



Talking Points for ending New York's long-term care institutional bias

COVID-19 has killed almost 13,000 nursing home residents in the state. The conditions that allowed this disproportionate impact existed prior to the pandemic, as nursing homes have never been safe settings for seniors or people with disabilities. It is time to end the state's institutional bias by investing in community-based long-term care.

- COVID-19 has shone a spotlight on the problems of nursing homes. However, we must realize these problems are not new, COVID has merely shone a light on the disease spread, isolation, and exploitation that has existed in these institutions for years, bringing it to the fore by making it worse.
- The tragedy of COVID-19 in nursing homes is not new. Whether it is the seasonal flu, drug resistant illnesses that flourish in health care facilities, or the common cold, these settings present an easy opportunity for contagious viruses to decimate residents.
- To stem the spread of the virus, nursing homes banned family visitation, exacerbating loneliness and leaving residents vulnerable to further exploitation.
- Last year's budget enacted eligibility restrictions and reimbursement cuts for CDPA and personal care while simultaneously granting nursing homes immunity to liability for COVID-19 related deaths. The budget even cut wage subsidies for home care workers - at the same time these critical healthcare heroes were risking their life to provide our services.
- Further, in the middle of the pandemic, the state implemented a two-year old rule change that carved nursing homes out of the Medicaid managed care benefit and began disenrolling folks in nursing homes from their plans, making it nearly impossible for programs like Open Doors to help them leave.
- We must take the lessons from this tragedy and overhaul our long-term care system. New York is the epicenter of a worsening workforce crisis. Individuals eligible for community-based services are unable to access them because there aren't enough workers, leading to institutionalization.
- Low wages from stagnant reimbursement are the cause of the workforce crisis. Institutional bias will continue unless wages for home care workers are returned to the 150% of the minimum wage that they were at as recently as 2006.

ASK: Will you fight to end New York's institutional bias and the workforce crisis by overhauling our long-term care system and investing in and prioritizing community-based services?

CDPAANYS is the only statewide association solely representing fiscal intermediaries, consumers and personal assistants in Consumer Directed Personal Assistance (CDPA). For more information, please contact us at 518-813-9537 or bryan@cdpaanys.org.