

**Managed Long-Term Services and Supports  
Public Meeting**

**Testimony**

**Presented on:**

**June 11, 2015**

**Allegheny County Courthouse  
601D Room  
436 Grant Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15219**

**Submitted by:**

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Good morning Secretary Dallas and Secretary Osborne.

My name is Leslie Grenfell. I am the Executive Director of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Area Agency on Aging, Inc. (AAA) which is a non-profit Area Agency on Aging serving and advocating for seniors residing in Fayette, Greene and Washington Counties. Thank you for the opportunity to share comments with you on the design and implementation of Managed Long-Term Services and Supports (MLTSS) for older adults and individuals with physical disabilities.

Our agency serves as the central point in our three counties for information and assistance about aging issues and services, protecting older adults who are most vulnerable, assisting families caring for older members, assessing publicly-funded long-term services and supports and empowering older citizens to remain independent and active.

Pennsylvania is pursuing a major paradigm shift in the delivery of long-term care services, which will fundamentally change how seniors and persons with physical disabilities access and receive their services. While opportunities exist to implement many positive changes, there is also a significant risk to beneficiaries if managed care is used to reduce needed services and/or to limit access to community providers. However, if implemented and operated in a manner which places the needs and interests of seniors and persons with disabilities **first**, then the

Managed Care Delivery System has the potential to expand access to an array of services that consumers want and in locations where they wish to receive them.

Based upon our review of the Discussion Document, I would like to submit the following comments for your consideration:

**1. Ensure an Adequate Planning Process**

The planning and implementation timeline is extremely ambitious and fast-paced. There are only four months from the date the comment period ends to the release of the Request for Proposal (RFP) to the Managed Care Plans in the southwest region. We strongly urge the Commonwealth to allow more time for consumers and family members to be adequately informed of how changing from a fee-for-service program to a managed care system will impact their lives. A successful implementation will require ongoing outreach, education, choice counseling and other supports designed to specifically help the target population understand their options in this new managed care environment. Substantial stakeholder engagement is vital through all stages of program development and it is necessary to fully identify the needs and concerns of consumers in order to design a program which is truly responsive. Therefore, in addition to the strategies identified, we recommend convening an Oversight Committee comprised of representatives of all major constituency groups in the state as a mechanism to

gather comprehensive consumer input both in program design and for ongoing operations.

## **2. Role for Area Agencies on Aging**

The Pennsylvania Aging Network has been an integral part of the long-term care system for over forty (40) years and has direct knowledge and experience regarding the strengths and weaknesses of our current system of services and supports. We urge the Commonwealth, as it considers program design options, to maximize the existing service delivery systems and to specifically utilize the expertise that Area Agencies on Aging have successfully developed through four decades. Area Agencies on Aging have community-based long-term care experience in all 67 counties, have demonstrated capacity in working with medically complex consumers and proficiency in performing face-to-face strength-based consumer assessments for older adults and persons with physical disabilities, as well as care management/service coordination. As a network, Area Agencies on Aging are committed and motivated to support and counsel consumers and their caregivers about long-term care options and to assist them with receiving care and services in settings of their choice for as long as possible. We value the opportunity to partner with the state in the planning, implementation and delivery of a more comprehensive approach for managed long-term services and supports in order to expand the available options.

### **3. Ensure an Adequate Network of Providers**

Another critical element of a successful Managed Long-Term Services and Supports plan is to ensure a choice of providers. Consumers want assurances that provider networks in managed care plans will have the expertise and the capacity to provide the variety of services and supports that they need. As network adequacy is determined by the number of participating providers of the same type in a geographic region, we encourage the administration to develop a set of clearly defined standards to guarantee a sufficient number and range of home- and community-based service providers are available. Consumers have voiced their concern and want to be assured that there will be continuity of service delivery. Therefore, we urge the state to ensure that there is an acceptable number of organizations that have historically provided service, especially in the rural communities of southwestern Pennsylvania.

Additionally, we recommend careful consideration of the methodology to be employed in transitioning the system from a current “any willing provider” to the proposed standard of “any qualified provider” that will not disrupt service and that will give consumers access to current providers.

### **Conclusion**

In closing, Pennsylvania has the opportunity to implement a Managed Care Long-Term Services and Supports Program which aligns with consumer’s needs,

which identifies clear and specific strategies to prevent disruptions in access and care, and which provides for ongoing monitoring and strong protections for consumers. We were, therefore, encouraged by the Discussion Document which includes a quality and outcome-based focus and the assurance that the process will be transparent and will incorporate person-centered service into the design.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.