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New Administration Must Act on Nursing Home Quality

The Administration must share a public vision and actionable strategy for improving nursing home quality. Moving Forward stands ready to work alongside the Administration to achieve quality improvement goals.

The Issue

Since its inauguration on January 20th, 2025, the Administration has:

- Issued a [communication pause](#) to [the Department](#) of Health and Human Services (HHS)
- Issued a memo [freezing federal funding](#) of [grants and loans](#) and then promptly withdrew the memo, while maintaining the federal funding freeze was still “in full force and effect”
- Moved to [significantly reduce](#) the federal workforce

These actions [impact](#) programs that fund, regulate, and support nursing homes:

- **The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS).** CMS's survey activities, which have not received a funding increase [since 2015](#), ensure regulatory compliance, underpin quality-based payment programs, and protect residents from rights violations and poor care. CMS also administers the [Nursing Home Staffing Campaign](#), one of the only federal programs dedicated to increasing the size of the nursing home workforce—a vital effort given that [one in four nursing homes](#) reports short staffing.
- **The Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA).** Alongside CMS, HRSA promotes the development of a more robust long-term care workforce. These activities include administering the [Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program \(GWEP\)](#) and the [Nurse Education, Practice Quality and Retention Grants](#).
- **The Administration for Community Living (ACL).** The [Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program](#) is the only federal program dedicated to working with nursing home residents. More than half of ombudsman programs report insufficient funding impedes their ability to protect residents, provide resources, and advocate for reform (NASEM 2022, p. 425).
- **The National Institute on Aging (NIA).** NIA supports vital scholarship advancing knowledge and best practices in nursing home care delivery and quality.
- **The Federal Housing Administration.** Nursing home [mortgage insurance](#) helps many nursing homes [avoid going bankrupt or falling into disrepair](#).
- **The Office of the Assistant Secretary for Technology Policy and Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ASTP/ONC).** ASTP/ONC promotes digital communication between health providers through the [Fast Health Interoperability Resources \(FHIR\)](#) and [Trusted Exchange Framework and Common Agreement \(TEFCA\)](#).

Although there is ongoing uncertainty about the ultimate shape and effect of these actions, as well as what they might indicate about [direct federal funding](#) of nursing home services via Medicaid and Medicare, they leave all of us—nursing home staff and clinicians, owners and operators, care partners and family members, advocates and ombudspeople, researchers, and community members—concerned about the future of nursing home care and quality of life.

Our Position

[1.2 million people](#) live in U.S. nursing homes. Depending on the estimate, [over half of adults](#) will spend at least one night in a nursing home during their life. Nursing homes are vital to the physical, social, and economic [health of communities](#)—in some cases, a town's largest employer and only source of 24/7 health services.

Nursing homes depend on federal funding, oversight, communication, and support.

The Moving Forward Coalition reaffirms the conclusion of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) in its 2022 report, [The National Imperative to Improve Nursing Home Quality](#): The federal government must play a major role in improving nursing home quality through moral leadership, stakeholder engagement, funding, and quality oversight.

Federal and state governments, nursing homes, health care and social care providers, payers, regulators, researchers, and others need to make clear a shared commitment to the care of nursing home residents. Fully realizing the committee's vision will depend upon the collaboration of multiple partners to honor this commitment to nursing home residents, their chosen families, and the staff who strive to provide the high-quality care every resident deserves. (NASEM 2022, p. 3)

Freezing funding, curtailing agency communication, and reducing workforce all run contrary to this “shared commitment” and “collaboration,” as well as the conclusion that implementation of nursing home quality improvement “will likely require a significant investment of financial resources at the federal and state levels.”

A list of NASEM recommendations that could be impacted by these federal actions can be found below.

The Administration Must Act Now

The Administration has a moral responsibility to share a concrete public vision and strategy for improving nursing home quality. We urge the Administration—including the President, HHS Secretary, and incoming CMS Administrator—to **issue a joint statement or fact sheet directing federal efforts to improve nursing home and long-term care quality over the coming four years**. This statement should draw on the NASEM report for guidance.

Issuing a statement would follow on precedent from each of the past two administrations: the Biden Administration's “[FACT SHEET: Protecting Seniors by Improving Safety and Quality of Care in the Nation's Nursing Homes](#)” (published February 28, 2022) and the Trump Administration's “[Commission for Safety and Quality in Nursing Homes](#)” (report released September 16, 2020).

