

**Testimony of the
Connecticut Association of Adult Day Centers
To the Appropriations Committee
In Support of Increased Funding for Adult Day Care**

Michael Hebert, MSW, MBA

February 18, 2009

Good evening Senator Harp, Representative Geragosian and Members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Michael Hebert and I am the director of the Adult Day Centers of the Jewish Home for the Elderly and Grasmere Eldercare Center in Fairfield and I am here today to speak on behalf of the 50 adult day center members of the Connecticut Association of Adult Day Centers in strong support of *increased funding for Adult Day Centers and in opposition to the capping of participating in the Connecticut Home Care Program for the Elderly.*

Please support an increase in the Adult Day Centers reimbursement rate to ensure that this community based option remains a viable choice for the elderly in our state. We understand the challenges the Connecticut legislature faces in 2009, to fairly fund so many vital services and programs, but we firmly believe adult day centers save Connecticut significant long-term care dollars as well as providing a vital link to the Connecticut Long-Term Care Advisory Council's recommendations towards balancing the long-term care system in Connecticut and meeting the growing needs of Connecticut's elderly and their caregivers.

Adult Day Health Centers offer a solution to saving the state millions of dollars by offering services in the community allowing older adults to stay where they would prefer to live, in their own homes. Adult day services have proven to keep older adults happier and healthier and prevent nursing home placement for many years and in some cases avoiding institutional care altogether.

The rebalancing of the long term care system looks to community services to assist in this process. Adult Day Health Centers want to remain a part of this service system, but without an increase in our current reimbursement rate many of us will be forced to close our doors. Over the past 7 years, 16 Centers have closed in large part to the low state reimbursement rate.

The average cost to care for a client in an adult day center is \$81 per day. The state currently reimburses \$63.55 per day under the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders for medical model adult day center services, a loss of \$17.45 per day. The state continues to require that we provide door to door transportation with the cost **included in our daily rate.** We calculate transportation per client to cost our agency **\$20.00** per day. Additionally, centers do not receive reimbursement when an expected client is absent and this has adversely impacted centers who have planned and staffed for the expected census.

We need to encourage the development of new centers and support our existing centers. There are parts of our state right now that are without an Adult Day Center near enough to allow older adults to choose this option for their care. For those who are fortunate to have a center in their area and choose this option, the benefits are immeasurable.

I would be happy to answer any questions. I can be contacted at (203) 365-6469 or mhebert@jhe.org or Maureen Dolin, CAADC Chairperson at (860) 525-6111 or mdolin@hebrewhealthcare.org.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Hebert, MSW, MBA, Director

The Jewish home for the Elderly and Grasmere Eldercare Center in Fairfield, CT

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Increased State Funding Is Needed For Adult Day Services

Adult day centers provide a cost effective community-based long term care alternative for older adults wishing to remain in their homes but who need varying assistance during the day. With adult day services, clients are able to remain in their homes rather than moving to assisted living or a nursing home. At the same time, their quality of life is enhanced with a strong social component and a continued sense of independence. Unfortunately, while adult day centers provide a cost effective option to families, the current level of state reimbursement is making it increasingly difficult to remain a viable option.

Adult Day Centers Provide a Rich Array of Services

- Adult day centers provide help with activities of daily living, including toileting, bathing, walking, transferring, and eating.
- Medical model day centers have on-site licensed nursing staff, access to rehabilitation services, and bathing facilities in addition to the nutritional, social, recreational and other services provided by social model programs.
- Door to door transportation is provided to and from the center and these costs are bundled into the package of services provided to clients of the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders.
- The nursing, nutrition, rehabilitation and social services provided in adult day centers help frail elders remain at home – including many who would otherwise require nursing home placement.

Adult Day Health Care is a Cost-effective Alternative to Nursing Home Care

- A day of adult day center services currently costs the state 63.55 (medical model) and 57.93 (social model) making them a cost effective option compared to nursing home placement where the daily rate Medicaid rate average is 215.37.
- By keeping clients in their homes, the net savings to the State attributable to the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders add up to many millions each year.

State Payment Does Not Cover the Cost of Adult Day Health Services

- Adult day centers face financial losses with each Home Care Program client they serve.
- There are currently 50 certified adult day centers in operation, but 16 have closed in the last seven years due in large part to the low state reimbursement rate.
- The average cost to care for a client in an adult day center is approximately \$ 81.00 per day. The state currently reimburses a medical model center \$63.55 for a loss of \$17.45 per day.
- The costs of providing day services continues to rise as some clients require the assistance of two staff members for toileting and bathing; many suffer from confusion and require constant supervision.

Costs are rising due to several factors:

- **Staffing** - Adult day centers are not immune from the nursing shortage, and they typically cannot compete with the benefits and incentives larger facilities offer.
- **Transportation** - The associated costs such as insurance and fuel are significant and have risen dramatically in recent years. The requirement remains that transportation be included within the daily rate.
- **Absenteeism** - The state will not pay for scheduled clients who do not attend for the day. The center incurs the cost in anticipation of the client's attendance, but they receive no reimbursement.

Please Support State Funding for Adult Day Services that more closely represents our actual costs.