

Funding for the Resident Advisor Program

PURPOSE:

Allocate \$3 million to fund the Resident Advisor Program. This investment in affordable senior housing will provide low income seniors with access to basic supports in the community, allowing them to age in place and delay or prevent them from becoming high Medicaid users. Ultimately, this proposal represents a modest investment that will save Medicaid dollars and help the State implement its ambitious Olmstead Plan.

BACKGROUND:

- The Resident Advisor Program, authorized by Section 220 of the NYS Elder Law and supported by the NYS Office for the Aging (NYSOFA), was developed to create community linkages that would support seniors in aging in place.
- The resident services coordinators are at the heart of the program, providing facilitated linkages and referrals to all levels of community-based services and agencies, providing resident advocacy, helping residents with family communication, and maintaining a community resource directory.
- The Resident Advisor Program has been under the purview of NYSOFA for more than twenty years. While the program helped develop the resident advisor model across the State, funding has never been allocated to support low-income senior housing providers in hiring resident service coordinators.

ISSUES:

For many years, providers were able to access federal dollars for service coordinators through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), although even HUD funding never met the demand across New York State. HUD funding is now being significantly reduced. Without State investment, this successful model may become extinct.

PROPOSAL:

Allocate \$3 million to fund the Resident Advisor Program that would make these funds available to housing providers for the purpose of hiring resident service coordinators to extend successful aging in place, which is a primary preference of aging individuals. This program would delay or eliminate relocation to costly health or long-term care facilities. In family multi-unit buildings, older tenants would be able to continue living in an age-integrated living environment. Each program's design is based upon the unique needs and preferences of the program's client population – increasing the safety of each living situation. In addition, the program would:

- establish and maintain networking relationships with community-based services and organizations;
- provide residents with information and referral lists for community services;

- verify whether promised services from community agencies are being provided;
- arrange for educational and socialization programs for residents;
- help residents arrange for housekeeping, shopping, transportation, meals-on-wheels, cooking, laundry assistance;
- establish resident safety programs; and
- assist with crisis intervention.

FISCAL IMPACT:

\$3 million to the State.

NEEDED LEGISLATION:

For services and expenses related to a resident advisor program in accordance with section 220 of the elder law to assist affordable senior housing providers with the employment of a resident services coordinator.....\$3,000,000

QUESTIONS:

Please contact Ami Schnauber, Leading Age NY, VP of Advocacy & Public Policy, 518-867-8383 or aschnauber@leadingageny.org or Bobbie Sackman, LiveOn NY, Director of Public Policy, 212-398-6565 x226, bsackman@liveon-ny.org with any questions.