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The Healthcare Benefits of Assisted Living versus Long-Term-Care:

According to the research study (21-2: 217-233) by Graham J. McDougall, PhD at the National Institute of Health (NIH), "There is growing demand from residents of assisted living and their family members to allow these residents to age in place, rather than moving them from assisted living to nursing home settings. At posttest memory self-efficacy scores significantly increased in the experimental group (M1 = 52.13, M2 = 68.50)."

According to the research study by (16-3-111-5) Hayslip B Jr, Kennelly KJ, Maloy RM "Elders in long-term care facilities are at-risk for decreasing cognitive ability and are particularly vulnerable to the devastating effects of depression."

The Benefit to Kansas Tax Payers:

The average MCO reimbursement at Delaware Highlands Assisted Living is over 60% less than the average Long-Term-Care reimbursement in the state of Kansas.

Current MCO Trends:

Delaware Highlands Assisted Living's current MCO census of residents:
Amerigroup: 12 Sunflower: 30 United Healthcare: 55

Sunflower and Amerigroup: No reductions in care plans, but a few increases in care.

UHC: No increases in care plans. 100% of re-assessed care plans taking effect October 1, 2013 have reductions in care. Average care plan cut by UHC is a 38% reduction in care.

Thesis:

The state of Kansas currently has a "gap" in its continuum of care when it comes to the important stage of elderly care covered by Assisted Living Facilities. In short, the state of Kansas does NOT have a mechanism for MCO's to reimburse Assisted Living Facilities on a per-diem basis, like nearly all other states. This per diem reimbursement is essential to cover core aspects of Assisted Living communities such as 24-hour care and social care that are proven and tangible factors in reducing or delaying healthcare costs in elders, see the McDougall study above.

Solutions:

KDADS needs to activate one or more of the Assisted Living care CMS HCPCS codes T2030 through T2033. This will technically allow the MCO's to negotiate per diem rates with providers. Without these codes activated, no per diem rates can exist for Assisted Living.

KDADS needs to enforce a procedure or policy that MCO's negotiate per diem rates with Assisted Living facilities based on current or approved care plan.

Robert G. (Bob) Bethell Joint
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