



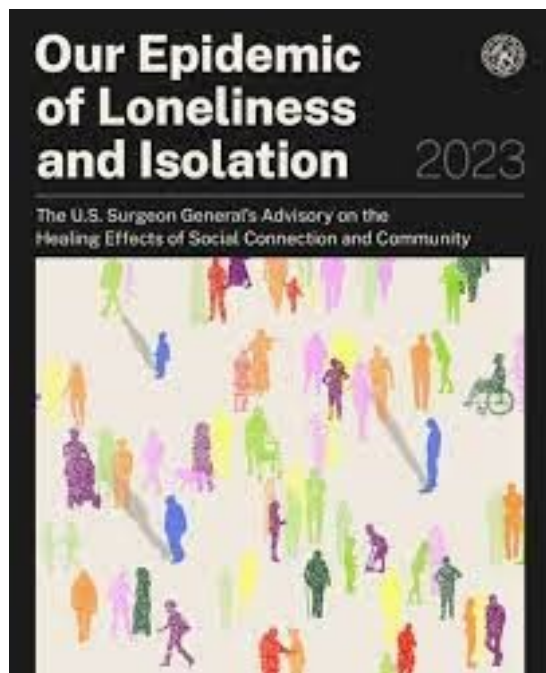
AUGUST 2023 NEWSLETTER

A Note From Caitlin...

The Loneliness Epidemic: Why Social Connection Matters

Earlier this summer, Dr. Vivek Murthy released a new Surgeon General Advisory calling attention to the public health crisis of loneliness, isolation, and lack of community connectedness in our country. Even before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, approximately half of U.S. adults reported experiencing measurable levels of loneliness. Our psychological, physical, and societal health is affected by disconnection. As home care providers, we bear witness to this as we make our way into and out of patients' homes each day.

"Our epidemic of loneliness and isolation has been an underappreciated public health crisis that has harmed individual and societal health. Our relationships are a source of healing and well-being hiding in plain sight – one that can help us live healthier, more fulfilled, and more productive lives. Given the significant health consequences of loneliness and isolation, we must prioritize building social connection the same way we have prioritized other critical public health issues such as tobacco, obesity, and substance use disorders." U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy.



You can learn more about the six pillars to advance social connection and recommendations for stakeholders in [***Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on the Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community***](#). If you are interested in a less technical read on this topic, dive into a copy of Dr. Murthy's book, [***Together: The Healing Power of Human Connection in a Sometimes Lonely World***](#).

In the spirit of community connectedness, **MNCHA invites you to share your stories with us!** Tell us about an exciting goal that your team accomplished or milestone your agency achieved. Small or large in scope, we'd love to share across the MNCHA network and celebrate you! Please email us at our general inbox, info@mncha.org. You can also tag us on any of our four social channels.



My best wishes to you for an ease-filled and enjoyable time of transition as the summer draws to a close. Be well and stay safe!

In Community,

Caitlin

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Caitlin S. Hoke".

MNCHA Fall Events & Meetings

September

- Home Health Agency Member Meeting – Tuesday, September 12, 2023 from 10-11AM. - [Register here](#)
- MNCHA Fall Symposium on September 14, 2023 - See speaker line-up and registration here – [Register here](#)
- NAHC Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill – Wednesday, September 20, 2023.
- Personal Care & Private Duty Member Meeting – Thursday, September 21, 2023 from 2-3PM. - [Register here](#)

MNCHA FALL SYMPOSIUM

Join the Maryland-National Capital Homecare
Association for a half day Fall Symposium

SEPTEMBER 14TH // 9 A.M. - 1 P.M.

MEET THE SPEAKERS



Aaron Blight, EdD



Jenna Crawley



Amy York



Meg LaPorte

AGENDA:

9:00 A.M. - 9:45 A.M.

Networking & Breakfast

9:45 A.M. - 9:50 A.M.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

9:50 A.M. - 10:30 A.M.

Leave No One Behind in an Aging Maryland: Creating a Multisector Plan

Jenna Crawley

10:30 A.M. - 11:45 A.M.

Keynote: What Providers Need to Know About Caregiving

Dr. Aaron Blight

11:45 A.M. - 12:00 P.M.

Break

12:00 P.M. - 1:00 P.M.

Maryland's Direct Care and Services Workforce: Understanding & Addressing Staffing Challenges

Meg LaPorte & Amy York

October

- Webinar Series - The Land of 10,000 Codes: A 4-Part ICD-10 Coding Knowledge, Update, and Refresher Course. **This series will cover the home health ICD-10 coding changes taking effect on October 1, 2023.** Dates/times for the series are provided below. - [Register here](#)
 - Tuesday, October 10, 2023 – 1:00PM-3:00PM
 - Thursday, October 12, 2023 – 11:00AM-1:00PM
 - Tuesday, October 17, 2023 – 1:00PM-3:00PM

- Thursday, October 19, 2023 – 11:00AM-1:00PM
- Home Health Webinar – Value-Based Purchasing: Clinical Impact - Wednesday, October 25, 2023 from 12:00PM-1:30PM ET. - [Register here](#)

November

- Home Health Webinar – Home Health Survey Readiness - Tuesday, November 14, 2023 from 12:00PM-1:30PM ET. Registration link will be forthcoming.

