



2017-18 Executive Budget Proposal and the Impact on Older New Yorkers

STATE OFFICE FOR THE AGING

Changes to the Community Services for the Elderly (CSE) Program

The CSE program supports multiple service options including transportation, in-home services, meals and case management, among others and serves approximately 122,500 people annually.

Executive Budget proposal:

- Removes the 25 percent county share exemption
- Consolidates transportation funding within the CSE program

What this means: Removal of the 25 percent waiver is a cost shift to local governments who are already constrained under the property tax cap. This could result in the inability to accept the additional CSE dollars that were enacted in over the past few years and result in fewer older New Yorkers receiving vital services. Further, by moving the \$1,121,000 from the transportation line to the CSE line now subjects all of that funding to the local match, putting these critical services in jeopardy.

There are already over 15,000 older adults statewide on waiting lists for critical community based aging services. Because lengthy waiting lists already exist and will grow as a result of demand generated by both an aging, it is egregious that the budget proposes cuts and cost shifts that put funding for seniors in serious jeopardy.

Threats to NY Connects

NY Connects provides free comprehensive information on services and supports and continues to expand statewide. Approximately 230,000 people are served annually including seniors and caregivers.

Executive Budget proposal:

- The budget proposal shifts support for NY Connects to the Federal Balancing Incentive Program grant and Medicaid Global Cap.

What this means: This shift removes NY Connects from the State Office for the Aging (SOFA) budget and puts it under the Department of Health (DOH). The \$3.35 million is not actually lined out or allocated in the Medicaid Global Cap so nothing requires it to go to NY Connects. This could be devastating. NYConnects is the CenterPoint of all aging and long term care services and supports and should remain part of the State funding allocations within the NYSOFA budget.

Prevention of Financial Exploitation of Older Adults

Executive Budget Proposal: The budget cuts \$700,000 in funding for Elder Abuse services, yet includes important language to strengthen the state's efforts to prevent the financial exploitation of older adults that is costing the state of New York upwards of \$1.5 billion annually.

Elder abuse affects an estimated 260,000 older adults annually, and is an underreported crime, with only 1 out of 24 cases reported to the authorities. It is very encouraging that legislation is included in the Executive Budget proposal to address financial exploitation of vulnerable adults, an issue that we have been advocating for several years. However, we were very discouraged that \$700,000 in funding for elder abuse victims' services and for the expansion of Enhanced Multi-Disciplinary Teams (EMDTs) was cut from the State Office for the Aging budget.

OFFICE OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES BUDGET CUTS IMPACT AGING SERVICES

Threats to Title XX Funds that Support Senior Centers

Executive Budget Proposal: New York State receives \$98 million in annual Federal Title XX funding that is allocated to counties. Of this amount, \$66 million is set aside for Adult Protective and Domestic Violence Services, \$5 million supports training activities for county and State staff, and \$27 million for all other services, which counties can use at their discretion to fund certain services. The Budget would require the \$27 million for all other services to be used to support Child Care subsidy costs, enabling the State to maintain the current level of child care subsidies while reducing General Fund costs for the program.

What this means: Federal Title XX funds have been used to support senior centers in NYC for decades. NYC will lose \$17 million in Title XX funds, forcing 65 senior centers to close in virtually every Assembly and Senate district. This represents almost 30% of our Neighborhood Senior Centers. 6,000 seniors per day would lose their local senior center and lose access to vital nutrition, socialization and health promotion activities. 1.5 million meals per year will be lost. There will be 24,000 of lost hours of case work assistance for benefits, housing and other needs.

OTHER ITEMS OF INTEREST

\$7.4 million Cut for Direct Care Workers

Executive Budget Proposal: Discontinue Underutilized Cost of Living Adjustment. Funding was enacted in 2015 to provide a wage increase targeted to direct care workers and direct service providers. DOH and SOFA providers have not adopted this COLA as anticipated, citing the complexity of identifying the targeted workers.

What this means: The complexity of the requirements made this funding very difficult to use. However, we strongly disagree that it should be cut, and instead reallocated so that agencies can utilize this funding to support their workers. Further, the state must evaluate how much of the funding from the \$7.4 million was actually utilized before instituting a blanket cut.

Affordable Senior Housing

Executive Budget Proposal: We applaud the addition of \$125M in capital funding (over five years) for affordable senior housing in the proposal, however nowhere in the proposed budget is there language that would create a new program. As part of a statewide affordable senior housing coalition, we will continue to advocate for a new program for affordable senior housing and \$10 million for service funding for a Resident Adviser program.

Health Care Regulation Modernization Team

Executive Budget Proposal: We support the establishment of this multi-stakeholder work group and process for the purpose of recommending ways to modernize the health care regulatory framework. However, we request that the State Office for the Aging be included in this team.