California Community Based Adult Services Centers (CBAS) Urge Governor Newsom to Retain Adult Day Health Care Funding to Protect Seniors, Prevent COVID-19 Deaths

100% Elimination of Program Places Seniors at Risk for Placement in Nursing Homes

Sacramento, June 16, 2020—Today, in response to the California Legislature passing a stopgap budget to meet the statutory deadline, seniors, adults with disabilities and their advocates across California called on Governor Newsom to work with the Legislature to fully retain the Medi-Cal funding for Community Based Adult Services (CBAS).

CBAS (a public health licensed facility), had been slated for elimination in the Governors May Revise budget but was restored in the Legislature’s joint budget passed on June 15th, which assumes a higher level of revenue than the May Revise. Budgeted at $95.2 million with matching federal funds, CBAS keeps seniors living independently in their home at a cost of $76 per day. Nursing home care is $380 per day.

“As budget negotiations continue at the State Capitol, we are calling on Governor Newsom to retain CBAS as an essential Medi-Cal service that the Legislature wisely retained in their budget,” said Cathy Davis, Executive Director of Bayview Senior Services in San Francisco. “Literally thousands of seniors will be at risk for placement in nursing homes if our centers close their doors. With nursing homes the source of nearly half of COVID-19 deaths in California, the proposal to eliminate CBAS is reckless and unconscionable.”

She continued, “Not only that, but the health disparities that African American elders we serve in the Bayview experience puts them at great risk for dying from COVID-19. Our dedicated
staff work every day to address health inequities and they are successfully keeping our elders safe and engaged while they shelter at home.”

With the fiscal year starting July 1, Adult Day Health Care Centers and the seniors and families they serve face an uncertain future as caregivers at home prepare to return to work. During COVID-19, the centers have adapted to providing at-home care and monitoring while preparing to implement measures to meet new protocols required to safely re-open.

“Our Center has been a lifeline for our family as my mother requires round-the-clock monitoring. Having a safe place for her to go during the day where she is cared for and can participate in activities allows me time to take care of my other responsibilities and get a break,” said Tia Roberts, whose mother attends Neighborhood House in San Diego.

While the Newsom administration has pointed to their initiation of a new Medi-Cal benefit such as a Long Term Care benefit proposed to address the aging population in California, to date, there are no programmatic details such as descriptions of the services and their associated costs.

Over 40% of CBAS program members suffer from Alzheimer’s or some form of dementia. All have multiple underlying chronic conditions putting them at high risk for death from COVID-19. CBAS serves a diverse population of 37,000 across California and offers constant monitoring and respite for caregivers, in addition to providing physical and cognitive therapies, health monitoring, nutrition, and socialization for all participants.

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