



**Below please find updates on the latest news from the Council:**

- **Save the Date for the Home Care Aide Council Spring Conference**
- **Governor Signed FY19 Supplemental Budget which included the \$10 million Enough Pay to Stay Line Item**
- **Home Care Worker Registry Update**
- **Safe Home Care Project at UMass Lowell**
- **Council Celebrates Completion of Another HEART HHA Training Cohort**
- **News from Council Partners with Online Training Provider, *CareAcademy***

**SAVE THE DATE**



**ANNUAL SPRING CONFERENCE**

**Wednesday, June 10, 2020**

**The Conference Center at Bentley University, Waltham**

Details to come. Stay tuned for updates at [www.hcacouncil.org](http://www.hcacouncil.org)

For exhibitor opportunities please contact our office at 617-744-6561

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**Governor Signed FY19 Supplemental Budget which included the \$10 million Enough Pay to Stay Line Item**

On December 16, Governor Baker signed the FY19 Supplemental Budget. The Enough Pay to Stay (EPTS) line item with \$10 million and the language we requested survived. Here is the language:

9110-1635 For adjustments to rates and capitations for home and community-based services provided through items 9110-1630, 9110-0600, and 4000-0601; provided, that \$4,141,830 shall be provided for an adjustment to approved program rates issued under said items 9110-1630 and 9110-0600 to provide a rate add-on for wages, compensation and salary related costs for personnel providing homemaker and personal care homemaker services; provided further, that \$5,941,400 shall be provided for adjusting rates for home health aide services funded through said items 4000-0601, 9110-1630 and 9110-0600; and provided further, that the secretary of elder affairs, with the approval of the secretary of health and human services and the secretary of administration and finance, may transfer



funds from this item to said items 9110-1630, 9110-0600 or 4000-0601 or any other item necessary in order to ensure that all home health aides and personnel providing homemaker and personal care homemaker services receive an appropriate rate adjustment; provided further, that the department of elder affairs, in consultation with the executive office of health and human services, shall require that each home care and home health agency receiving funds from the item submit a spending plan fully accounting for the uses of said funds, including the rate add-on funds for hourly rate increases, other categories of worker compensation and other related eligible costs; provided further, that not later than July 1, 2020, the department shall provide a report to the house and senate committees on ways and means detailing the impact of funds from this item on wages for the workforce at the home care and home health agencies receiving rate adjustments...\$10,083,230

We anticipate that the funds will be released during the first quarter of next year, and we will be working with Elder Affairs on that.

We will update Council members on what you will need to include the spending plan fully accounting for the use of such funds, including the rate add on funds for hourly rate increases, other categories of worker compensation and other related eligible costs when Elder Affairs has established the details.

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### **Home Care Worker Registry Update**

We wanted to update you and let you know that the registry was posted to the public on December 26<sup>th</sup> you can view the Registry at: <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/home-care-worker-registry-regulation>.

Providers have until February 26<sup>th</sup> to send their Quarterly updates for the Registry to the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Instructions regarding this process are attached.

Updates should include any individuals no longer employed, any changes to an existing employees' data such as updated trainings or certifications, name change, etc. and new hires.

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### **Safe Home Care Project at UMass Lowell**

The Safe Home Care (SHC) Project at the UMass Lowell is continuing its mission to promote the safety and health of the home care workforce with a new grant from the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)/Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Building on research conducted over the last 15 years with industry, government and community partnerships, the newest study will evaluate ways to improve safety for home care aides and their clients. The new four-year study will begin in early 2020. Soon the SHC team will be reaching out to recruit participants for interviews and focus groups. Participants will be offered a financial incentive. All information collected and results are kept anonymous. All methods are approved by the UMass Lowell Institutional Review Board (IRB).

If you are interested in learning more about the new study, please contact the Safe Home Care Project at UMass Lowell: [SafeHomeCare@uml.edu](mailto:SafeHomeCare@uml.edu) The Safe Home Care Project website is available at: [www.uml.edu/safehc](http://www.uml.edu/safehc).

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### **Council Celebrates Completion of Another HEART HHA Training Cohort**

On December 18, the Council was delighted to join in celebrating the most recent cohort of graduates from the HEART Consortium Home Health Aide training program. This group of 15 students is a shining example of the success that can be achieved when we all work collaboratively to identify and support members of our communities interested in getting started in a career in healthcare. With this graduating class, the HEART Consortium has now trained over 100 new Home Health Aides within the last few years, at no cost to participants.

We would like to thank our many partners in this important workforce development initiative: The Center for Community Health Education Research and Services ([CCHERS](#)), who work tirelessly to secure the funding and manage the implementation of the training programs, [Mothers for Justice and Equality](#), who provide additional training programming for participants in areas of personal growth and goal setting, [Anodyne](#) who served as our employer partner throughout the training and now has 15 new Home Health Aides on staff, and the [Caribbean Foundation of Boston](#) who graciously support our work through the use of their training space and nurse educators.

Congratulations graduates!



For more information on the HEART HHA Training program please contact Foundation Manager Sydney Axelrod at [saxelrod@hcacouncil.org](mailto:saxelrod@hcacouncil.org).

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### **News from Council Partner Online Training Provider, CareAcademy**

CareAcademy has launched a new Home Health Aide (HHA) training program that meets the federal requirements necessary to train qualified HHAs in Massachusetts.

To learn more: <https://careacademy.com/certified-hha-training-program/>

The program's curriculum meets the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services' (CMS) Conditions of Participation for Home Health Aide Services (42 CFR § 484.80) and includes:



- 59 hours of video-based online training
- 17+ hours of in-person training and skills practice (with your own instructor)
- Instructor manual and lesson plans to deliver in-person training
- End-of-program knowledge exam

To learn more about the program, get a free trial, or sign up your caregivers, schedule a time with our team: <https://careacademy.com/demo/> or call us at 1-866-227-3895 ext. 3.

CareAcademy provides home care agencies with a best in class online education platform that delivers engaging video-based classes and real-world scenarios that walk-through aspects of the caregiver experience. CareAcademy offers great resources to help manage caregiver training so you can acquire and retain the talent you need to grow your business. Their mission, like the Council's, is to help agencies and caregivers provide excellent care.

Through the Council's partnership with them, Council members will receive exclusive discounts on Care Academy offerings. For more information and to see what Care Academy can do to meet your agency's training needs, and to sign up for exclusive deals for Council members please visit: <https://careacademy.com/?afmc=1s>.

Please also note that because of the many new features that CareAcademy has launched, they are also updating their pricing in 2020 for NEW Customers. So, if you are thinking about upgrading your training program, now is the time! Sign up before the end of the year to take advantage of 2019 pricing!

CareAcademy's online training platform works on smartphones, lets agency administrators easily view and download training progress, automatically sends reminders to your caregivers, and more!

If you're on the fence, you can even try CareAcademy free before committing to sign up:

**Free Trial:** <https://info.careacademy.com/free-trial-2019>

***The Council will continue to keep you updated on these issues and will be sure to let you know what you can do to support our work to strengthen the Home Care Aide workforce in Massachusetts. Thank you for your continued support of the Home Care Aide Council and Happy New Year!***