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NEWS RELEASE

Presumptive Eligibility for Homecare Falls Short This Legislative Session

Lemoyne, Pa. (October 25, 2018) — Legislation that would have allowed seniors to get in-home care when they first need it by allowing homecare providers to begin care services immediately fell short of passage this year. While the legislation ultimately did not become law, the Pennsylvania Homecare Association (PHA) will work to introduce similar legislation in the 2019-20 Legislative Session that would allow homecare providers to presume eligibility for individuals seeking home-based care while the lengthy Medicaid eligibility process is completed.

Allowing homecare providers to presume a senior is eligible for Medicaid and start services immediately would open up in-home care as an option for many people in Pennsylvania. Currently, because the Medicaid process can take months to complete, the only option for many seniors who need additional care after a hospital stay is to go into a nursing home because they can start services right away. As a result, the often-preferred and less-costly option of homecare is off the table for many seniors.

PHA thanks members of the General Assembly who supported Senate Bill 912 and House Bill 1829, which would have allowed homecare providers to use presumptive eligibility. Both bills were passed unanimously in their respective chambers, but time ran out to bring either bill for a final vote before the 2017-18 Legislative Session ended.

“The legislators who supported these two bills took a stand for Pennsylvania’s seniors,” said PHA CEO Vicki Hoak. “As the state’s population ages, in-home care is a growing segment of the health care industry. It is vitally important that access to this option is available to all. We sincerely thank legislators for their support and look forward to working with them and the governor in the new legislative session to give presumptive eligibility to homecare providers.”

About PHA... The Pennsylvania Homecare Association is a statewide organization of more than 425 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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