Maryland Health Care Commission Small Assisted Living Study

WORKGROUP MEETING #6

JANUARY 8, 2024

Agenda

1. Welcome

2. Review and Discuss Workgroup Recommendations for Final Report

3. Next Steps

Regulatory Framework

Uniform Definition for Small AL Programs

▶ Adopt a consistent definition for "small AL programs" across all Maryland agencies. The group suggests defining 16 or fewer beds as "small" and 17 or more beds as "large." Within the category of small AL programs, a residential dwelling with 1-5 unrelated individuals shall be the focus of these recommendations in the first year.

Needs Assessment for Access to AL Programs

▶ The Maryland Health Care Commission, in collaboration with the Department of Aging, will initiate periodic comprehensive needs assessments to identify availability of AL programs by jurisdiction concerning the entry and exit of AL programs in the state. As part of this action, data sources from the Department of Health essential for the assessments, will be identified and compiled. A standardized timeline for recurring assessments will be established, specifying whether it will be conducted annually or at a different interval. A detailed resource plan, accounting for manpower, financial, and technological resources, will be designed to sustain the assessment process in the long term.

Regulatory Framework: Staff Training and Support

Recruitment, Retention and Training

▶ To create a larger workforce, the Maryland Department of Labor shall support, establish, and facilitate employment and training programs that encourage recruitment, retention, and competency for AL programs. Track the number of individuals enrolled in training programs, retention rates over a 12-month period, and the percentage of employees meeting competency standards. The state will encourage the development of programs in regions where there is a significant shortage of staff and regions but significant numbers of AL programs.

▶ To create a larger workforce, the Department of Labor shall partner with local community colleges to develop training programs and courses that will encourage the development of a well-trained workforce. The state will focus on the development of community college programs in regions where there is a significant shortage of staff and regions where there are significant numbers of AL programs.

Regulatory Framework: Staff Training and Support

Assisted Living Program Manager Training

▶ The Maryland Department of Labor shall develop and implement a comprehensive training program specifically targeting assisted living program managers to ensure their full compliance with the provisions of Health General §19-1807 (Training requirements for assisted living managers) and any subsequent legislation enacted related to the regulation.

Changing Level of Care

▶ The Maryland Department of Labor and Maryland Department of Health shall support training programs to help assisted living programs attain the training needed to offer and maintain a higher level of care.

Regulatory Framework: Reimbursement Policies Assessment

Reimbursement of the Home and Community Waivers Program

▶ Maryland's Medicaid Program shall conduct a thorough reassessment of reimbursement policies in the Maryland Medicaid Home and Community Based Waivers Program.

Reimbursement Policies

▶ MHCC shall study removing the stipulation that a family member is not eligible for reimbursement as an AL program under state and federal requirements.

Technology and Data Infrastructure Improvement

Enhancing OHCQ's Data Infrastructure

▶ The state shall allocate requisite resources to OHCQ to establish and maintain a robust data infrastructure (i.e., inspection/deficiencies results, correction plans, residential agreements, assessments), ensuring timely, efficient, and accurate data collection.

Data Collaboration and Information Exchange

▶ MHCC, OHCQ, and other state agencies, shall formalize inter-agency data-sharing arrangements to support timely and accurate data for quality improvement, consumer decision-making, and program performance monitoring.

Technology and Data Infrastructure Improvement

Digital Platform Development for Assisted living Programs and Integration with the CRISP Health Data Utility

▶ Develop and implement a digital platform through the state designated Health Information Exchange (HIE) to facilitate efficient information exchange and data collection and sharing related to AL programs. The platform will include functionality to collect data during a public health or catastrophic emergency. The requirement shall be staged starting with facilities with over 16 beds connecting by January 1, 2026. Facilities with 6 to 15 beds connecting by January 1, 2027, and facilities with 5 beds or fewer establishing connectivity to CRISP by January 1, 2028. All facilities must maintain an active email address and stable internet connections by those respective dates.

Technology and Data Infrastructure Improvement

Committee and Campaign for AL Programs in Maryland

▶ Formulate a joint committee consisting of representatives from relevant state departments and the assisted living industry. The committee will oversee the design and rollout of a public education campaign that illuminates assisted living as a viable long-term care option, detailing its benefits, costs, and the types of care and services offered.

Next Steps

▶ Incorporate workgroup feedback into recommendations.

▶ Finalize report.

▶ Present report and recommendations to Commissioners on January 18.

▶ Submit final report to legislature.