



THE HOSPITAL & HEALTHSYSTEM ASSOCIATION OF PENNSYLVANIA

April 28, 2009

**TO:** The Honorable Members of the Senate Labor and Industry and Aging and Youth Committees

**FROM:** Paula Bussard, Senior Vice President, Policy and Regulatory Services

**Subject:** The Proposed Consumer Workforce Council (CWC)

**Issue:** This proposal creates a state-run, state-funded agency that would compete with consumers and private agencies. Ultimately, this could result in the elimination of competition in the marketplace with less choice and access to care for consumers.

**Background:** The current administration states that it is committed to rebalancing the long-term care system and improving the wages and benefits of the direct care workforce while providing consumers with a choice of caregivers.

The proposed council will require that all direct care workers be employees of the state-run agency and be placed on a registry. The council becomes the employer rather than individuals who currently have an employer relationship with their own direct care worker. As a result, Pennsylvania's current network of home- and community-based providers could be eliminated. This action limits access to care and the consumer's ability to choose who cares for them.

While HAP supports the improvement of the direct care workforce, this proposed entity is unnecessary and takes control away from older Pennsylvanians and people with disabilities. HAP's evaluation of the current CWC proposal raises concern in the following areas:

- Rather than improving competition, the CWC proposal reduces consumer choice by mandating a central clearing house for all aide services.
- The mandatory requirements for workers are too restrictive and do not give consumers the freedom to manage workers to meet their needs.
- The proposed CWC eliminates the consumer-directed model that has been established in Pennsylvania.
- Additional monies have to be expended by the state and counties to change a system that has a proven track record rather than capitalizing on the existing opportunities and enhancing them.

**HAP Position:** HAP opposes the creation of the CWC in its current format. The association is willing to participate in open discussion and planning with all of the stakeholders involved.

**For More Information:** If you have specific questions, please feel free to contact Kathy Mebus at [kmebus@haponline.org](mailto:kmebus@haponline.org) or (717) 561-5351.

