

# PLATFORM FOR LEGISLATIVE ACTION



**SENIOR ACTION WEEK: MAY 9-13, 2022**

**OLDER MICHIGANIANS DAY: MAY 11, 2022**



## **SUPPORT AND STRENGTHEN THE DIRECT CARE WORKFORCE**

Direct care workers (DCW) are an essential component in helping older Michiganians age in place. In Michigan, an estimated 34,000 more direct care workers are needed to meet the demand. There is currently no federal training standard to professionalize the direct care workforce although they provide the majority of in-home care.

**ACTION:** Support the Governor's FY 2023 budget inclusion of the \$2.35 DCW wage increase and ensure the wage increase is made permanent.

**ACTION:** Support and strengthen the direct care worker network through training, opportunity for advancement, and increased wages and benefits.



## **REBALANCE COMMUNITY-BASED LONG- TERM SERVICES AND SUPPORTS (LTSS)**

Michigan ranks near the bottom in the proportion of taxpayer dollars spent by states to provide long term care in home and community-based settings (HCBS) versus institutional care. In Michigan during FY21, only 43% of LTSS care delivered went to HCBS while 57% went to care in institutional settings. Michigan can strengthen the HCBS model of service delivery by expanding our Medicaid HCBS programs including MI Choice, PACE, and home help.

**ACTION:** Appropriate funds to rebalance Medicaid LTSS funding in Michigan to achieve a goal of at least 50% going to HCBS.

**ACTION:** Urge MDHHS to explore flexibility with income guidelines for home and community-based services under the available federal options to increase the special income limits.

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## EXPAND ACCESS TO MI CHOICE

The MI Choice Medicaid Waiver Program is an in-home service program that enables seniors and adults with a disability who meet eligibility requirements to receive LTSS in their home rather than a nursing facility. MI Choice has demonstrated that care delivered in the home is more than 42% less expensive than having the same person moved into a nursing facility or institutional setting.

**ACTION:** Raise the MI Choice capitation rates to keep up with inflation and address direct care worker wage increases to stabilize and advance the workforce.



## INCREASE ACCESS TO HOME AND COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES

In Michigan, there are currently 7,270 seniors on waiting lists for essential non-Medicaid in-home services. Michigan's Administration for Community Living Supports (ACLS) funded services include home delivered meals, in-home personal care, homemaking, and respite care that delay or prevent the need for more costly long-term care interventions.

**ACTION:** Support the Silver Key Coalition's request for a \$7 million increase for ACLS in-home services and a \$1 million increase for home delivered meals in ACLS' FY 2023 budget.



## BRIDGE THE DIGITAL DIVIDE FOR OLDER ADULTS

Broadband access can reduce isolation, improve health outcomes and help lower health care costs, but Michigan's digital divide is leaving many older adults behind. Older residents and those with disabilities – two groups of individuals who often face difficulty traveling for medical appointments – are also significantly less likely to have broadband service at home.

**ACTION:** Urge policymakers to expand access to affordable, reliable high-speed internet for all Michigan residents, regardless of where they live in the state, making use of new federal funding for broadband infrastructure.

**ACTION:** Urge policymakers to provide funding for educational programs targeted at older adults making use of collaborative models that provide training and pre-loaded technology for program participants.

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