



Media Advisory:

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RECOMMENDATIONS RELEASED ON MAKING ASSISTED LIVING AFFORDABLE FOR NEW YORKERS

LTCCC White Paper Advises NY State to Increase Access to Assisted Living and Potentially Save State Money on Nursing Home Care

NEW YORK, February xx, 2008 – Assisted living is an attractive long-term care option for older adults who need help but prefer a more community-like setting than traditional nursing homes provide. Unfortunately, the high cost of assisted living currently puts it out of reach for all but the most affluent. Middle and lower income people are shut out: either left to fend for themselves, even when they may no longer be able to live safely on their own, or sent to a nursing home even when they don't need that level of care. In response to this problem, the Long Term Care Community Coalition (LTCCC) today released a white paper advising the state on how to make affordable assisted living a reality.

"This white paper presents realistic strategies to overcome the major financial and systemic challenges to achieving assisted living's promise for all our seniors," said Cynthia Rudder, LTCCC's Director of Special Projects. To promote development of affordable assisted living residences, LTCCC's recommendations include incentives for developers, such as streamlined financing and approval processes and more public-private partnerships. The paper urges that funds from Governor Spitzer's new Housing Opportunity Fund be allocated for assisted living.

To ensure that appropriate services are available to low income residents, LTCCC recommends that New York utilize the Medicaid State Plan Personal Care Services Benefit, which guarantees personal care service for all who are Medicaid eligible. It also recommends mandating sliding scale fees for facilities that access government funds to extend affordability to those who are not Medicaid eligible.

Because assisted living is significantly less expensive than nursing home care, and can delay or prevent nursing home placement, it is not only beneficial for people but also cost effective for the state," said Richard Mollot, LTCCC's Executive Director. "It is an attractive option for states seeking to fulfill their mandate under the US Supreme Court's *Olmstead* decision, which requires that individuals eligible for publicly funded programs receive care in the least restrictive setting possible."

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The white paper is available on LTCCC's website: www.ltccc.org.