



## *Consumer Directed Personal Assistance Association of New York State*

### **Expanded Medicaid Eligibility and Health Coverage Must Come With Increased Service Access**

The proposed budget includes an expansion of free or subsidized health coverage and Medicaid long-term care (LTC) benefits through an extension of the ACA-created Essential Plan to those earning up to 250% of the federal poverty level (FPL). It also increases the income threshold for Medicaid recipients who qualify because they are “Aged, Blind, or Disabled” (legal terminology) to 133% FPL while streamlining their recertification requirements, creating parity with other Medicaid populations that generally do not rely on long-term supports and services (the non-MAGI and MAGI populations) These changes are positive and will make thousands of more New Yorkers eligible for services like CDPA. However, without investments to address our ‘worst in the nation’ workforce crisis, the increased access will only offer services to more people who cannot actually utilize them due to an inability to recruit and retain staff to provide them.

CDPA empowers more than 140,000 disabled and older New Yorkers to live at home and receive LTC services at their direction. CDPAANYS strongly supports increasing health and LTC coverage and making CDPA available to every person that needs it, without a need to impoverish oneself to do so. However, access to these services is lacking. Tens of thousands are already not receiving some or all of the services they are entitled to. A workforce crisis driven by poverty-level wages stemming from a decade’s worth of eligibility cuts, is to blame.

Without addressing this crisis by including Fair Pay for Home Care in the budget, investing in home and community-based services and ensuring this vital workforce access to the middle class, not poverty level wages, will allow these expansions to meet their goal. This is even more critical when it comes to the expansion of the Essential Plan, as the Governor is relying on the success of this initiative to lower Medicaid spending by \$110 million, a savings that cannot be realized if people do not have true access to the benefits that the program purports to offer.

For New York to be a national leader and expand access to long-term supports and services is a welcome development. However, we cannot open these services to tens of thousands of people, promising them services that cannot be delivered. For these expansions to be meaningful and serve the purpose they are intended to serve, they must be accompanied in the budget by A.6329-A (Gottfried)/S.5373-A (May), the Fair Pay for Home Care Act, to rebuild our HCBS system and ensure the workforce is there to support these newly eligible individuals.

**For the expansion of eligibility in the Essential Plan and Medicaid to actually be meaningful, it must be accompanied in the budget by A.6329-A (Gottfried)/S.5373-A (May), Fair Pay for Home Care, so we can rebuild our workforce and deliver the services these programs promise.**

*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](mailto:bryan@cdpaanys.org).*