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NEWS RELEASE

November is National Homecare and Hospice Month: Statistics Show Health Care is Coming Home

Lemoyne, PA (Nov. 1, 2018) – Baby Boomers are rewriting history. This generation broke new grounds on issues of equality and diversity, ended polio and gave us the internet. As this generation ages, it also is redefining healthcare. The aging Baby Boomer population has a different take on what aging and healthcare look like. While entering a nursing facility may have been the accepted norm for their parents, this generation increasingly has a desire to stay in their homes as long as possible.

“In many ways, it’s a return to how things were generations ago,” said Pennsylvania Homecare Association (PHA) CEO Vicki Hoak. “Home was the center of family living, which meant doctors made house calls, and more people spent their final days in their homes surrounded by family and friends. The move from home-based care to institutions had some benefits, but more people are rediscovering the advantages of staying at home – closeness to family, ability to still be a part of major life events, fewer returns to the hospital, less opportunity to get secondary infections, to name a few.”

During November, PHA is raising awareness for National Homecare and Hospice Month. Each year, nearly one million Pennsylvanians receive care at home or nearly 100 new consumers every hour.

Not surprisingly, many businesses on the list of fastest growing companies in the country are connected with homecare. Much of the growth of these agencies is fueled by the aging population of Pennsylvania, which has one of the highest percentages of senior adults in the country. Homecare, which is an umbrella term for home health agencies, personal care/private duty homecare agencies, and hospice, has been growing by 10% a year nationally, according to Hoak.

Hoak said the growth is being fueled by the government’s desire to encourage seniors and those with disabilities to stay at home rather than entering nursing homes, which cost about twice as much as home-based care, as reported in the recent [2018 Cost of Care Survey](#) conducted by Genworth. As healthcare costs rise, people are recognizing the cost-advantages of homecare.

The growing demand for in-home care is presenting new challenges for the industry. Personal care aide and home health aide jobs are projected to grow by 70% over the next few years – the largest growth among all occupations – but even that may not be enough to meet the demand. There is also a nursing shortage, which impacts home health and hospice.

Medicaid, for low-income Pennsylvanians, reimburses providers \$17 to \$19 per hour depending on where they are located in the state. Out of that reimbursement, agencies must pay a direct care

worker, provide training, pay for insurance and other expenses. That does not leave much of a margin.

Despite these challenges, the industry is expected to see record growth for the foreseeable future. The most recent economic impact study conducted by PHA in 2013 showed that home-based care agencies fueled Pennsylvania's economy by nearly \$22 billion annually and employed nearly 340,000 people. With these types of numbers, don't expect homecare's growth to slow any time soon.

***About PHA...** The Pennsylvania Homecare Association is a statewide organization of nearly 700 homecare and hospice providers. PHA members provide quality care and serve as advocates for their patients and clients on a variety of healthcare related issues. PHA and its members work hard to improve professional standards and ensure access to quality homecare throughout the Commonwealth. To learn more, visit www.pahomecare.org.*

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