



TESTIMONY

Presented by

Caryn Resnick
Deputy Commissioner, External Affairs

on

Oversight: DFTA's Home Care Program

before the

New York City Council
Committee on Aging

on

Thursday, November 12, 2015
10:00 A.M.

at

250 Broadway, 14th Floor Committee Room
New York, NY 10007

Good morning, Chairperson Chin and members of the Aging Committee. I am Caryn Resnick, Deputy Commissioner for External Affairs at the New York City Department for the Aging (DFTA). I am joined by Eileen Mullarkey, Assistant Commissioner for Long-Term Care at DFTA. On behalf of DFTA Commissioner Donna Corrado, I would like to thank you for this opportunity to testify today about the Agency's home care program.

HOME CARE

DFTA's Expanded In-Home Care Services for the Elderly Program or EISEP is one of the primary services offered through DFTA funded case management. EISEP is designed for low-income seniors 60 years and older that have unmet needs in activities of daily living, and do not qualify for Medicaid funded home care. The goal of this program is to help clients achieve the greatest level of comfort in the friendly and familiar environment of his/her own home for as long as possible. Home care services are provided to help functionally impaired older adults remain safely at home who need assistance with at least one Activity of Daily Living, such as dressing, bathing and personal care; or two Instrumental Activities of Daily Living, such as shopping, cooking and house cleaning. As part of a comprehensive assessment, case managers evaluate the needs of older adults, and if home care is needed, clients are authorized for home care services.

Client income and expenses are considered when determining if a client requires a cost-share or a suggested contribution for their home care. If a client is eligible for DFTA funded home care, the client provides documentation of income to enable the case manager to determine whether he/she is above the current threshold for contribution status and will be required to pay a cost share. Thresholds are provided annually by the New York State Office for the Aging. Unlike Medicaid funded home care, EISEP allows deducting housing costs up to \$588 and deducting monthly income up to \$1,471, and does not consider resources such as savings accounts. Approximately 80 percent of clients receiving DFTA funded home care are contribution clients who are not required to pay for the services, but are asked to make a contribution. The remaining 20 percent of clients are required to pay an hourly fee up to \$18.50 based on a State formula.

DFTA issued a solicitation for home care services in October 2013. Contracts were awarded to qualified home care providers and contract terms began in July 2014. The DFTA contracted home care providers are Personal Touch, which covers the Bronx and Brooklyn; the New York Foundation for Senior Citizens, which covers Manhattan; People Care, which covers Queens; and Richmond Home Needs, which covers Staten Island. For FY '16, DFTA's home care program is funded at \$22 million, which includes \$4.2 million of one-time funding designated to eliminate the home care waiting list.

Currently, there are 3,000 clients who are authorized for DFTA's home care program. Approximately 70 percent of the clients receive homemaker/personal care services and 30 percent receive housekeeping/chore services. The maximum number of hours per week for housekeeping had been 4 hours and the maximum hours per week for homemaker/personal care was 12 hours. Due to expanded funding, the maximum home care hours were increased to up to 8 hours per week for housekeeping and up to 20 hours per week for homemaker/personal care services.

HOME CARE WAITING LIST

At the end of FY '15, DFTA case management agencies reported 316 clients on the waiting list for DFTA funded home care services. After a concerted effort on behalf of community providers to enroll new clients and to expand hours for existing home care clients, there is no longer any waiting list for home care services. This has been a great accomplishment considering the process to refer clients for home care is comprehensive and time-intensive.

CONCLUSION

Thank you again for this opportunity to testify today about DFTA's home care program. I am pleased to answer any questions you may have.



Real Possibilities in

New York City

AARP New York City

**Testimony before the
Committee on Aging
NYC Council**

November 12, 2015

City Hall

New York, NY

Introduction

Good morning Chair Margaret Chin and members of the Aging Committee. My name is Janice Handler. I am an AARP volunteer and a resident of New York City. AARP is a membership organization that represents Americans 50 and older. We have over 2.5 million members in New York State and about 750,000 members living in NYC. I would like to submit the following testimony.

