



We appreciate President Obama's commitment to the Title VII and Title VIII Geriatrics Health Professions programs as evidenced by the funding included in his FY2012 budget. We ask that Congress support the full amount of funding needed to advance the geriatrics workforce priorities established under the *Affordable Care Act* (ACA).

We urge you to fund the geriatrics training programs adequately in FY 2012. Our health care workforce is ill-prepared to care for America's rapidly growing older adult population. This funding is integral to insuring that we have the faculty and educational programs to prepare ourselves to care for older Americans. Specifically, we request a total of \$54.9 million in funding for the following programs administered through the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) under Title VII and VIII of the Public Health Service Act:

**Title VII Geriatrics Health Professions  
Appropriations Request: \$46.5 Million**

These are the only federal programs that: (1) seek to increase the number of faculty with geriatrics expertise in a variety of disciplines; and (2) offer critically important training to the entire healthcare workforce focused on improving the quality of care we offer to America's elders.

- Geriatric Academic Career Awards (GACA): The goal of this program is to promote the development of academic clinician educators in geriatrics.

*Program Accomplishments:* In Academic Year 2009-2010, there were 84 non-competing continuation awards. GACA awardees provided interdisciplinary training in geriatrics training to about 60,000 health professionals. These awardees provided culturally competent quality health care to over 525,000 underserved and uninsured patients in acute care services, geriatric ambulatory care, long-term care, and geriatric consultation services settings.

- HRSA has the expanded the awards to be available to more disciplines, which has undoubtedly increased the demand for these awards. EWA advocated for this expansion and we now want to ensure that there is adequate funding to meet the increased demand given the greater number of disciplines that will be participating. **Our request of \$5.3 million includes support for 68 Geriatric Academic Career Awardees, promoting the development of clinician educators.**
- Geriatric Education Centers (GEC): The goal of the Geriatric Education Centers is to provide quality interdisciplinary geriatric education and training to the health professions workforce including geriatrics specialists and non-specialist.

*Program Accomplishments:* In Academic Year 2009-2010, the GEC grantees provided clinical training to 54,167 health professional students and to 20,791 interdisciplinary teams in multiple settings.

In the Affordable Care Act, Congress has approved a supplemental grant award program that will train additional faculty through a mini-fellowship program and requires that those faculty provide training to family caregivers and direct care workers. **Our funding request of \$22.7 million includes support for the core work of 45 GECs and for the 24 GECs**

**that would be funded to undertake development of mini-fellowships under the supplemental grants program included in ACA.**

- Geriatric Training Program for Physicians, Dentists, and Behavioral and Mental Health Professions: The goal of the GTPD is to increase the supply of quality and culturally competent geriatric clinical faculty and to retrain mid-career faculty in geriatrics.

*Program Accomplishments:* In Academic Year 2009-2010, 11 non-competing continuation grants were supported. Forty-nine physicians, dentists, and psychiatric fellows provided geriatric care to 20,078 older adults across the care continuum. Geriatric physician fellows provided health care to 12, 254 older adults. Geriatric dental fellows provided health care to 4,073 older adults. Geriatric psychiatry fellows provided health care to 3,751 older adults.

This program supports training additional faculty in medicine, dentistry, and behavioral and mental health so that they have the expertise, skills and knowledge to teach geriatrics and gerontology to the next generation of health professionals in their disciplines. **Our funding request of \$8.5 million includes support for 13 institutions to continue this important faculty development program.**

- Geriatric Career Incentive Awards Program: Congress has authorized this new program created through the Affordable Care Act, which offers grants to foster greater interest among a variety of health professionals in entering the field of geriatrics, long-term care, and chronic care management. President Obama included \$10 million in his FY 2012 budget to establish this awards program. **Our funding request of \$10 million includes support for implementation of this new program reflecting the President's budget.**

#### **Title VII Direct-Care Worker Training Program**

##### **Appropriations Request: \$3.4 million**

Direct-care workers help older people carry out the basic activities of daily living and are critical to ensuring an adequate geriatrics workforce. More than one million additional direct-care workers will be needed by 2018, according to the latest employment projections.

- Training Opportunities for Direct Care Workers: In the Affordable Care Act, Congress has approved a program, administered by HHS, that will offer advanced training opportunities for direct care workers. While this vital training program was not included in President Obama's budget, EWA believes Congress must fund it to create new employment opportunities by offering new skills through training. **Our funding request of \$3.4 million includes support to establish this unique grants-program and community colleges as they look to increase the geriatrics knowledge and expertise of this workforce.**

#### **Title VIII Geriatrics Nursing Workforce Development Programs**

##### **Appropriations Request: \$5 million**

These programs, administered by the HRSA, are the primary source of federal funding for advanced education nursing, workforce diversity, nursing faculty loan programs, nurse education, practice and retention, comprehensive geriatric education, loan repayment, and scholarship.

- Comprehensive Geriatric Education Program: The goal of this program is to provide quality geriatric education to individuals caring for the elderly.

*Program Accomplishments:* In Academic Year 2009-2010, 27 CGEP grantees provided education and training to 3,030 Registered Nurses/Registered Nursing Students; 260 Advanced Practice Nurses; 221 Faculty; 110 Home Health Aides; 483 Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurses & LPN students; 730 Nurse Assistants/Patient Care Associates; 810 Allied Health Professionals and 929 lay persons, guardians, activity directors. The CGEP

grantees provided 459 educational course offerings in the care of the elderly on a variety of topics to 6,846 participants.

