



# PRIORITIES FOR SENIOR CARE IN 2021



**We are facing the largest population of seniors in U.S. history.**

60K Minnesotans will turn 65 every year this decade



**Senior care requires a partnership between families, caregivers and state government.**

The state plays a major role in funding senior care.



**By 2022, there will be 1 million+ senior Minnesotans**

70% of older Minnesotans will need some type of long-term care.



## COVID-19 RESPONSE AND RECOVERY

COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted older adults and those living in congregate care who are at greater risk of contracting the virus due to the close quarters in which they live. As a result, the network of services and supports Minnesota's seniors count on for care has become increasingly fragile.

**RESPONSE:** We need help now to ensure Minnesotans have access to the care they need in the communities they call home.

**RECOVERY:** Seniors need a much stronger commitment from state government to ensure their caregivers have stable funding and adequate resources to provide quality care and the tools necessary to protect seniors in the future.

### PROTECTING SENIORS IS OUR HIGHEST PRIORITY

Finish vaccinating seniors and caregivers

Continue testing

Ensure adequate PPE and equipment

Improve ability to recruit, train and retain talented workers

### WE URGE YOU TO SUPPORT:

- **Nursing home moratorium funding** Reform property payments to nursing homes to modernize facilities and improve infection control.
- **Alternative ADS** Make alternative Adult Day Services (ADS) a permanent service option to expand access to caregiver support and prevent social isolation.
- **State grants to fund paid leave for staff** Help cover the growing costs of paid sick leave during the pandemic.
- **12a.10 funding for HCBS** 12a.10 funding for home and community-based services (HCBS) helps position HCBS providers to respond to future emergencies without funding delays.



## THE WORKFORCE OUR SENIORS NEED

The biggest senior population in history is driving up demand for long-term care, but inadequate state funding for senior care makes it nearly impossible for providers to offer competitive wages, train and retain good people to provide safe, quality care. Only the state has the capacity to adequately fund and appropriately regulate senior care.

**25,000 +**

additional caregivers  
will be needed to meet demand  
in the next decade

**10,000 +**

unfilled positions for long-term care  
nurses and nursing assistants  
on any given day in Minnesota

**2,000**

# of staff hired under the COVID-19  
waiver who will need a pathway to  
permanent positions

### THE SOLUTIONS:

**Better pay and more support for the physically and emotionally demanding work of a professional caregiver!**

Minnesota needs a comprehensive state commitment to grow and support a professional caregiving workforce.

### WE URGE YOU TO SUPPORT:

- **Hero pay bonuses** Honor caregivers who have courageously cared for Minnesota's seniors throughout the pandemic with a one-time retention bonus.
- **Elderly Waiver reform** Continue to implement reforms of the Elderly Waiver payment system, which provides direct aid to individuals so that they can receive services provided at home or in assisted living. Proposed reforms will help us meet the growing demand for care for middle-and low- income seniors.
- **Transition pathway for nursing assistants** Provide a transition pathway for nursing assistants hired under the COVID waiver.
- **Background study** Extend the background study waiver to include a transition period.
- **Student loan forgiveness** Incentivize people to choose a career in caring for seniors by easing student loan debt.



## PAYMENT REFORM ENSURES SENIOR CARE CHOICES

Instability in government reimbursement, a growing workforce crisis and the continued closures of nursing homes in the rural parts of our state is creating an unnecessary fear in seniors and their families who wonder whether they or their loved one will have access to skilled care as they age, close to home and connected to their community and families.

### WE URGE YOU TO SUPPORT:

- **Protecting Value Based Reimbursement (VBR)** Preserve the Value Based Reimbursement model for nursing homes to ensure sustainable funding and COVID 19 recovery implications
- **Assisted Living licensing costs recognition** Recognize the cost of compliance with new regulations governing daily care for those in assisted living settings and improve funding programs accordingly.
- **Age Friendly MN** Create and fund a permanent Age-Friendly Minnesota Council to ensure that aging is a strategic priority for Minnesota.
- **Immunity** Establish protections for providers and caregivers from certain civil liability claims during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Tax Conformity** Conform to federal PPP tax loan forgiveness and allow deductibility of expenses on Minnesota income tax returns.