

December 14, 2023

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor
NYS State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Re: A.6021-A (Paulin)/S.3146-A (Mannion)

Dear Governor Hochul,

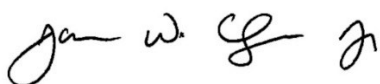
LeadingAge New York and its not-for-profit, mission-driven aging services members write to you today in strong support of legislation A.6021-A (Paulin)/S.3146-A (Mannion), a bill which would codify in statute quality incentive programs for the state's Medicaid Managed Care (MMC) and Managed Long Term Care (MLTC) programs. Currently, the Department of Health (DOH) operates quality incentive programs (QIPs) for both MMC and MLTC under its administrative authority. These programs distribute quality incentive payments equivalent to approximately 1 percent of overall annual premium spending to those managed care organizations with high performance on specified quality measures.

QIP programs incentivize the delivery of high-quality services and support value-based payment (VBP) initiatives between Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) and providers. They fund critical investments in quality initiatives and the delivery of cost-effective services that are not otherwise covered by Medicaid but serve to improve quality. Unfortunately, these important programs often become a target for reductions, including, most recently, a 25 percent cut enacted in FY2021 and a proposal to eliminate the program in 2023. Interruptions and reductions in funding only serve to undermine the plan-provider partnerships needed for effective quality improvement and enhanced consumer experience. These initiatives, that often focus on state priorities such as health equity and social determinants of health, deserve the chance to succeed which requires consistency in funding. By codifying QIP, the bill will help provide the structure and funding certainty required to maximize the effectiveness of quality improvement efforts that enhance the lives of the millions of New Yorkers served through the MMC and MLTC programs.

This legislation requires that QIP programs be structured in ways that provide the greatest level of funding to those MCOs with the highest quality scores and requires the Department to set the quality objectives in advance of the measurement period. Given that quality initiative programs are commonly used to focus provider and MCO quality efforts on specific concerns, knowing those quality objectives in advance is critical for maximizing the effectiveness of quality improvement efforts.

For these reasons, LeadingAge NY supports A.6021/S.3146-A and urges that it be signed into law.

Sincerely,



James W. Clyne, Jr.
President and CEO
LeadingAge New York