NEWS RELEASE

New Study Previews Long-Term Care System for Older Adults, People with Disabilities in 2040

State Projected to Expand Home Care as Demand Grows

(HARTFORD, CT) – State officials today released a detailed report that previews the landscape for long-term care of Connecticut's population of older adults and people with disabilities in the year 2040—confirming the popular trend toward aging in place and community living.

The public's growing demand for alternatives to institutional care is a clear takeaway from the statewide analysis by Mercer Human Services Consulting, retained by the Department of Social Services (DSS) to help plan the future of Medicaid-funded services.

"We are proud that Connecticut has long been a national leader in developing and providing home- and community-based services for our older adults and persons with disabilities," said **Governor Ned Lamont**. "Surveys tell us that in most cases our residents are more satisfied with their care when it is received at home. As a result, our goal is to provide as much choice in support services as we possibly can."

The report, titled *State of Connecticut Medicaid Long-Term Care Demand Projections,* uses data to predictively model long-term care trends over the next 20 years—including nursing home, home care and associated workforce—at the state level and for each of the 169 Connecticut cities and towns.

The report projects a major increase in demand for and use of home care provided through Medicaid, from 67.6% of long-term care enrollees in 2017 to 82.3% by 2040. Over the same period, the report projects a concomitant drop in demand for nursing home care, with a reduction in demand of nearly 6,000 beds.

The report reinforced the role of DSS Medicaid services in boosting the proportion of enrollees receiving home- and community-based services since 2011. These programs and initiatives include Money Follows the Person, Community First Choice, the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders, hospital discharge planning, diversion of people from nursing homes, and pre-admission screening.

"We envision this report as a tool to help policymakers, municipal officials, the nursing home industry, labor representatives, and families and advocates understand how changes are anticipated to affect the entire system," said **DSS Commissioner Deidre S. Gifford**. "The report covers each of the 169 cities and towns with a four-page analysis, including current and

projected supply and demand for long-term care services and staff. The result is what we hope will be a helpful snapshot of what each town can expect for long-term care patterns in the future—and a guide to help the state best focus services for our Medicaid members."

In addition, new initiatives proposed by Governor Lamont and adopted by the General Assembly will further support this work. These include funding of $239,100 for housing vouchers, funding of $800,000 in fiscal 2020 and $500,000 in fiscal 2021 to support development of predictive modeling to support discharge of older adults from nursing homes to community settings; and $726,400 for additional staffing for the Money Follows the Person program, which has helped 5,700 people move from nursing homes to community homes since 2008. As indicated in the report, Connecticut had 3,791 open nursing home beds in FFY 2017. As a result of the state's rebalancing efforts and the impact of nursing home closures, that figure is now over 3,100.

"Connecticut has been moving in the right direction on long-term care for a number of years and this report indicates we must continue to adapt," said **Office of Policy and Management Secretary Melissa McCaw.** "We currently have an array of effective home- and community-based services that promote both personal choice and our commitment to continually improving care. While high-quality, skilled nursing facilities will continue to be a vital part of our continuum of care, it's becoming more apparent that consumers often prefer to receive services in their homes when they can. We need to ensure our policies and priorities address this excess capacity and meet this oncoming demand with a continuation and expansion of choices in the marketplace to reflect consumer trends and opportunities to leverage efficiencies in the spectrum of long term care. As the paradigm shifts, we will make certain state government can be flexible to shift with it."

The report and its town-by-town appendices are posted at www.ct.gov/dss/medicaidlongtermcarereport.

DSS and Mercer Human Services Consulting will host two webinars to present the report and how to use the information on August 7 and August 9, from 1 to 2 p.m. Information about accessing the webinars is also posted online.

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