My statement today will focus on the importance of home care and caregivers, and how it keeps older persons living in their home and communities.

AARP believes that supporting family caregivers, having a strong home care program, as well as additional resources for the EISEP program in NYC, will improve older New Yorkers' quality of life while also saving city taxpayers money by allowing more people to avoid moving to expensive, taxpayer-funded institutional settings. Enhancing these programs will undoubtedly keep older New Yorkers living with independence and dignity in their homes and communities – where the vast majority want to stay - for as long as possible.

Background/Need to Strengthen Home and Community Based Programs for Older New Yorkers

Based on an AARP analysis of Census data, over the next two decades the share of people living in NYC who are aged 65 and over will grow from one in eight to one in six residents. Overall, New York's 60+ population will increase exponentially to a projected 1.84 million by 2030, a 47% increase from 2000. The growth of this population brings opportunities and challenges. What we know for certain is that we must prepare for the growing needs of this population and the clear desire of New Yorkers 60 and over to age in place in our city.

A recent AARP-commissioned poll revealed that the majority of New York State residents aged 50 and over would prefer to receive long-term care services at home rather than go into a long-term care facility. We believe that the poll shows strong support for government to make an investment in home- and community-based services that not only keep older people in their homes, but keep them out of costly nursing homes.

In addition, AARP strongly believes that family support is a key factor in determining an older person's ability to remain in his or her home and community. Home care services must work side by side with resources targeted at family caregivers.

AARP believes that the NYC budget offers one of the best opportunities to adequately address the needs to help an ever-growing aging population by providing adequate resources to our aging services at the front end, thereby avoiding higher costs for institutional care down the road.

A 2014 AARP poll of NYC voters 50 and over, *The State of the 50+ in NYC*, asked questions to family caregivers, those people that provide unpaid care for a family member or loved one. I would like to note that New York City caregivers, like most in the nation, are more likely to be female. Many are younger than 65 and tend to be working while caring for a loved one.

The results of this survey showed the tremendous need for services that help older persons and their families, and AARP believes these points should be added to this public policy discussion. Key findings include:

- ***Among all NYC 50+ voters, 39% have been caregivers in the past five years or currently are providing care to a friend or family member.***

- ***NYC voters 50+ do not see their caregiving responsibilities diminishing. More than half (52%) believe they are likely to provide care within the next 5 years.***
- ***Most NYC 50+ voters (79%) believe supporting family caregivers should be a priority for NYC elected officials.***

AARP Position

New York City must continue to make additional investments in non-Medicaid home and community-based care that includes home care and support for family caregivers. If continued support and commitment to the older persons and their caregivers is not maintained, it certainly comes at the wrong time with current demographic trends of an aging population.

AARP research clearly shows that the majority of New Yorkers aged 50 and over would prefer to receive any type of long-term care services at home rather than go into a long-term care facility. We believe our recent NYC 50+ Voter survey demonstrates strong support for the City Council to continue to make investments in aging services.

Conclusion

Thank you again for allowing AARP to testify regarding this important issue. The programs that I have highlighted will not only help thousands of New Yorkers and their families, but will undoubtedly save NYC taxpayer money now and in the future.



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**Testimony from Selfhelp Community Services, Inc.
New York City Council Committee on Aging
Oversight: DFTA's Homecare Program
November 12th, 2015**

Good morning. My name is Sandy Myers and I am the Director of Government and External Relations at Selfhelp Community Services. Thank you to Council Member Chin and the members of the Aging Committee for holding today's hearing on DFTA's homecare program.

As you may know, Selfhelp was founded in 1936 to help those fleeing Nazi Germany maintain their independence and dignity as they struggled to forge new lives in America. Today, Selfhelp has grown into one of the largest and most respected not-for-profit human service agencies in the New York metropolitan area, with 26 sites throughout Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, the Bronx, and Nassau County. Selfhelp provides a broad set of important services to more than 20,000 elderly, frail, and vulnerable New Yorkers each year, while remaining the largest provider of comprehensive services to Holocaust survivors in North America. Selfhelp offers a complete network of community-based home care, social service, and senior housing programs with the overarching goal of helping clients to live with dignity and avoid institutionalization.

