

# RAISE SENIOR CAREGIVER WAGES. IMPROVE ACCESS TO CARE.

Minnesota's senior population is growing while care options for older adults in the communities they call home continue to disappear. Nearly 20 percent of caregiver positions remain unfilled, causing seniors to be turned away from the care they need. Minnesota families are making incredible sacrifices to care for our seniors. **We must ensure that families and communities remain whole.** The State of Minnesota is our partner in caring for our one million Minnesota seniors. Permanent and comprehensive funding increases will help secure access to care for older adults in every corner of the state.

## THE CHALLENGE

### Caregivers are leaving long-term care for higher-paying, less stressful jobs.

The senior care workforce is filled with compassionate and skilled professionals who provide incredible care for seniors. But long-term care providers have an increasingly difficult time recruiting and retaining quality staff due to inadequate state funding.



**Without state investment to permanently raise wages for caregivers, staff shortages will persist, and seniors will continue to be turned away from care they need.**

## THE SOLUTION

### \$25 by 2025

A \$52 per day rate increase for nursing homes will provide caregivers with family-sustaining wages. This proposal requires nursing facilities to develop a distribution plan and post a plan summary for staff, and funding received will be audited by the Minnesota Department of Human Services.



**Caregivers deserve family-sustaining wages. Raising wages for workers in nursing facilities by \$5/hour would, on average, raise caregiver wages from \$20 per hour to \$25 per hour.**

## THE CHALLENGE

### Elderly Waiver rates lag five years behind.

Elderly Waiver (EW) is a state program that provides various care options for seniors ages 65+ who are eligible for Medical Assistance. **Though the Legislature invested in a better payment framework for EW, the 2023 legislation locks important comparison benchmarks to 2017 wage data.**



**Currently, Elderly Waiver rates do not have an updating function. They are the only Medicaid waiver that does not.**

## THE SOLUTION

### Automatic rate updates

This proposal directs the Minnesota Department of Human Services to annually update the wage data used to calculate Elderly Waiver rates.



**Automatic Rate Updating for Elderly Waiver will help ensure that caregiver wages are responsive to labor market demands and help ensure access for Medicaid beneficiaries.**

## THE CHALLENGE

**Reimbursement rates for nursing home care are delayed 15 to 27 months.**

Senior care providers face obstacles due to delayed reimbursement from Minnesota state.



**Nursing home providers must wait for 15-27 months for payments that cover the actual cost of care provided to residents.**

## THE SOLUTION

**Reduce the impact of the reimbursement delay by accounting for inflation.**

The application of a known cost change factor to the audited and allowable nursing facility costs incurred 15 to 27 months prior to their use for establishing rates will incent and reward nursing facility investment.



**Nursing facilities spend money on staff that is not reimbursed by the government for 15-27 months. This proposal will add an inflation factor that covers the period between cost report and rate attainment.**

## REAL STORIES. REAL IMPACT.



**SARAH WIELAND**  
Caregiver at Oak Hills Living Center in New Ulm, MN

*"There are times I am unsure if I'm going to be able to put food on the table for my kids. Or if I am going to be able to put gas in my car to get here. I'm a single mom. I have two kids. I don't get a lot of help."*

**Support \$25 by 2025 to help raise wages for caregivers like Sarah and ensure every Minnesota senior has access to care when they need it.**

*"It's very important to be able to stay in a community with family close by so that you're able to do things with them, visit with them... I've known people that have had to leave from their families and it really affects them emotionally and physically because they don't have that contact with their family members."*

**Support Automatic Rate Updating for Elderly Waiver and an inflation factor for rate reimbursement to help ensure every Minnesota senior like Nancy can access the care they need in the places they call home.**



**NANCY SALO**  
Senior resident at St. Clare Living Community in Mora, MN