

PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF AGING



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Pennsylvania Long-Term Care Council

Pennsylvania Long-Term Care Council Proposal

- The following proposal was developed by evaluating information from:
 - Council members' insight at the first meeting and from the online survey
 - The enabling statute (Act 64 of 2015)
 - Previous long-term care reports
- This comprehensive review enabled us to identify trends and allocate information into three areas: council structure, priorities, and strategies.
- This proposal is fully inclusive and must be looked at as a whole in order to assess the way the council would operate if the proposal is adopted.

Purpose

The purpose of the council is to provide informed recommendations that improve regulations, licensing, financing, and delivery of the commonwealth's long-term services and supports (LTSS) system.

Perspective

- The council will work from an operational and person-centered perspective.
 - **Operational perspective includes:** ensuring that the regulatory, licensure, financial, and service delivery aspects of LTSS are appropriate and sufficient.
 - **Person-centered perspective includes:** ensuring that the LTSS system meets a consumer's needs and preferences in a culturally competent manner. Cultural competence includes recognition of the unique needs, challenges, and concerns of Pennsylvanians based on age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, religion, physical and mental capacities, geographic location, and more.

Committees

- The council's committee structure was built on four ever-present components of the LTSS system: outreach, access, quality, and the workforce.
- This structure enables the council to focus on a single priority and develop strategies and recommendations in a systematic and holistic manner, regardless of the issue.
- It also enables the council to quickly shift its focus to another priority in the event that an unexpected change occurs.

Committees

Outreach

To what extent are Pennsylvanians aware of the LTSS in question? What changes are needed to better inform/educate them? Outreach also includes assessing communication with the workforce.

Access

Do Pennsylvanians have access to the LTSS in question? If not, what changes are needed to ensure all individuals have access?

Quality

Are Pennsylvanians receiving the highest possible quality of LTSS in question? If not, what changes are needed to ensure that all individuals receive high quality services and supports?

Workforce

Is the workforce empowered and equipped to serve Pennsylvanians? If not, what changes are needed to better prepare and empower the workforce to deliver services? Workforce also includes informal caregivers, stakeholders, etc.

Survey Results

- **Total Responses: 28**
- **Do you support the proposed committee structure and methodology?**

Yes: 26

No: 2

Survey Feedback

- “One element of outreach is the diversity of languages that PA elders speak and feel comfortable in receiving information. We must be cognizant of that challenge as we think about the issue.”
- “I support the above but would suggest that depending on the issues several committees may want to join together for calls/meetings as opposed to looking at issues in a siloed way.”
- “The themes and methodology appear to focus on persons in need of care now and the resources available or not for their care. I think that attention also needs to be given to helping folks to recognize the value and resources that may be available to them for future care planning that will not or will less likely create a demand on Commonwealth funded services.”
- “I would suggest adding a fifth category to the themes described above, availability. Using the example of Adult Day Services as a possible priority for study and further planning, availability of Adult Day Services in the various geographic areas of the Commonwealth would be an important consideration.”

Survey Feedback

- “The theme of cultural competency, in particular, LGBT cultural sensitivity and competency, which cuts across multiple themes (outreach, quality and workforce).”
- “I think the question on the workforce is broader and should include the following, training, environment, and the quality of the Job - wages and working conditions.”
- “There needs to be an element where the council considers the financial portion and the ability to access benefits in a timely manner. Currently, people are not able to get services in a timely manner.”
- “I will support whatever the direction the majority of my colleagues define. However, as a member of my third Advisory Council on Long Term Care, the fundamental issue in Pa is the lack of a clear, effective management system that truly "manages" our ltc resources/financial risk across a continuum.”

Priorities

- **Administrative Functions**
- **Adult Day Services**
- **Advance Directives**
- **Adult Protective Services**
- **Alzheimer's Disease & Related Disorders**
- **Assisted Living Residences**
- **Behavioral/Mental Health**
- **Home and Community-Based Service Wait Time**
- **Housing**
- **Informal Caregivers Support**
- **Language Diversity**
- **LGBT Senior Population**
- **Long-Term Care Insurance**
- **LTSS Funding**
- **Nursing Home Transition Program**
- **Palliative Care Options**
- **Personal Care Homes**
- **Proposed Department of Health and Human Services**
- **Rebalancing**
- **Recruitment and Retention of Direct Care Workers**
- **Transitioning Individuals Born With Intellectual Disabilities**

Strategies

- **Administrative Functions**
 - Evaluate Community Health Choices and Independent Enrollment Broker to prevent service delays
- **Adult Day Services**
 - Examine the availability of this service option across the state
- **Alzheimer's Disease & Related Disorders**
 - Evaluate Long-Term Services and Supports for individuals living with Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders
- **Assisted Living Residences**
 - Evaluate third-party reimbursement
- **Behavioral/Mental Health**
 - Examine behavioral health issues of senior citizens who are least 60 years of age
- **Consumer Choice**
 - Evaluate methods by which participants can accept personal risk when healthy and safety might be increased when exercising choice
- **Home and Community-Based Service Wait Time**
 - Implement presumptive eligibility (Aging Waiver)
 - Develop model of how to fund the program (Act 150)
- **Informal Caregivers Support**
 - Encourage businesses to provide benefits (e.g., flextime, telecommuting, etc.) to allow employees to care for aging parents
 - Investigate adopting the United Way's "United for Caregivers @ Work" initiative in other geographic areas throughout the commonwealth

Strategies

- **Language Diversity**
 - Evaluate language barriers and outreach in various languages
- **LGBT Senior Population**
 - Educate the workforce on the needs of LGBT individuals
 - Consider expanding AARP established LGBT workshops across the state
- **Long-Term Care Insurance**
 - Educate consumers on planning alternatives for meeting financial consequences of long-term care (LTC)
 - Require insurance companies licensed to offer hybrid or linked products, including annuities with LTC riders, in Pennsylvania to also offer stand-alone, individual LTC policies
 - Require insurance producers who sell life, accident, and health insurance to complete the initial and ongoing training required by Section 39a.9 of Title 31 of the PA Code to qualify such producers to sell long-term care insurance
 - Develop a standardized educational program to teach producers the value and basic structure of a comprehensive LTC policy
 - Make Individual LTC policy premiums 100% deductible above the line for state and federal income tax purposes
- **LTSS Funding**
 - Examine inadequate Medicaid rates
 - Extend Aging Waiver to Assisted Living
 - Evaluate federal proposals for funding Medicaid (e.g., block grants)

Strategies

- **Mental Health**
 - Provide integrated mental health services to participants receiving home care
- **Personal Care Homes**
 - Evaluate third-party reimbursement
- **Rebalancing**
 - Examine other states to determine proper split
 - Evaluate social model versus medical model
- **Recruitment and Retention of Direct Care Workers**
 - Address compensation deficiency (e.g., living wage, paid time off, overtime, etc.)
 - Assess training (including cultural competency), job quality, working conditions/environment (e.g., increase minimum nursing home staffing levels)
 - Find creative ways to attract young people (e.g., Peace Corp-type model) and educate about positive attributes of profession
 - Remove red tape/over regulation
 - Engage workforce in the care they are providing, the mission
 - Gather information from paid direct care workers on their needs, problems, and points of view
 - Invite students, schools, and caregivers to provide ideas on workforce sustainability

Next Steps