



**Testimony to the Appropriations Committee**

**March 3, 2021**

**Regarding**

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

**Presented by Maria Hitchcock-Salgado, RN, President of CAADS**

Senator Osten, Representative Walker and Members of the Appropriations Committee. My name is Maria Hitchcock-Salgado and I am the Director of Day Break at Hartford, an adult day services center in Hartford Connecticut. I am speaking today on behalf of the Connecticut Association of Adult Day Services, or CAADS, of which I am currently serving as President. CAADS is an association of over 40 adult day centers from across the state and is Connecticut's only professional organization devoted to promoting adult day health services as a high-quality community-based option in the continuum of long-term services and supports. I appreciate the opportunity to testify today evening on the Governor's proposed budget.

Adult day centers are a covered service in the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders and our services are also utilized by many families on the statewide Alzheimer's Respite Program. Adult day services are a truly valuable and cost-effective community-based option and never has this been more evident than during the past year.

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, our centers were providing programming, services, socialization and respite for hundreds of individuals and families throughout the state. During the pandemic we have continued to serve our clients and their families and the value of adult day services is being demonstrated every day.

At the start of the pandemic, adult day centers were that safe, trusted place for clients to work through all the varying and changing information that was being thrown at them from every direction. Imagine for a moment being an older adult in the community and having everything you know and are familiar with being taken away. Sitting home alone, with only the television, and watching as it continuously tells you how many people, and how many seniors, were falling ill and dying. Imagine watching in fear and being all alone. This is what was happening to many of our clients.

Adult day centers were able to make that phone call to the client and replaced that feeling of isolation – offering a safe, familiar and trusted voice on the other end of the phone to offer a caring ear. Fear and anxiety were replaced with that comfortable, trusted staff from the adult day center to assist, to clarify and to help navigate all the information they were hearing through the media.

During Covid, as we all worked to understand and keep up with all of the new and changing guidelines, clients were able to comfortably ask questions to the centers and then receive accurate information in a manner they could process. Important information such as learning that masks needed to be worn when going out and when caregivers and others came to their homes.

Now, at this critical time when getting vaccines to this population will be lifesaving, the centers have again become a place to find the accurate information and actually be able to access the technology to schedule vaccination appointments. It has given each client the confidence to take the shot in the arm and the ability to get registered and find transportation to the site.

Community based providers like adult day centers are meeting the growing needs of Connecticut’s older adults. We were doing so prior to the pandemic and we continue to do so now. We thank you for your support over these many years and ask for your continued support and investment in the Medicaid funding for the community-based provider network.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony and I would be happy to answer any questions.

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### **The Value of Adult Day Services**

We firmly believe adult day center services and other community-based services save Connecticut significant long-term care dollars by meeting the community-based needs of Connecticut’s older adults, their caregivers and their families. Positive social engagement, meaningful activities, self-help guidance are the cornerstones of the respectful care and services delivered to the individuals enrolled in adult day centers throughout the state. More than 40 certified adult day centers are located in Connecticut offering door to door transportation from neighboring communities to each center.

#### **Adult Day Center Services Provided through the CT Home Care Program for Elders**

**Adult Day Center Services are a *full day of care that includes:***

<b>Activities, Companionship, Socialization &amp; Supervision</b>
<b>Medication Administration</b> by licensed Nurses
<b>Nutritious Meals</b> including Breakfast, Hot Lunch, Snacks, and continuous encouragement of liquids
<b>Bathing/Showers</b> are available and personal care is provided
<b>Caregiver Support</b> , Information, and Education are readily available
<b>Escorted Transportation, door to door</b> , is provided to and from the Center
<b>Assistance</b> in Coordinating and Planning client’s long-term care needs is available
<b>Community Engagement</b> , opportunities for elders to connect with their community through center organized out-trips, programs brought into the centers, philanthropic work, and socialization with other clients, their families, friends and visitors
<b>Opportunities</b> for daily face to face individual consultations, information and referral, support and assistance
<b>Currently reimbursed at \$74.74 per day</b>

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