

2006 Priorities of the Connecticut Elder Action Network (CEAN)

A coalition of leaders advancing responsible public policy for older adults

❖ **Fund the Medicare Part D Wrap Around for 2007**

Continue to Hold Harmless Connecticut's dually eligible & ConnPace Participants
This position held in collaboration with a Part D Wrap-Around group lead by the Center for Medicare Advocacy

Connecticut committed to holding harmless people who are dually eligible and those who participate in ConnPACE who now depend upon Medicare as the primary payer for their prescription drug coverage. The Special Session law says that Connecticut will cover medically-necessary drugs not on the individual's Part D plan formulary "within available appropriations".

This commitment is entirely separate from the State's efforts to remedy interim Part D implementation problems, spending for which the State *will* be reimbursed by the federal government. Current legislation and budget items provide funding for the "Wrap Around" only through June 30, 2006.

❖ **Conduct a Comprehensive, Long-Term Care Needs Assessment**

Support SB 346, An Act Concerning the Comprehensive Needs Assessment
Also the marquee priority of the Long-Term Care Advisory Council

SB 346 provides \$300,000 to conduct an analysis to 1) assess consumers' long-term care needs, desires and preferences; and 2) plan for optimal use of public and private long-term services and supports funds.

Payment for long-term care services and supports through Medicaid alone represents 20.9% of Connecticut's biennial budget. Over and above the State's significant array of commitments to funding long-term care, families and other caregivers contribute both resources and untold hours of uncompensated care to loved ones. Given the magnitude of the dollars, and the immediate demographic certainty of increased need, assessment and planning for future needs should:

- gauge present and future consumer needs; and
- assess the financial viability, capacity and performance of the service network.

The results of this analysis will 1) assist families in making provision for their own long-term care; and 2) help the Legislature and departments of the State to set priorities for future policy and resource allocation.

❖ **Maintain Support for the Elderly Nutrition Programs**

Support bills (SB 171, SB 266, and the Governor's Budget Proposal) which seek to maintain and enhance the Elderly Nutrition Program

State match and state supplemental funds for home-delivered and congregate meal programs are provided through the "Elderly Services" line item of the Dept. of Social Services budget. These critical funds are inadequate to meet the growing demand in Connecticut, especially given significant recent reductions in federal funding. Home-delivered meals are a core long-term care support for frail, homebound elders representing a vital source of balanced nutrition, a social connection with the delivery person, and an essential element of preventative health. Congregate meals have similar nutritional and psycho-social benefits.

(03/21/06)

CEAN Executive Committee Members:

AARP- CT

Center for Medicare Advocacy, Inc.

CT Association of Area Agencies on Aging

CT Association of Municipal Agents for the Elderly

CT Association of Senior Center Personnel

CT Coalition on Aging

CT Commission on Aging

CT Community Care, Inc.

CT Legal Services

**For more information contact the CT Commission on Aging
coa@cga.ct.gov or 860.240.5200**