



LEND CENTER OF PITTSBURGH

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH | CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

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REPRESENTATIVE EDWARD GAINNEY

March 10, 2021

Dear Representative Gainney,

A greater number of adults with intellectual disabilities (ID) are living into old age and developing dementia. Dementia symptoms develop earlier in adults with ID and are different due to pre-existing communication difficulties or other disabilities. Many adults with ID and their families face the challenge of finding appropriate health-care services to serve their medical needs.

Due to your support of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, adults with ID are able to receive resources that help them live at home. However, this is difficult when dementia symptoms worsen because families are not able to continue providing the support they need. Further, most healthcare workers are unfamiliar with the complex healthcare needs of adults with ID. This compromises the individual's medical treatment and well-being. Medicare offers a home health training policy that provides home health nurses with the knowledge necessary to teach families about dementia symptoms and techniques to improve the quality of life of their loved ones. This Medicare policy, *Home Health Skilled Nursing Care – Teaching and Training for Dementia Patients with Behavioral Disturbances*, is currently not available in Pennsylvania.

It is critical to extend the availability of this Medicare plan to Pennsylvania. This will allow families to learn how to manage treatment that is focused on person-centered care and improve the well-being of their loved ones.

Sincerely,

Sarah Aghjayan
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