

February Forecast Underscores Necessity to Address Senior Care Crisis

Almost 20,000 senior caregiver roles statewide remain vacant statewide.

ST. PAUL, MINN – Today, the Minnesota Department of Management and Budget released its February Budget and Economic Forecast. As state lawmakers decide how to best allocate funding, priority must be given to strengthening pay and retention of essential senior caregivers to address the ongoing crisis in senior care.

“Last October, admissions requests for senior care settings were denied 11,000 times due to caregiver shortages,” said Kari Thurlow, President and CEO of LeadingAge Minnesota. “When seniors can’t receive professional care in their communities, the burden falls directly on families to find a solution. In some cases, seniors face discharge delays in hospitals, backing up our already overcrowded healthcare systems. This problem will only get worse unless lawmakers prioritize funding senior care.”

“Between the number of caregivers going to nursing pool agencies, which can afford to pay higher wages, and the turnover rate in nursing homes and assisted living facilities, remaining staffed and open is an ongoing challenge,” said Patti Cullen, President and CEO of Care Providers of Minnesota. “In a system where the legislature directly influences the wages providers can offer to caregivers, they have a moral responsibility to prioritize funding senior care and addressing this crisis.”

Bipartisan legislation that would increase reimbursement rates and funding for senior care settings is currently working its way through the legislature. If passed, this legislation would take meaningful steps towards paying caregivers the higher wages they deserve and strengthen the caregiving workforce for Minnesota’s growing senior population.

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The Long-Term Care Imperative is a collaboration of LeadingAge Minnesota and Care Providers of Minnesota, two of the state’s largest long-term care associations. The Long-Term Care Imperative is committed to advancing a shared vision and future for older adult housing, health care and supportive services.