

Care Agenda *for* California



California faces a significant challenge in meeting its growing need for long term services and supports/long-term care. Seniors, people with disabilities, caregivers, and our families need California's leaders to be visionaries in responding to this challenge. The steps we take now will create the caregiving economy of the future.

We know that the number of seniors in the state, already one-fifth of the population, will grow from 5.2 million to 8.4 million by 2030. By all estimates, California must recruit an additional 500,000 direct care workers by 2020 to meet the needs of this population. This demographic shift will further strain the state's existing, ad-hoc system of long-term care and supports, which is fragmented and costly.¹

Out of this crisis comes a historic opportunity to create a comprehensive and innovative system of long term services and supports that is person-centered, high-quality, and accessible to all who need it. There is no time to lose for all Californians who desire to remain in their homes with dignity and independence.

**We must work together to stake out a path today for long term care
we can all count on in the future.**



cadomesticworkers.org



domesticemployers.org



caringacross.org



udwa.org



CARE AGENDA PRINCIPLES OF CARE

□ *Yes! I support the Care Agenda for California.*

♥ **California needs a meaningful plan to address the long term care needs of its rapidly aging population.**

Seventy percent of Americans who reach the age of 65 will need some form of long-term care for an average of three years.² Yet few can afford the care they need. Many families must spend down to a poverty level to be eligible for Medicaid-provided support. Despite what many assume, Medicare does not cover long-term care. Most long-term nursing home care isn't covered, leaving the burden of care to family members. Eighty percent of the care in California is uncompensated and provided by family members.³

The stakes are high in California, where middle class and higher wage earners must "become poor" to access the care they need at a time when care for the poor is already strained.

♥ **Long-term services and supports must be accessible to Californians of all economic backgrounds.**

Access to affordable care is a shared responsibility. With a collaborative approach — for example, a "buy-in" for those who can afford care; a tax credit, subsidy and/or appropriate support for those who can afford a modest level of care; and continued support for those who cannot afford care at all — we can lift each other up. We can make access to long-term care universal in California.

There exists a complex web of state and federally funded programs for seniors and people with disabilities, providing varying services to different populations at various levels of eligibility. Unfortunately, these programs are not integrated and as a result work in "silos". The state's care dollars are not working in a coordinated way to maximize choice and quality of care.⁴

♥ **Consumer choice is vital.**

The United States Supreme Court's 1999 Olmstead decision determined that people with disabilities must receive care in the most integrated and least restrictive setting possible, recognizing their right to live with self-determination and independence. In this spirit, California can do more to ensure seniors and people with disabilities stay in their homes and communities. We must continue to improve consumer choice and self-direction.

♥ **We must address the shortage of trained care workers and create good jobs.**

California is home to the largest direct care workforce in the country. Yet the shortage of care workers is staggering. With proactive recruitment and a committed effort to address retention, California can do more to develop a robust and sustainable care workforce to meet the growing demand. By improving conditions for these workers, care work can become a valued profession with stable wages, benefits, and opportunities for advancement. This, in turn, will improve the quality of service and attract new workers.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

[1] <http://www.ccltss.org/cc-content-wp/uploads/2015/01/AgingLong-TermCareReport.pdf> and <http://www.chcf.org/publications/2013/08/long-term-care>

[2] http://www.apnorc.org/PDFs/Long%20Term%20Care/AP_NORC_Long%20Term%20Care%20Perception_FINAL%20REPORT.pdf

[3] <http://www.ccltss.org/cc-content-wp/uploads/2015/01/AgingLong-TermCareReport.pdf>

[4] <http://www.thescanfoundation.org/transforming-california%E2%80%99s-system-care-older-adults-and-people-disabilities-look-state%E2%80%99s>