

MaineHealth Local Health Systems

Franklin Community
Health Network
LincolnHealth
MaineHealth Care At Home
Maine Behavioral Healthcare
Memorial Hospital
Maine Medical Center
Mid Coast-Parkview Health
NorDx
Pen Bay Medical Center
Southern Maine Health Care
Waldo County General Hospital
Western Maine Health

Part of the MaineHealth Family

MaineHealth Accountable
Care Organization

MaineHealth Affiliates

MaineGeneral Health
New England Rehabilitation
Hospital of Portland
St. Mary's Health System

Testimony of Sarah Calder, MaineHealth In Support of LD 1684 “An Act to Invest in the Health and Wellness of Older Maine Residents by Expanding Coordinated Community Programming” Monday, May 1, 2023

Senator Baldacci, Representative Meyer and distinguished members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, I am Sarah Calder, Senior Government Affairs Director at MaineHealth, and I am here to support LD 1684, “An Act to Invest in the Health and Wellness of Older Maine Residents by Expanding Coordinated Community Programming.”

MaineHealth is an integrated non-profit health care system that provides a continuum of health care services to communities throughout Maine and New Hampshire. Every day, our over 22,000 care team members support our vision of “Working Together so Our Communities are the Healthiest in America” by providing a range of services from primary and specialty physician services to a continuum of behavioral health care services, community and tertiary hospital care, home health care and a lab. This bill aligns with the MaineHealth vision by supporting the aging network to expand these critical services in the community as outlined in the Older Americans Act.

Additionally, this bill will provide short-term and ongoing funding to expand case management and navigation services available to older Mainers via the five area agencies on aging (AAA). While the AAAs receive federal funding from the Older Americans Act to do some case management, persistent direct care workforce shortages, lack of affordable housing, and no adult care services in many parts of Maine means more Mainers need extensive help with increasingly complex situations that take considerable time and effort to solve. This funding will allow AAAs to increase service delivery.

Finally, the bill has the potential to increase access and improve care coordination between healthcare and community-based supportive services. These services help older Mainers to remain securely housed and actively participating in their communities, and improve health outcomes. There are significant “care deserts” in Maine where people cannot find the home care or homemaker services they need – and even when services exist, a third of older Mainers cannot afford to pay out of pocket for these services. Helping older Mainers navigate through these challenges takes considerable time.

MaineHealth provides care coordination services to its most vulnerable patients through our practice based Lend a Hand program. This program is designed to better coordinate health system driven care management with the services offered by our partners in community-based organizations. The area agencies on aging are critical partners in our work with older adults. It is for that reason that we support the legislation before you today.

Thank you for your time and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

