



## Older Adult Lobby Day

**February 27, 2024**

### **FY22-FY24 Legislative Priorities**

#### ***An Act Allowing Spouses to Serve as Caregivers***

**[ [S.67](#) / [H.216](#) ]**

***Lead Sponsors:*** Senator Joanne Comerford & Representatives Adam Scanlon and Norman Orrall

This legislation would instruct the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) to include “spouses” within the definition of family member for home and community-based services funded through MassHealth.

It would also require EOHHS to file a state plan amendment or waiver application to allow spouses to serve as paid caregivers for the Personal Care Attendant (PCA) and Adult Foster Care (AFC) programs.

Our state and nation are facing a significant crisis in our ability to recruit and retain enough home care workers to meet the needs of older adults and persons with disabilities.

This bill will allow MassHealth to compensate spouses willing and able to serve as paid caregivers to their partners.



#### ***An Act Clarifying Rate Setting Processes for Home Health and Home Care Services***

**[ [S.755](#) / [H.1195](#) ]**

***Lead Sponsors:*** Senator Patricia Jehlen & Representative Carmine Gentile

The goal of this legislation is to clarify established rate setting processes for home health and home care services to ensure that rates accurately reflect the true cost of providing home care and home health services to consumers across the Commonwealth.

The single largest cost factor impacted by the rate setting process is staffing - the ability for providers to ensure fair and adequate wages and benefits for their dedicated home-based workforce.

The rate setting process directly impacts and determines the ability of providers to retain and recruit sufficient staff to meet the Commonwealth's need to ensure the provision of home health and home care services to vulnerable elders, persons with disabilities and children and individuals with medically complex needs.

If this bill is passed, the Legislature will no longer need to fund supplemental rate add-ons for home care and home health workers every year through the state budget process.

## ***An Act Relative to Intensive Case Management for Clinically Complex Older Adults***

***[ S.370 / H.630 ]***

***Lead Sponsors: Senator Adam Gomez & Representative Danielle Gregoire***

This legislation will enable the Commonwealth's network of Aging Services Access Points (ASAPs) to provide Intensive Case Management to individuals with complex care needs such as mental illness, substance abuse, hoarding, dysfunctional families, and dementia.

Within the current program guidelines, these individuals, in the greatest need of support, have a hard time accepting or sustaining the services necessary to enable them to remain safely in the community.

Many of these individuals are subjects of reports to the Elder Protective Services program and cycle in and out because their care coordination requires more time and attention than the current case management service provides.

It is estimated that between 1,800 to 3,600 individuals each month, or between 5 to 10% of individuals enrolled in the State Home Care program, would benefit from the enhanced case management services that would be offered through this new program.

## ***An Act relative to expanding the availability of personal care homes for older adults***

***[ S.385 / H.634 ]***

***Lead Sponsors: Senator Joan Lovely & Representative Sally Kerans***

This bill will enable the ASAP network to partner with housing providers to convert houses into small group homes where older adults and individuals with disabilities can receive both housing and long-term care services in smaller, residential settings.

The language establishes licensing procedures for Personal Care Homes (also known as HEART Homes) through the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA) that is separate from the processes established for Assisted Living Facility certification.

This legislation will also create a spending model for these small group homes that includes two distinct funding lines to ensure the financial viability of the program – resources to provide necessary long term care services and supports, and resources to cover room and board expenses.

The language for this bill was developed to align with licensure requirements for similar Provider-owned homes in several other states.

