



Trinity Health  
Of New England

## Senior Communities

### Testimony to the Appropriations Committee

Submitted by Janice Hamilton-Crawford, M.B.A., FACHE, President, Trinity Health Of New England Senior Communities

March 3, 2021

### Regarding the Governor's Budget Proposals Related to the Human Services

#### House Bill 6439, An Act Concerning the State Budget for The Biennium Ending June Thirtieth, 2023, and Making Appropriations Therefore

On behalf of Saint Mary Home, part of The Mercy Community in West Hartford and a member of Trinity Health Senior Communities, I respectfully submit the following testimony regarding the Governor's Budget Proposals related to the Human Services.

Our non-profit nursing home has been through an unprecedented year facing a global pandemic and defending against the COVID-19 virus that targeted the very people we serve. We have worked around the clock to ensure the health and safety of the people we serve – we have no greater priority.

Rooted in our primary mission to deliver high quality care, our nursing home continues to provide a supporting, loving home for the people we serve, despite this unprecedented pandemic. But the pandemic is having a detrimental impact on the financial stability our organization. It is not only the additional cost for PPE, staff and wages, but in the lost revenue caused by a drastically reduced census and in particular, the loss of Medicare sub-acute patient stays.

The payor mix is now weighted so heavily toward Medicaid that there is nowhere to shift the costs of care that are not covered by the inadequate Medicaid rate. This is causing us to operate at a deficit, and we must rely on the state and federal relief funds we have received to continue to operate. But they will not be enough. **We need the Medicaid program to address the financial crisis.**

To date, we have received a total of \$2,558,019 in federal PPP loans, federal HHS provider relief funds, and state Coronavirus Relief Funds. Unfortunately, this has not been enough to continue to cover our lost revenue and increased costs. We predict that we will use up this funding within the current month. Saint Mary Home has an operating loss of \$1.3 million in the current fiscal year.

**We need your help.** This is a critical time for nursing homes like us and we need the state to immediately address the Medicaid program's chronic underfunding of nursing homes. Prior to the pandemic, our nursing home was underfunded by the Medicaid rate system by \$40.00 per resident day. As a result of the financial impact of the pandemic, we can no longer sustain this underfunding and we

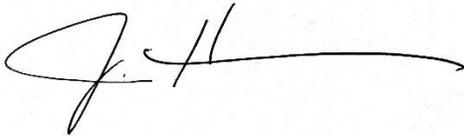
urge you to substantially increase the Medicaid appropriation for the nursing home sector and fully fund the reimbursement system so that quality nursing homes like ours can meet their costs.

**The nursing home reimbursement system needs an additional \$135 million to be fully funded.** This funding is especially crucial now as the state plans to transition to a new, acuity-based rate system for nursing home reimbursement. This transition will only be successful in meeting its stated policy goals if the reimbursement system is fully funded.

The pandemic is not over. We will continue to work to deliver high quality care to our residents, but we need your help. Please fully fund the nursing home Medicaid system.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. H.', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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