

HCCI Lauds VP Harris' In-Home Care Medicare Proposal

The [Home Centered Care Institute](#) (HCCI) lauds Vice President Harris' announcement today that, if elected, she will propose that Medicare expand the number of older adults eligible for in-home care (i.e., home-based assistance, generally provided by an aide). This decision, if enacted, will make a significant difference in the quality of life provided for older Americans.

"Harris' proposal is one that will certainly lift the tremendous burden felt by the more than 7 million Americans who are home-limited or homebound due to chronic or serious illness, injury, or medical complexity," said Julie Sacks, President and Chief Operating Officer of HCCI. "Increased access to in-home care is also a great support to caregivers and allows our older adults to remain at home, with their families, where they prefer to be."

While this proposed expansion in Medicare benefits would be extremely beneficial, Sacks adds that this vulnerable population must be made aware that, through Medicare, they already DO have access to home-based primary care (including comprehensive primary care, delivered by physicians, nurse practitioners or physician assistants). For patients and caregivers who struggle with getting to and from a clinic, home-based primary care is a welcome and valuable care model.

"As the primary healthcare setting continues to shift away from institutional care to more home-based care, it is critical that healthcare consumers understand the full spectrum of home care options available to them. For example, while the continuation of the Hospital at Home Medicare waiver beyond year-end is dependent on legislative action, home-based primary care, home-based hospice and/or palliative care, and home health will continue to be available.

Like the in-home care that Harris proposes, home-based primary care not only allows patients a choice in where they receive their healthcare but is known to reduce the all-too-frequent revolving door of hospital admissions, readmissions, and/or ER visits, which are tremendously costly for patients as well as the healthcare system.

Bottom line, our society is aging so rapidly that our nation's healthcare system simply won't be able to meet the future demand for healthcare without considering home-based primary care. That means we must be proactive as opposed to reactive, informing citizens of the essential care that is CURRENTLY available to them.