We, the Coalition, stand ready to work with the Administration—its federal agencies, appointees, and staff—to continue implementing recommendations from the NASEM report and realize a more humane, cost-effective, and comprehensive long-term care system.

About the Coalition

The Moving Forward Nursing Home Quality Coalition is a group of cross-sector nursing home stakeholders working together to advance recommendations from *The National Imperative to Improve Nursing Home Quality*, a landmark report by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM). Launched in 2022, the Coalition has dedicated itself to launching and scaling collaborative quality improvement initiatives, as well as advocating for policies to improve nursing home quality for nursing home residents, staff, and communities.

You can read more about the Coalition at www.MovingForwardCoalition.org.

NASEM Recommendations Potentially Impacted by Recent Federal Actions

Recommendations Potentially Impacted by Funding Freeze	
2E	Fund training grants to advance and expand the role of the CNA and develop new models of care delivery that take advantage of the role of the CNA as a member of the interdisciplinary care team. (HRSA)
2I*	Fund research on systemic barriers and opportunities to improve the recruitment, training and advancement of all nursing home workers, with a particular focus on CNAs. (HHS, e.g., CMS, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ), National Institutes of Health)
5C	Advocate for increased funding for LTC ombudsman programs with additional resources allocated toward hiring additional paid staff and training staff and volunteers, bolstering programmatic infrastructure, making data on state LTC ombudsman programs and activities publicly available, and developing summary metrics designed to document the effectiveness of these programs in advocating for nursing home residents. (ACL)
6C	Fund the development and adoption of new nursing home measures to Care Compare related to palliative and end-of-life care, receipt of care that aligns with residents' goals and the attainment of those goals, implementation of the resident's care plan, staff satisfaction, and psychosocial and behavioral health.
7A	Identify a pathway to provide financial incentives to nursing homes for certified EHR adoption and develop EHR certification criteria that promote adoption of health information exchange. (CMS, ASTP/ONC)
7C	Provide financial support for the development and ongoing implementation of workforce training emphasizing core HIT competencies for nursing home leadership and staff. (CMS, HRSA)
7D	Fund rigorous evaluation studies to explore use of HIT to improve nursing home resident outcomes; disparities in HIT adoption and use across nursing homes; innovative HIT applications for resident care; and assessment of clinician, resident, and family perceptions of HIT usability. (ASTP/ONC, AHRQ)
5A	Ensure that state survey agencies have adequate capacity, organizational structure, and resources to fulfill their current nursing home oversight responsibilities for monitoring, investigation, and enforcement, particularly for complaints.
6E	Allocate funds to state governments for grants to develop and operate state-based, nonprofit, confidential technical assistance programs that have an ongoing and consistent focus on nursing homes to provide up-to-date, evidence-based education and guidance in best clinical and operational practices.
6D*	Develop an overall health equity strategy for nursing homes that includes defining, measuring, evaluating, and intervening on disparities in nursing home care. (HHS, NIH, and other agencies)
1B	Fund rigorous, pragmatic, translational research and demonstration projects to identify the most effective care delivery models to provide high-quality comprehensive, person-centered care for short-stay and long-stay nursing home residents. (Federal agencies [e.g., AHRQ, CMS, Center for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation (CMMI), Centers for Disease Control (CDC), NIH], private foundations, academic institutions, and long-term care provider organizations)

Recommendations Potentially Impacted by Communication Pause	
3A, 3B	Collect, audit, and make available detailed facility-level data on the finances, operations, and ownership of all nursing homes, ensuring that data allow assessment of staffing patterns, deficiencies, financial arrangements, and payments, related party entities, corporate structures, and objective quality indicators by common owner and management company are available in a real-time, readily usable, and searchable database.
6A	Add the Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) measures of resident and family experience (i.e., the nursing home CAHPS survey) to Care Compare.
6B	Expand and enhance existing publicly reported quality measures in Care Compare. (HHS/CMS/NIH/AHRQ)

**Recommendations with an asterisk could also be impacted by Executive Order "[Ending Radical and Wasteful Government DEI Programs and Preferencing](#)" (January 20, 2025).*