

MEMORANDUM

A.10290 (Kelles)/S.9875 (Webb)

An act to amend the social services law and the public health law, in relation to permitting individuals receiving hospice services to enroll in managed long term care plans and ensuring coordinated service delivery

LeadingAge New York supports this legislation, which would allow individuals receiving hospice care to simultaneously enroll in Managed Long Term Care (MLTC) plans. The bill also requires the Department of Health to issue guidance concerning enrollment processes, care coordination, and continuity of care.

Individuals receiving hospice care may require care and supports that are unrelated to their terminal condition and are not covered by the hospice benefit. For example, they may need personal care services for reasons other than their terminal condition, medical transportation, dental care, and other long-term services supports. These services, not provided under the hospice benefit, are covered by the managed long term care benefit package. However, current law prohibits Medicaid beneficiaries who are enrolled in hospice from enrolling in MLTC plans. The exclusion of hospice patients from MLTC plans limits access to care and adds to patient and family distress at the end of life.

Currently, hospice patients seeking MLTC enrollment must first disenroll from hospice, enroll in an MLTC, and then reenroll in hospice care. This administrative process leads to interruptions in care and administrative burdens for patients, families, and providers. It also discourages timely hospice enrollment. Medicaid beneficiaries at the end of life and their families should be able to access both hospice care and other essential services that optimize their wellbeing and quality of life.

The bill would ensure that hospice enrollment does not preclude access to essential long-term services and supports otherwise available through enrollment in an MLTC plan. It would also support a streamlined enrollment process and care coordination among plans and providers, improving the experience of patients and families as they navigate care at the end of life.

For these reasons, LeadingAge New York supports A.10290 (Kelles)/S.9875 (Webb).

LeadingAge New York represents over 350 not-for-profit and public long-term care providers, including nursing homes, home care agencies, senior housing, retirement communities, assisted living, adult care facilities, adult day health care and managed long term care.

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