

AJAS Schedules Meetings with Federal Legislators on Medicaid Redesign

At this most critical time in the eldercare profession, AJAS has scheduled two briefings on Capitol Hill in March 2018 to educate lawmakers about restructuring Medicaid effectively.

On March 7, AJAS will meet with members of the U.S. Senate and with representatives from the House on March 8 in Washington, D. C.

We will be inviting staffers and members of Senate Finance, Commerce, Aging and Ways and Means Committees to the events. While AJAS is leading this initiative, we have invited LeadingAge and American Health Care Association to join us in our presentations. The three organizations have met to discuss strategies for the briefings. Together we represent over 25,000 nursing and retirement communities, and allows us to speak to lawmakers with a very powerful voice. Additionally, we have bipartisan support from members of the Senate and House on our views on Medicaid.

Our message will revolve around our opposition to block grants and per capita caps. The Medicaid program is one of the foundational programs of our nation's safety net providing necessary health care services the elderly and disabled individuals—many of whom would be uninsured in the absence of a strong and vital Medicaid program. Today, Medicaid provides health coverage for over 70 million of our nation's most vulnerable individuals and is also a major source of financing for long-term care and many safety-net institutions, including AJAS communities.

AJAS remains strongly committed to retaining Medicaid's entitlement and has opposed proposals that would significantly weaken the program's ability to provide quality affordable coverage to all eligible low-income elders. AJAS is specifically opposed to the capping of federal financing through a "per capita cap" and block-granting of the Medicaid program to the states. Such proposals simply shift the cost burden onto individual beneficiaries, health providers and local and state governments. While such proposals may seem to be a solution to reducing the federal deficit, the long-term effects of these strategies would further erode the safety net and jeopardize the health and economic safety of millions of Americans.

AJAS has formed a **Medicaid Re-design Team** that will present elected officials and staff representatives with solutions that providers can implement to help reduce Medicaid expenditures, improve the program and reduce the rate of spending growth. Along with our position we feel that it is appropriate that as providers, assume some of the risk in our plan.

Our briefings will focus on five major points:

- 1) Why we oppose Medicaid restructuring
- 2) Having providers work to establish a true care coordination model
- 3) Recommendations to reduce duplicative regulatory systems
- 4) Recommendations to reduce Medicaid fraud and abuse
- 5) Advocating for preventive health programs for the elderly

Our presenters and contributors for these sessions include:

Marsha Greenfield, J.D. VP Health Legislation, Leading Age

Mike Cheek, Senior Vice President for Reimbursement Policy & Strategy, American Health Care Association

Richard Schwalberg, COO Menorah Park, Beachwood OH

Molly Forrest, President and CEO Los Angeles Jewish Home, Reseda, CA

Jim Newbrough, President Menorah Park Beachwood, OH

Carol Irvine, President and CEO Abramson Center for Jewish Life Horsham, PA

Debbie Winn-Horvitz, President and CEO Jewish Association on Aging, Pittsburgh, PA

Dan Reingold, President and CEO Riverspring Health, Riverdale, NY

David Abraham, President and CEO Beth Shalom Village Virginia Beach, VA

Alison Salopeck, President and CEO Jennings Center for Older Adults, Garfield, OH

Suzanne Pugh, President and CEO Aldersgate Methodist Community, Charlotte, NC