



The John A. Hartford Foundation

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President

September 21, 2022

The Honorable James E. Clyburn
Chairman
Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis
2157 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Steve Scalise
Ranking Member

RE: Taking Action to Improve Nursing Home Care

Dear Chairman Clyburn, Ranking Member Scalise, and Members of the Subcommittee:

The John A. Hartford Foundation, a national philanthropy dedicated to improving the care of older adults, commends the House Select Subcommittee on the Coronavirus Crisis for its September 21, 2022 hearing on the current state of nursing homes and the actions needed to implement recommendations from the April 2022 National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) report, *The National Imperative to Improve Nursing Home Quality*.

The NASEM report found nursing home care to be fragmented, unsustainable, and urgently in need of fundamental change, as the COVID-19 pandemic made clear. Its set of recommendations offer a clear pathway to improving nursing home care, but implementation will require a whole-of-government approach and ample partnerships with the private and philanthropic sectors.

The John A. Hartford Foundation stands ready to rapidly work with Congress, the Administration, philanthropies, advocates, researchers, nursing home operators, staff, residents, and families to ensure that all nursing homes provide care that is high-quality, safe, and equitable. Key areas that Congress must address include workforce development and funding, state survey processes, ownership transparency, adequate reimbursement, and reducing racial and ethnic disparities in nursing home care. The voices of nursing home residents and their families must guide actions, and the private nursing home sector must be engaged as partners in reform.

One key vehicle for ensuring sustainable improvement in nursing home care is the Moving Forward: Nursing Home Quality Coalition [movingforwardcoalition.org], established with a grant from The John A. Hartford Foundation. The coalition has formally launched with a diverse group of nursing home residents and family caregivers, researchers, advocates, and for-profit and non-profit nursing home owners to develop and test action plans that advance the NASEM report recommendations. More than 100 participants have agreed to serve on committees organized around the seven goals of the NASEM report: Person-Centeredness, Culture Change, Care Planning & Quality of Life; Staffing & Well-Trained Workforce; Transparency & Accountability of Finances and Ownership; Financing System; System of Quality Assurance; Quality Measurement & Continuous Quality Improvement; and Health Information Technology.

As the Moving Forward Coalition prioritizes actionable steps for the government, nursing homes, and other stakeholders to take in the near and long-term, The John A. Hartford Foundation asks this Committee and all of Congress to immediately take the corresponding legislative and administrative actions needed to support those recommendations, which are aligned with current Administration priorities to address nursing home staffing, accountability, and transparency.

The work to improve nursing home care will benefit from prior actions taken by The John A. Hartford Foundation and its partners to address the COVID-19 crisis in nursing homes. Below is a list of activities from which lessons can be drawn to ensure that a complete reimagining of nursing homes takes place, rather than the “tinkering around the edges” that has occurred since the last NASEM nursing home report published 35 years ago.

- **Convergence Dialogue on Reimagining Care for Older Adults:** In September 2022, the Convergence Center for Policy Resolution released its final report offering consensus recommendations produced by leaders and experts from across the political spectrum to change America’s systems of care for older adults in a range of settings including nursing homes. [convergencepolicy.org/latest-projects/reimagining-care-for-older-adults]
- **Nursing Home Strike Teams and Infrastructure Projects Resources: Connecting Public Health and LTC Communities (ARPA):** In 2021, The John A. Hartford Foundation, in partnership with the CDC, convened a taskforce of volunteers to advise state departments of health on ways to strategically utilize American Rescue Plan Act funds for ongoing nursing home-public health collaborations in support of workforce development and education. Strategic guidance documents and webinar recordings are available. [johnahartford.org/dissemination-center/view/resources-on-connecting-public-health-and-long-term-care-communities]
- **Revisiting the Teaching Nursing Home Project:** A pilot project in Pennsylvania, organized by the Jewish Healthcare Foundation, is partnering three schools of nursing with nursing homes and health systems to better equip nursing home staff with clinical training, research, and quality improvement support, harnessing lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic. [jhcf.org/news-blog-menu/entry/pennsylvania-teaching-nursing-home-pilot-aims-to-transform-care-model-1]
- **Age-Friendly Health Systems - Nursing Home Quality Improvement:** The Institute for Healthcare Improvement has developed guides for improving the quality of care in nursing homes with evidence-based practices from the Age-Friendly Health Systems movement. [ihi.org/Engage/Initiatives/Age-Friendly-Health-Systems/Pages/Resources]

The John A. Hartford Foundation looks forward to continuing to work with Congress, the Moving Forward Coalition, the initiatives noted here, and all stakeholders to support nursing homes in improving the quality of care for residents and their families.

Sincerely,



Terry Fulmer, PhD, RN, FAAN
President
The John A. Hartford Foundation