</td><td>Jim Lomastro</td><td>jimlomastro@comcast.net</td></tr>
<tr><td>Home and Community Based Services</td><td>Meg Coffin</td><td>mcoffin@centerlw.org</td></tr>
<tr><td>Legislative</td><td>Richard Moore</td><td>Dickmoore1943@gmail.com</td></tr>
<tr><td>Legal Issues</td><td>Stephen Schwartz</td><td>sschwartz@cpr-ma.org</td></tr>
<tr><td>Interest Group</td><td>Group lead</td><td>Email</td></tr>
<tr><td>Housing</td><td>Bill Henning</td><td>bhenning@bostoncil.org</td></tr>
<tr><td>Veteran Services</td><td>James Lomastro</td><td>jimlomastro@comcast.net</td></tr>
<tr><td>Transportation</td><td>Frank Baskin
Chris Hoeh</td><td>baskinfrank19@gmail.com
cdhoeh@gmail.com</td></tr>
<tr><td>Covid / Long Covid</td><td>James Lomastro</td><td>jimlomastro@comcast.net</td></tr>
<tr><td>Incarcerated Persons</td><td>TBD</td><td>info@DignityAllianceMA.org</td></tr>
<tr><td>Bringing People Home: Implementing the Marsters class action settlement</td><td colspan="3">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/</td></tr>
<tr><td>REV UP Massachusetts</td><td colspan="3">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.</td></tr>
<tr><td>The Dignity Digest</td><td colspan="3">For a free weekly subscription to The Dignity Digest:
https://dignityalliancema.org/contact/sign-up-for-emails/
Editor: Paul Lanzikos
Primary contributor: Sandy Novack
MailChimp Specialist: Sue Rorke</td></tr>
<tr><td>Note of thanks</td><td colspan="3">Thanks to the contributors to this issue of The Dignity Digest:
Wynn Gerhard
Dick Moore
David Roush
Special thanks to the MetroWest Center for Independent Living for assistance with the website and MailChimp versions of The Dignity Digest.
If you have submissions for inclusion in The Dignity Digest or have questions or comments, please submit them to Digest@DignityAllianceMA.org.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">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.</td></tr>
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