



LD 958: Resolve, Directing the Department of Health and Human Services to Conduct a Review of Rules Governing In-home Personal Care Assistance Services

April 5, 2021

Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services, my name is Laurie Belden. I am a resident of Durham and serve as the executive director of the Home Care & Hospice Alliance of Maine -- a membership organization representing home care, home health care and hospice providers across the State. I am testifying in support of LD 958.

Members of the Alliance care for older adults and disabled Mainers of all ages - allowing them to stay in their home and community. Annually, our provider members deliver care to more than 45,000 clients in their residences across Maine, traveling more than 20 million miles. Collectively, home care, home health care and hospice members employ more than 15,000 staff – making our sector of the healthcare continuum a large contributor to Maine’s economic growth and prosperity.

We thank Senator Maxxim for introducing this legislation to review rules governing the services delivered to those needing assistance with activities of daily living. During the 129th Legislature, similar legislation was proposed by former Senator Bellows which we also supported but ultimately was not passed due to the session being cut short due to COVID.

Personal care agencies’ (PCA) rules are very minimal and only require a \$25 registration to start providing care. This care can be quite intimate (bathing, dressing, toileting, and transferring). Ensuring that adequate rules are in place to support the success of home care providers, cultivate essential caregivers, and protect the health and wellbeing of the beneficiary is imperative.

The newly-implemented Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) for PCA tracks the type of service performed, the person receiving the service, the date, location, person providing the services and the time the service begins and ends. This mandate is good first step to reduce fraud and ensuring care is being delivered but more standardized rules.

We believe strongly that involving a diverse group of stakeholders in the review process will lead to a better process and outcome ---and the Alliance will happily identify well-respected providers to work with MaineCare in the review process, as well as help to draft consistent standards for care.

It’s time to review the rules for PCA across all MaineCare chapters to ensure consistent, equitable, quality services and care are being delivered to Maine’s vulnerable population. These rules should also be monitored and updated routinely to ensure the highest standard of care is being provided.

Thank you.

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