



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Legislation Passed To Help Keep Older Adults, Others With Long Term Care Needs In Their Homes

CATHARINE YOUNG April 22, 2015

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The CARE Act ensures caregivers are involved in and educated about their loved one's medical needs

ALBANY – With more and more Americans requiring long term care each year, Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I – Olean) and her Senate colleagues this week moved to ensure family caregivers receive consultation in the treatment of a loved one, as well as training to assist with post-release care tasks.

The CARE Act is an important step toward improving the quality of care for patients when they are released from the hospital, and will help cut down on the estimated \$17 billion in Medicare funds spent each year nationally on hospital readmissions.

“An estimated 4.1 million New Yorkers provide uncompensated long term care for older loved ones, or someone with limitations to their daily activities. Whether it's a parent, spouse, or neighbor in need, caregivers often face the difficult prospect of addressing their loved one's complex medical condition without any formal training or medical background. By providing consultation during hospitalization, and training for post-release care, a designated caregiver can help someone stay in their home longer, reduce the amount of hospital re-admittances, and improve that person's quality of life,” said Senator Young.

“Be it eating, dressing, bandaging a wound, or operating medical equipment, the right care, and quality care, can improve a person’s outlook and medical condition. Preparing a caregiver, before the patient leaves the hospital, helps create a smoother transition once their loved one returns home,” Senator Young said.

Senate bill 676A allows a person, upon admission to a hospital, to designate a caregiver who would be able to discuss the patient's plan of care prior to the patient's discharge or transfer to another facility. The designated caregiver would also be offered training in certain post-release care tasks, which they would be able to perform for the patient in their home.

The legislation has support from AARP.

Along with passage of The CARE Act, Senator Young and her colleagues recently passed a number of provisions in the state budget that significantly increase the resources for long term care patients and caregivers. An additional \$25 million was provided this year for Alzheimer’s programs, and an additional \$8 million will be provided for the New York Connects program for a statewide expansion. The Connects program will provide more patients access to long term care options, services, and support. The budget also includes a \$2.5 million increase in funding for the Community Services for the Elderly Program and \$500,000 for the Long Term Care Ombudsman Program.

“Enhancing someone’s care improves their state of mind and brings hope and happiness to their day. Family caregivers don’t hesitate to step forward when a loved one is in need, and now New York has the opportunity to ensure these valiant individuals have the necessary skills when the time arrives,” Senator Young said.