Our services are extensive and include: specialized programs for Holocaust Survivors; seven affordable senior housing complexes; four Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC) programs; DFTA funded case management; five senior centers including one of New York City's first Innovative Senior Centers; home health care; client centered technology programs including the City's first Virtual Senior Center; court-appointed guardianship; and the Selfhelp Alzheimer's Resource Program (SHARP).

The New York City Department for the Aging (DFTA) funds Selfhelp for two case management programs. Selfhelp Queens North is located in Flushing and serves elders in Community Board 7. Selfhelp Project Pilot is located in Manhattan and serves elders on Manhattan's West Side. Through these two programs, Selfhelp serves more than 2,000 elders.

language as the client. Selfhelp is proud to provide culturally competent services to our clients, and we believe that it's critically important that the homecare aides are able to provide the same quality of service to our City's elders.

Additionally, in certain neighborhoods in Queens that are less accessible and further from transportation, we have found it more difficult to get aides to attend to clients. It is critical that DFTA, with support from the Council, ensure that all clients are served, regardless of their neighborhood and access to transportation.

Lastly, we would like to see weekend hours added to this contract. Many, if not most of our clients have no coverage on the weekends. A small number are able to secure alternative arrangements or can depend on family or friends, but a significant number are left without any sort of support on the weekends.

With that, I would like to thank DFTA for many of the positive changes they have made in recent years to help providers serve more clients, alleviate waitlists, and address problems as they arise especially for our Manhattan program. I'd also like to thank the City Council for holding this hearing and for your support of this important issue. We look forward to working with you to strengthen this important program for our City's elders.



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GOOD MORNING DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL COMMITTEE ON AGING AND COLLEAGUES IN AGING SERVICES. MY NAME IS DEBRA BERNSTEIN CASE MANAGEMENT SUPERVISOR FOR SERVICES NOW FOR ADULT PERSONS, INC (SNAP). SNAP, IS A MULTI-SERVICE, SOCIAL SERVICES AGENCY DEDICATED TO IMPROVING AND ENHANCING THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR OLDER ADULTS IN QUEENS. SNAP STRIVES TO MAINTAIN OLDER ADULTS AS VIABLE COMMUNITY RESIDENTS AND TO ASSIST THEM IN AGING WITH DIGNITY AND INDEPENDENCE THEREBY PREVENTING PREMATURE INSTITUTIONALIZATION.

I HAVE BEEN WORKING IN CASE MANAGEMENT FOR THE PAST 7 YEARS. I SUPERVISE FIVE CASE MANAGERS AND OVERSEE ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICE CLIENTS WHO ARE RECEIVING HOME DELIVERED MEALS.

IN THIS ROLE, I HAVE SEEN FIRST HAND HOW DFTA FUNDED HOME CARE IS A CRUCIAL PART OF CASE MANAGEMENT AND IS VITAL TO KEEPING OLDER ADULTS SAFELY IN THEIR HOMES ALLOWING THEM TO AGE IN PLACE. THE NEED FOR SENIOR SERVICES CONTINUES TO EXPAND AS INDIVIDUALS AGES 85 AND OLDER ARE AMONGST THE FASTEST GROWING OF THE ELDERLY POPULATION.

THE NEED FOR HOME CARE IS PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT FOR THESE OLDER AND FRAILER SENIORS. THE CURRENT DFTA HOME CARE FUNDING HAS ALLOWED SNAP TO PROVIDE THESE MUCH NEEDED SERVICES FOR MANY CLIENTS OVER THE YEARS AND THE NEED CONTINUES TO GROW.