The Maryland Department of Health invites all healthcare workers and environmental services staff to MD Project Firstline!

Online Independent Study: Scan the QR code to visit the [MD PROJECT FIRSTLINE site](#) and select any of the FREE infection control courses. Earn a certificate for each course!

Group Training Sessions: Our instructors can lead FREE in-person or virtual training sessions for your team members. Project Firstline can also provide you with the presentation materials to lead your own group sessions. Scan below to request a session or materials.

mdfirstline@hqi.solutions

Scan to Visit Project Firstline

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PROJECT FIRSTLINE

Maryland DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



Home Care Happenings

The 2023 Council of State Home Care & Hospice Associations Conference

During the week of July 31st, MNCHA participated in the annual Council of States Conference in Nashville, TN. This is a networking and learning-intensive event that is attended by the home care association executives from across the country. It's an opportunity for state leaders to share ideas, successes, and challenges that we are each facing and "crowdsource" solutions to common issues. Our national affiliates, including NAHC, PQHH, and NHPKO,

provide federal legislative and regulatory updates. We also have the opportunity to hear from the brain trust of industry partners with data insights on current trends and innovative tools to address the foremost challenges we face in the post-acute care community. This is one of the most valuable events that MNCHA attends each year, and it reinforces what a connected community we are in home care!



Maryland Updates

Medicaid Self-Direction

The summer months have been filled with lots of proposed federal legislation affecting Medicare home health and Medicaid personal care providers. The Maryland Department of Health, Office of Long Term Services & Supports has also been busy creating an authority that will allow participants in the Community First Choice (CFC) and Community Personal Assistance Services (CPAS) programs to self-direct personal assistance services. The target timeframe for implementation will be on or about October 1, 2023.

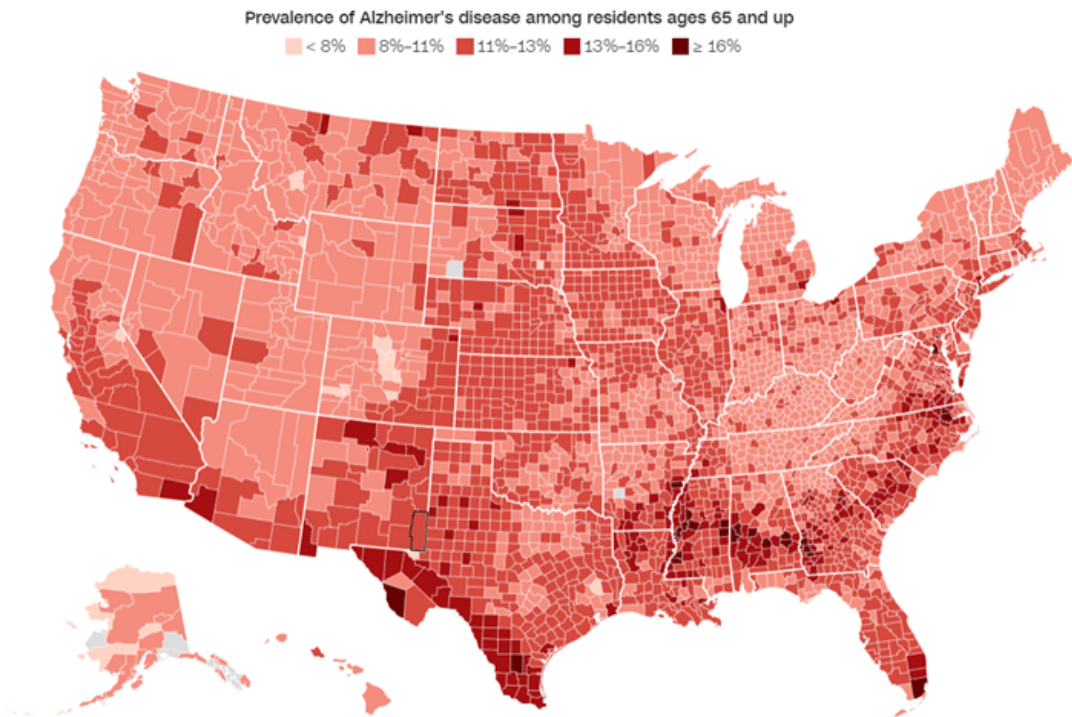
Based on advocacy initiated by members, MNCHA filed public comments on these proposed programmatic changes. We also had the opportunity to convene directly with the Maryland Medicaid leadership team to better understand the impacts to the Residential Service Agencies who currently provide personal care services to the beneficiaries in these programs. We

appreciate the consideration, transparency and collegiality extended by the LTSS team.

