



Vermont  
Association of  
Area Agencies  
on Aging

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**Member Agencies:**

Age Well  
Central Vermont Council on Aging  
Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging  
Southwestern Vermont Council on Aging  
Senior Solutions

**To:** House Committee on Human Services

**From:** Janet Hunt, Executive Director

**Date:** March 11, 2021

**Regarding:** H. 153 - An act relating to Medicaid reimbursement rates for home- and community-based service providers

The Vermont Association of Area Agencies on Aging (V4A) strongly supports H.153 –Medicaid reimbursement rates for home and community-based services providers.

The V4A is comprised of the five Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) which are located throughout Vermont. Area Agencies on Aging provide necessary supports for older adults to be able to choose to live at home. V4A and our partner agencies work together to provide person-centered, long-term care options and services for individuals to remain at home, in their communities, thus reducing high costs of care in facilities.

I want to thank the Committee for taking up H.153. V4A supports both the inflationary increase, as well as the study to address reimbursement rates.

We would like to offer an amendment to the definition of “home and community-based services”

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(7) “Home- and community-based services” means long-term services and supports received in a home or community setting other than a nursing home pursuant to the Choices for Care component of Vermont’s Global Commitment to Health Section 1115 Medicaid demonstration or a successor program and includes home health and hospice services, assistive community care services, **services provided by Area Agencies on Aging**, and enhanced residential care services.

The Care Management staff at the AAA's offer care coordination for vulnerable older adults who qualify for Choices for Care/Medicaid. The AAA Care Management services contributes to reductions in hospitalizations and emergency visits by our clients- thereby saving overall health care dollars for our state.

Including the AAAs in this language will ensure that Area Agencies on Aging will be included in the rate study. The last rate increase AAAs received was 2% in 2019 and since then there has not been any additional increase. Annual rate increases would create a reliable system of support for this much-needed home and community-based services and allow us to narrow the gap between the cost to provide these needed services and the current reimbursement rates.

As the House and Committee on Human Services moves forward with H. 153, please ensure the Area Agencies on Aging are included in the plans for ensuring annual increases to home- and community-based services.