

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY FOR HEARING OF COMMITTEE ON DEFICIT  
REDUCTION**

**March 10, 2009**

**Submitted by the Illinois Council of Case Coordination Units**

The Illinois Council of Case Coordination Units would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide comments as you begin the process of making decisions concerning the Illinois State budget deficit. The Illinois Council of Case Coordination Units is a member association of case coordination units and elder abuse provider agencies serving over 90,000 older adults annually across the state.

The persons served through case coordination units and elder abuse agencies are the frail and vulnerable older adults in all of our communities. The Illinois Council of Case Coordination Units is greatly concerned that any erosion of the services which support these frail and vulnerable older adults would have a catastrophic impact on their health, safety, and ability to remain in their community residence. They depend on these services to provide for their necessary daily living tasks which enable them to remain in their homes and to protect them from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

The Illinois Council of Case Coordination Units recommends that State of Illinois continue the commitment to supporting frail older adults to live in their community residence and commitment to protecting them from abuse, neglect and exploitation by providing funding for services the following services:

- Comprehensive Care Coordination through the Case Coordination Units. Case Coordination Units have not received a rate increase since FY2000. They have received additional tasks to perform but the rate for the new tasks was based on the rate established in FY2000. Case Coordination Units assist older adults through comprehensive care by assessing the needs, prescreening before a nursing home placement, and arranging for services and programs which enable them to remain home or return to their home following a nursing home placement. Examples of comprehensive care coordination include: evaluating the home environment and accessing programs to modify the home; completing Medicaid, Circuit Breaker, Illinois Cares RX, Medicare Part D, Energy Assistance, Weatherization, and other assistance applications; arranging for home delivered meals and transportation; coordinating with home health services; evaluating behavioral health needs including alcohol and substance abuse screenings, depression screenings and making referrals as needed; determining eligibility for the community care program, developing care plans and monitoring community care program services. These programs and services are woven together by care coordinators into a care plan addressing their health, medication, behavioral health, financial, home environment, legal and activity of daily living needs. For frail older adults in our communities, a reduction in any piece of their plan would most likely result in the need to enter a nursing home for care.

- Elder Abuse and Neglect Program. Vulnerable older adults are targets for abuse, neglect and exploitation. The Program investigated 10,574 complaints during FY2008. We must remain committed to this problem and not allow older adults to be abused, financially exploited, or neglected in our communities. We must address the problem of self neglect. It is a growing problem which Illinois recognized through previous legislation. However, program implementation continues to wait for funding. It is time to appropriate funds to address this statewide need.
- Community Care Program. The Homemaker, Emergency Home Response Systems, and Adult Day Services provide essential daily and safety needs for the most frail of our communities' older adults. A cut to these services will place them in a nursing home or at risk resulting in an earlier nursing home placement. The impact on their quality of life for this small amount of funding is immeasurable.
- Long Term Care Ombudsman Program. The Ombudsman Program provides advocacy on behalf of nursing home residents. They provide them with a voice to resolve complaints and assure their rights as residents in licensed care facilities in Illinois.

In addition to the services above which support those most frail and vulnerable of our older adults, the ICCCU supports the funding which create a community network of support for older adults including:

- Community-Based Services
- Planning and Service Grants for Area Agencies on Aging
- Home Delivered Meals
- Senior Health Assistance Program (SHAP)
- Red Tape Cutter Program
- Long Term Care Systems Development
- Senior Employment Specialist Program
- Programs serving Grandparents Raising Grandchildren

The Illinois Council of Case Coordination Units understands the difficulties faced by the State of Illinois. We urge that careful consideration be given to the long term impact of an erosion of the services for older adults. We believe that services in the community are cost effective for the State of Illinois. As the number of older adults continues to grow, we must decide where we should prepare to provide care. We must make difficult decisions that serve us now and will also serve us in the future. To that end the ICCCU believes a state income tax increase is an important component to an overall revenue package for the State

On behalf of the Illinois Council of Case Coordination Units, I thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.

Respectfully submitted,

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