To read MNCHA's public comments and/or the Department's formal response, please click [here](#).

Highest Alzheimer's Prevalence Rates Across U.S. Counties Are Here in Maryland

In mid-July at the Alzheimer's Association International Conference (AAIC), researchers revealed first-ever county-level estimates of the prevalence of people Alzheimer's dementia. Across 3,142 U.S. counties, Baltimore City ranked among the three highest with a prevalence rate of 16.6%, followed closely by Prince George's County at 16.1%.



Researchers used demographic risk factors, including age, gender, and race, to map against the makeup of U.S. counties. These findings underscore the urgency of Maryland's public health initiatives to better support those living with this disease – and to plan for the needs of our aging population.

A feature article appeared in CNN Health, which you can read [here](#). The article includes an interview with Dr. Halima Amjad, who is a geriatrician at Johns Hopkins Medicine and currently serves as the Chair of the [Virginia I. Jones Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias \(ADRD\) Council](#). MNCHA holds a governor-appointed seat on this Council and has contributed to the formation

and implementation of the [Maryland ADRD State Plan](#) since the Council was formed by executive order in 2019.

Maryland Board of Nursing Vacancy Announcement

In accordance with the Annotated Code of Maryland, Health Occupations Article §8-202(b)(5), the Board of Nursing is providing notice to the public that all 14 Board member seats are now open for appointment. The deadline to receive applications has not been set at this time. Read more [here](#) for information on appointment criteria and application instructions.

If you are interested in applying for a seat on the Board of Nursing and would like to be considered for a referral to the Board, please contact Caitlin Houck at chouck@mncha.org.

All About Workforce

Workplace Violence Prevention for Post-Acute Care



On June 13, 2023, MNCHA and the Maryland Emergency Preparedness Network hosted our annual training event, this year on the topic of *Workplace Violence Prevention for Post-Acute Care*. This is a free, interactive,

transdisciplinary educational event for home health, hospice, and home care providers. We were able to offer a full day of programming, to include a Workplace Violence Tabletop Exercise for federally-certified providers, personal safety & de-escalation training, and continuing education credits for Registered Nurses who attended.

MNCHA considers workplace violence prevention an emergency preparedness priority because organizations can create positive future impacts by assessing their blind spots and enhancing their capacity to effectively respond to incidents of workplace violence.

Consistent, routine training is a cornerstone of an effective workplace violence prevention program. In collaboration with our dedicated subject matter expert, Master Police Officer Allen Perry, we created scenario-based [Conversation Starters](#) for you to utilize with your teams across all levels of your organization. Try one of the five scenarios in your next team meeting! Having open, thoughtful, routine discussions about your workplace violence policy and practices can enhance the culture of caring within your organization and help all staff feel more comfortable reporting incidents and near misses.

All of the EPN's recent workplace violence programming resources are available via the hyperlink above. We invite you to share your experience using the Conversation Starters, please email Kendal Lee at info@mdemergencyprepnetwork.org or tag the EPN on one of our social channels!



Comparing Notes on Workforce Dynamics

The MissionCare Collective initiated a research study in May 2023 to provide a snapshot of the current state of the home care workforce and the challenges faced by home care organizations.

- Do you wonder how your recruitment and retention efforts compare to your friendly competitors in the local market?
- Are the growth goals for your agency impeded by a lack of available caregivers?

- Contending with patients and clients who appear increasingly reluctant to accept younger caregivers that now account for more than 12% of the direct care workforce?

The primary objective of the study is to better understand current workforce-related issues as we collectively drive much-needed policy reform and innovation to address the caregiving crisis. The urgency of this matter is evident, as 89% of surveyed agencies reported turning away care due to workforce constraints.

To read the study's nine key findings, read [Through A Provider's Lens: A Study on Workforce Dynamics From the Perspective of An Agency](#).

A Friendly I-9 Compliance Reminder from Our Partners at Polsinelli

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) announced that the temporary COVID-19 flexibilities for remote I-9 verification **ended on July 31, 2023**, and employers must complete in-person physical document inspections for all employees whose documents were inspected remotely during the temporary flexibilities period **by August 30, 2023**.

Polsinelli has included [FAQs for agencies and employers](#) who may have questions about what they need to do. The Polsinelli Online Solutions for Homecare (POSH) now offers an I-9 Checklist with an easy-to-follow step-by-step verification process including a top-10 list of Employer I-9 Don'ts.

Remember, you do not have to be a MNCHA member to be able to access POSH resources. Remember to use code 'MNCHA0123' when you register for POSH!



How to Get Your Performance Management Process to PERFORM

Does your company's performance management process inspire you to do outstanding work? If you are in a supervisory position or managerial role, how would your direct reports rate the openness and regularity of their performance-related communication with you?

If your idea of performance management is only conducting annual employee performance reviews, you may be missing out on effective ways to align employee and company goals.

Check out [The Definitive Guide to Performance Management](#) to discover the best approach to establish the foundation for an effective, engaging process that can create real value within your organization!