THE DFTA FUNDED HOMECARE PROGRAM ASSISTS SENIORS WITH PERSONAL CARE, HOUSEKEEPING/CHORE, ESCORT, AND TEMPORARY CARE. IT ALSO PROVIDES FAMILY CAREGIVERS WHO ARE OVERWHELMED OR WORKING FULLTIME MUCH NEEDED ASSISTANCE. MANY CAREGIVERS STRUGGLE TO FIND CARE FOR THEIR OLDER LOVED ONES WHILE TRYING TO JUGGLE THE DEMANDS OF WORK AND FAMILY. PRIVATE HOME CARE COSTS OFTEN PROHIBIT CAREGIVERS FROM BEING ABLE TO SECURE RELIABLE HELP FOR THEIR LOVED ONES. DFTA FUNDED HOME CARE IS A VIABLE OPTION FOR MANY AS IT ALLOWS CLIENTS AND CAREGIVERS TO SECURE AFFORDABLE CARE. HOMECARE PROVIDES THESE CAREGIVERS WITH THE REASSURANCE THAT THEIR LOVED ONE IS SAFE AND SUPPORTED. ANOTHER IMPORTANT ASPECT TO CONSIDER REGARDING CAREGIVERS IS THAT THEIR ABILITY TO SECURE SERVICES THROUGH DFTA

FUNDED HOME CARE KEEPS CAREGIVERS FROM LEAVING THE WORKFORCE TO CARE FOR THEIR FRAIL LOVED ONES. WHEN CAREGIVERS LEAVE THE WORKFORCE TO CARE FOR A LOVED ONE IT IMPACTS THEIR FINANCIAL FUTURE AND HELPS TO PERPETUATE THE CYCLE OF POVERTY. THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE FOR WOMEN, AS WOMEN MAKE UP THE MAJORITY OF INFORMAL CAREGIVERS. WHEN THESE CAREGIVERS REACH RETIREMENT AGE AND NEED ASSISTANCE FOR THEMSELVES THEIR SOCIAL SECURITY WILL BE GREATLY LIMITED WHICH WILL IMPACT THEIR ABILITY TO SECURE HELP WHEN THEY ARE OLDER AND IN NEED.

THE DFTA FUNDED HOMECARE PROGRAM IS A COST EFFECTIVE PROGRAM FOR THOSE SENIORS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE, ENABLING THEM TO OBTAIN VITAL HOMECARE SERVICES AT A PRICE THEY CAN AFFORD. THIS PROGRAM MEETS THE NEEDS OF THOSE CLIENTS WHOSE INCOME IS NOT LOW ENOUGH TO BE MEDICAID ELIGIBLE BUT NOT HIGH ENOUGH TO SUSTAIN PAYING FOR PRIVATE CARE. IT ADDRESSES THOSE INDIVIDUALS WHO FALL INTO THAT GAP AND WOULD OTHERWISE BE AT RISK AND WITHOUT SERVICES.

SECURING AMPLE FUNDING FOR HOMECARE WILL ASSURE THIS SERVICE IS READILY AVAILABLE TO SENIORS WITHOUT A WAITLIST. HOMECARE IS A CORE CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICE. THIS CRUCIAL COMPONENT OF A CLIENTS CARE PLAN PREVENTS THEM FROM NEEDING A HIGHER LEVEL OF CARE AND GOING INTO A LONG TERM CARE FACILITY.

BASELINING HOMECARE IN THE BUDGET IS ESSENTIAL AS IT WILL SECURE FUNDING FOR FUTURE YEARS AND PROTECT OUR MOST VULNERABLE SENIORS BY ENSURING THAT SERVICES WILL BE AVAILABLE WHEN NEEDED.

THANK YOU FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK TO ALL OF YOU TODAY AND WE KNOW THAT YOU WILL CONTINUE TO WORK HARD ON BEHALF OF SENIORS THROUGHOUT THE CITY.

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Name: Debra Bernstein

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Name: Eileen Mullarky

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I represent: DFTA

Address: 2 Lafayette Street NYC

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Date: _____

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Name: Janice Handler

Address: 200 E 90th St NYC

I represent: NARP

Address: _____

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