

# Coalition for SILVER SOLUTIONS

## Executive Summary

The Coalition for Silver Solutions (CSS) will advocate in 2020 for efficiencies in the current long-term care system and for short-term, but essential, funding for home and community-based care (HCBS), assisted living facilities and nursing home care. In 2020, the CSS will strive to formulate and advocate for long-term strategies to support Florida's growing population of elders.

## Detailed Recommendations for the 2020 Legislature

### Improved Funding for Quality Services

- **Enhance funding for HCBS waitlist slots beyond the growth rate.** Funding below or at the growth rate does not reduce the waitlist. Funding 5% or 10% beyond the annual growth rate would begin to reduce the number of people on the waitlists.
- **Support an inflationary increase for nursing home Medicaid rates.** Nursing homes have not received an inflationary increase in 5 years. Centers have faced increasing wage pressure and enhanced regulatory burdens yet have continued achieving significant quality improvements. Without an increase in funding and stable rate predictability from one year to the next, access to nursing homes and quality will be impacted.
- **Allow people applying for Medicaid to gain eligibility, even if they have whole life insurance policies.** In return for gaining eligibility, applicants would be required to sign a priority collateral lien agreement for the policies with the state. The state could then recover applicants' Medicaid costs from the policies' death benefits. This would provide consumers with a far less expensive option to cover potential LTC needs and save the state money in the Medicaid program. The short-term solution may be to pursue a workgroup or OPPAGA study to develop legislation for a future session.

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*The Coalition for Silver Solutions is a partnership of AARP, Florida Health Care Association, LeadingAge Florida, and 1199SEIU United Healthcare Workers East, working together to jointly develop short- and long-term strategies for meeting the long-term health care needs of Florida's aging population in 2020 and beyond. Terri Barton of the Florida Association of Aging Service Providers (FASP) has also participated in CSS proceedings.*

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## Detailed Recommendations for the 2020 Legislature

### Home and Community-Based Recommendations

- **Modify Section 409.979, F.S., to require annual screening/assessment only of consumers who are ranked at levels 5, 4, or 3.** This would reduce the number of consumers requiring an annual rescreening by as much as 20,000. It would free up Aging and Disabled Resource Center (ADRC) staffing resources to more quickly and efficiently process waitlist releases and expedite the eligibility and enrollment process for Statewide Medicaid Managed Long-Term Care and state General Revenue-funded HCBS programs.
- **Florida Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) should consider placing all consumers with a lower-risk score (risk levels 1 and 2) on a “Registry of Interest” versus a waiting list.** The current policy should be revised to allow ADRCs to authorize service providers to enroll and serve consumers with lower risk assessment scores of 1 and 2.
- **For all consumers on the DOEA wait list with a caregiver, the DOEA should more closely scrutinize the needs of the caregiver and identify the services that would support and sustain the caregiver’s ability to function as a caregiver.**
- **Adequately fund the ADRC Medicaid-workload for the activities associated with waitlist releases and eligibility and enrollment for the Statewide Medicaid Managed Long-Term Care Program.** While this recommendation will require a small increase in resources (approximately \$1.0M in additional General Revenue to match federal Medicaid Administrative Funding), it will result in consumers transitioning more quickly from state General Revenue-funded programs to the federal Medicaid long term care program. This would reduce inappropriate placements and costs for institutional care.
- **DOEA should modify its screening/assessment tool and waitlist policy to prospectively consider eligibility for seniors and adults with disabilities who reside in assisted living facilities and have exhausted their financial resources.** This would reduce inappropriate placements and costs for institutional care.
- **DOEA should provide a mechanism for local service providers to appeal to Adult Protective Services (APS) referral decisions when local providers conclude that the APS referrals are “not in crisis ” and when APS referrals are no worse off than DOEA wait list consumers with a risk score of 4 or 5.** APS referrals distort and disrupt budgeting and service decisions for local service providers.

### Long-Term Care Workforce

- Several LTC workforce challenges affecting nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and home and community-based care providers have been identified. The Coalition is planning future meetings around the specific topic of the LTC workforce to begin developing policy recommendations to address recruitment, retention, training, and pay and benefits issues. These recommendations will be included in the Coalition’s Long-Term Care Blueprint in 2020.

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Learn more about the Coalition for Silver Solutions at [www.silversolutionscoalition.org](http://www.silversolutionscoalition.org).

