

Connecticut's five Area Agencies on Aging strengthened their Association and collaboration under the name, AgingCT. We are independent, nonprofit organizations dedicated to helping older adults and persons with disabilities thrive in the community with dignity and support throughout their lives. As thought leaders, we advocate and educate legislators, policy makers and Connecticut residents on the issues of importance to older constituents and those who support them. Visit www.agingct.org to learn more.

Increase the Medicaid Waiver Asset Limit

Over half of 34 states (19 of 34) set their medically needy asset limit at the SSI level (\$2,000 for an individual and \$3,000 for a couple). Fourteen states have more generous medically needy assets, ranging from \$2,400 for an individual in Pennsylvania, to \$30,182 in New York. California eliminated the asset limit. Connecticut has a more restrictive medically needy asset limit (\$1,600 for an individual and \$2,400 for a couple). ([Medicaid Financial Eligibility in Pathways Based on Old Age or Disability in 2022: Findings from a 50-State Survey – Appendix – 9965 | KFF](#))

Increasing the asset limit would allow residents to plan for financial emergencies, including home and vehicle repairs, funerals, rent increases, and other emergencies, while qualifying for long-term and other medical care services in the community. Without emergency savings, older adults and persons with disabilities are much more likely to rely on Medicaid. These residents are our neighbors who may have outlived their savings or have been forced into poverty by medical expenses.

Fund a robust network of Medicaid Providers for CT Home Care Programs

AgingCT continues to advocate for fair and equitable health & human services compensation so that nonprofit Providers have the funds to meet the needs of Connecticut's vulnerable residents. Residents who may have conditions that include intellectual, developmental, physical, or mental disabilities benefit from service providers' staff who guard client health and welfare.



In the past, legislators have approved increases for nursing facilities and unionized personal care workers. There has been no data-driven strategy to support agency-based reimbursement in Connecticut's Medicaid waiver. Low pay and high caseloads challenge the workforce and put quality at risk in the care of highly vulnerable populations. It seems counter-intuitive to reimburse facility-based care at a higher level than community-based care when our State is committed to rebalancing from institutional bias to community care. **Regular increases based on the CPI would help correct inadequate funding in the nonprofit, health & human service sector.**

Community-based Navigation Support

The staggering growth in the age cohort sixty and older and eighty-five and older demands additional support for application and enrollment services in long-term care services and supports. A 2022 CT survey (www.agingCT.org) of older adults and caregivers confirms that 50% of residents are unsure of where to go to get long-term care support and services. Support funding for service navigators within the Agencies on Aging. **AgingCT asks the legislators to continue their support for community-based navigators to help older adults, caregivers, and municipalities find appropriate support in a complex system.**

Housing & Utilities

The cost of housing and energy are the top two (89% and 85%) economic issues for low-, moderate- and middle-income adults according to the 2022 Area Agency on Aging (AAA) survey of older adults called, *The Great AAAsk*. Scarcity of housing and affordability of housing are equally problematic. In most areas, the Public Housing Authority's Maximum Allowable Rent (MAR) is more than half of the wages earned by minimum wage earners. **AgingCT supports all efforts to both expand the stock of affordable, accessible housing and to protect consumers from untenable energy rate increases, and no-fault evictions.**



Food Security

Inflation is affecting food security. AgingCT recognizes that home-delivered and congregate meals may never have the funds to meet the nutritional needs of all of Connecticut's residents. **AgingCT supports the efforts of the Nutrition Task Force to modernize the contracting and payment systems and enhance efforts to enroll older adults in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to reduce nutritional risk.**

Transportation

AgingCT supports **innovative transportation systems** for low-income residents, especially those living away from public transit routes. Half-fare taxis, last mile programs, and a commitment to Dial-a-Ride services, help older residents get to critical medical appointments, food, and community events.