

December 4, 2024

The Honorable Kathy Hochul
Governor
New York State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Re: A.3674-A (Pretlow)/S.5969-A (Harckham)

Dear Governor Hochul,

LeadingAge New York and its not-for-profit, mission-driven members write to you today in support of A.3674-A (Pretlow)/S.5969-A (Harckham). This legislation would allow medically fragile young adults who reside in pediatric specialized nursing facilities to remain at such facilities after reaching the age of 21 and until they reach the age of 36. Unless a higher reimbursement rate is expressly authorized by the department, the reimbursement rate and methodology for such medically fragile young adults would remain the same as it was prior to reaching age 21.

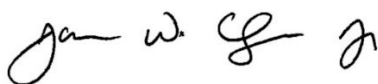
Advances in medical technology have significantly increased the survival rates of children residing in pediatric nursing homes, allowing many to survive into adolescence and even adulthood. These individuals have complex medical conditions that require specialized nursing home care. Under existing law and regulations, once they reach age 21, most medically fragile children must be discharged from the pediatric facilities that have been their homes and moved to nursing homes that serve primarily geriatric residents. This transition can be traumatic for these vulnerable young adults, and can significantly impact their overall health and well-being.

The social and medical needs of medically fragile young adults differ significantly from those of typical geriatric nursing home residents. For example, many medically fragile young adults require ventilators and feeding tubes, and the nursing homes serving primarily geriatric residents may have limited experience in providing the extensive nursing, medical, psychological, and counseling support services appropriate for young adults. Sadly, an estimated 30 percent or more of young adults with highly complex medical conditions die within the first 12 months of discharge from their pediatric facility. Continuity of specialized nursing facility care is vitally important to these individuals.

This legislation would ensure continued access to this needed specialty care by allowing existing young adult residents to remain in their home facility, at the same level of support from the State. Ensuring that these young adults can remain in familiar surroundings with their current caregivers is crucial for their health and well-being.

For these reasons, LeadingAge NY supports A.3674-A (Pretlow)/S.5969-A (Harckham) and urges that it be enacted into law.

Sincerely,



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