

FY2022-2023 State Budget Issue Brief Home- and Community-based Services

A 2016 study showed that 60% of Ohio long-term services and supports (LTSS) providers had no applicants nor qualified applicants for certain positions. Unfortunately, staffing challenges for home- and community-based services have worsened since that time. Ohio's Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), which administer Ohio's PASSPORT waiver, report increasing numbers of service requests that cannot be filled because there are insufficient staff to care for community-residing individuals. During the COVID-19 pandemic, LeadingAge Ohio members have reported losing as much as 10% of their staff to burnout, COVID illness/death, and higher paying opportunities. Nationwide, half of all nurses surveyed have considered leaving their careers due to COVID-19 pressures.

Investment in Ohio's LTSS is overdue, with many provider types seeing stagnant or decreasing reimbursement, when inflation and rising costs of care are taken into account. Ohio's executive budget included modest 4% increases for a broad array of home- and community-based services, including:

- Assisted living waiver;
- Nursing, aide and personal care services under the PASSPORT waiver;
- Nursing, aide, personal care and home care attendant under the Ohio Home Care waiver;
- State plan home health aide and nursing (home health) and private duty nursing; and
- Nursing, aide, personal care and home care attendant under MyCare waiver.

An additional proposal for home-delivered meal reimbursement would bring payment up to \$7.20 per meal.

LeadingAge Ohio supports the administration's investments as a necessary next step in stabilizing home- and community-based services, diverting Ohioans from more-costly nursing facility care, and ensuring older Ohioans have real choices when it comes to their long-term care needs.

Ohio budget needs to support the LTSS workforce:

- Preserve the proposed 4% increase to Ohio's home- and community-based programs.