

An Act establishing the Hospital to Home Partnership Program

(S.2607 / H.4432)

Lead Sponsors: Senator John Velis & Representative Kate Lipper-Garabedian

The Hospital to Home Bill seeks to codify the Hospital to Home Program, a successful partnership between ASAPs and hospital partners created by the Healey Administration. The program places ASAP staff directly in hospitals to work with patients, families, and hospital staff to facilitate a discharge back home, avoiding costly hospital stays and nursing home admissions. This program is designed to assist our state's rapidly growing older adult population who often face significant barriers when they are being discharged from a hospital. It also aims to address the crisis-level hospital backups which the Mass Hospital Association estimates costs hospitals over \$400 million annually due to unnecessary hospital stays. Additionally, people who begin to receive home care services are less likely to be readmitted to the hospital, freeing up acute care beds for others.

[current status: S.2607 is in Senate Ways & Means / H.4432 is in the Joint Committee on Healthcare Financing]

An Act to improve Massachusetts home care

(S.2555 / H.4706)

Lead Sponsors: Senator Pat Jehlen & Representative Tom Stanley

This legislation, supported by the The Enough Pay to Stay Coalition (The Home Care Aide Council, Home Care Alliance of Massachusetts, and Mass Aging Access), would establish licensing by EOHHS for non-medical personal care services. It would also authorize EOHHS, along with AGE and DPH, to develop regulations which would ensure consistent background screening and training for home care agency staff, as well as create a structure for managing complaints and for ensuring a safe working environment for both agency staff and the home care consumers they serve.

[current status: S.2555 is in Senate Ways & Means / H.4706 passed the House]

An Act clarifying rate setting processes for home health and home care services

(S.870/ H.767)

Lead Sponsors: Senator Patricia Jehlen & Representative Carmine Gentile

This legislation, supported by the The Enough Pay to Stay Coalition (The Home Care Aide Council, Home Care Alliance of Massachusetts, and Mass Aging Access), would clarify established rate setting processes for home health and home care services to ensure that rates accurately reflect the true cost of providing home care and home health services to consumers across the Commonwealth. The rate setting process directly impacts and determines the ability of providers to retain and recruit sufficient staff to meet the Commonwealth's need to ensure the provision of home health and home care services to vulnerable older adults, persons with disabilities and children and individuals with medically complex needs. If this bill is passed, the Legislature will no longer need to fund supplemental rate add-ons for home care and home health workers every year through the state budget process.

[current status: S.870 is in Senate Ways & Means / H.767 is in House Ways & Means]

An Act supporting family caregivers

(S.1938 / H.3159)

Lead Sponsors: Senator Joanne Comerford & Representatives Michael Kushmerek and David Rogers

This legislation would create an advisory council on family caregiving, allow spouses as eligible paid family caregivers under MassHealth, create vouchers to help families pay for respite services, provide a tax credit for family caregivers to help offset caregiving-related costs, facilitate family caregivers in qualifying for unemployment and protect them from workplace discrimination. It would also expand prescription drug coverage during a state of emergency.

[current status: S.1938 and H.3159 are both in Joint Committee on Revenue]