This program supports additional training for nurses who care for the elderly; development and dissemination of curricula relating to geriatric care; and training of faculty in geriatrics. It also provides continuing education for nurses practicing in geriatrics.

- Traineeships for Advanced Practice Nurses: Through the Affordable Care Act, the Comprehensive Geriatric Education Program is being expanded to include advanced practice nurses who are pursuing long-term care, geropsychiatric nursing or other nursing areas that specialize in care of elderly.

**Our funding request of \$5 million includes funds that will continue the training of nurses caring for the elderly and offer 200 traineeships to nurses under the newly implemented traineeship program.**

*The Eldercare Workforce Alliance is a group of 28 national organizations, joined together to address the immediate and future workforce crisis in caring for an aging America. The Institute of Medicine, in its critical report "Retooling for an Aging America: Building the Health Care Workforce," called for immediate investments in preparing our health care system to care for older Americans and their families. In response, we formed the national *Eldercare Workforce Alliance*-representing consumers, family caregivers, the direct-care workforce, and healthcare professionals-to propose practical solutions to strengthen our eldercare workforce and improve the quality of care.*

#### **Our Mission**

To address our nation's worsening eldercare crisis, the Alliance will build a caring and competent eldercare workforce, joining in partnership with older adults, their families and other unpaid caregivers-to provide high-quality, culturally-sensitive, person-directed, family-focused care, and improve the quality of life for older adults and their families.

*The positions of the Eldercare Workforce reflect a consensus of 75 percent of its members. This testimony reflects the consensus of the Alliance and does not necessarily represent the position of individual Alliance member organizations.*

## **Eldercare Workforce Alliance – Outside Witness Testimony**

Requests for the Department of Health and Human Services  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Resources,  
Education and Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate

April 11, 2011

Written Testimony\*\*  
Submitted on behalf of the  
Eldercare Workforce Alliance

By

Steven L. Dawson  
Alliance Co-Convener and  
President  
PHI – Quality Care through Quality Jobs  
349 East 149th Street, 10th Floor  
Bronx, NY 10451  
Tel: (718) 402-7471

Nancy Lundebjerg, MPA  
Alliance Co-Convener and  
Deputy Executive Vice President & COO  
American Geriatrics Society  
350 Fifth Avenue, Suite 801  
New York, NY 10118  
Tel: (212) 308-1414

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Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

We are writing on behalf of the [Eldercare Workforce Alliance](#) (EWA), which is comprised of 28 national organizations united to address the immediate and future workforce crisis in caring for an aging America. **As the Subcommittee begins consideration of funding for programs in FY 2012, the Alliance\*\* asks that you consider \$54.9 million in funding for the geriatrics health professions and direct-care worker training programs that are authorized under Titles VII and VIII of the Public Health Service Act as follows:**

- **\$46.5 million for Title VII Geriatrics Health Professions Programs**
- **\$3.4 million for direct care workforce training; and**
- **\$5 million for Title VIII Comprehensive Geriatric Education Programs**

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These programs are integral to ensuring that America's healthcare workforce is prepared to care for our rapidly expanding population of older adults.

The first of the baby boomers began to turn 65 this year. Within 20 years, one in five Americans will be over 65 and 90 percent of those Americans will have one or more chronic conditions. Yet there is a growing shortage of clinicians with special training in geriatrics and an even greater shortage of the geriatrics faculty needed to train the entire workforce.

In 2008, the Institute of Medicine issued a ground-breaking report, *Retooling for an Aging America: Building the Health Care Workforce* that spotlighted these shortages and their impact on care. The report called for an expansion of geriatrics faculty development awards to include other disciplines of the interdisciplinary team, increased training for the direct-care workforce, and other efforts to create a healthcare workforce that is competent to care for older adults. The Eldercare Workforce Alliance was established to ensure that the IOM recommendations are heard.

The enactment of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA) was a historic moment for health care in this country. The Act makes important strides toward addressing the severe and growing shortages of health care providers with the skills and training to meet the unique health care needs of our nation's growing aging population.

The Act includes provisions championed by Senator Kohl (D-WI) and Representative Schakowsky (D-IL) from their legislation, the *Retooling for an Aging America Act* (S. 245 and H.R. 468 in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress). These provisions implement key recommendations of the IOM report to enhance existing and establish new geriatrics programs in an effort to build the capacity of the healthcare workforce needed to care for older adults.

We very much appreciate the funding for the Title VII Geriatrics Health Professions programs that President Obama included in his FY 2012 budget. We urge you to fund the geriatrics training programs adequately in FY 2012 so that we can immediately begin to realize the health care workforce goals set forth in health reform. Specifically, we request \$54.9 million in total funding for the following programs under Title VII and VIII of the Public Health Service Act:

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Without additional funds in these programs, we will fail to ensure that America's health care workforce will be prepared to care for older Americans. We understand that the Committee faces difficult budget decisions. However, we strongly believe that by investing in these programs, which create geriatrics faculty and offer the training that is needed to ensure a competent workforce, we will be delivering better care to America's older adults. Health care dollars will be saved from better care coordination and health outcomes, and the workforce will grow as more people are trained, recruited and retained in the field of geriatrics.

On behalf of all the members of the Eldercare Workforce Alliance, we commend you on your past support for geriatric workforce programs and ask that you join us in expanding the geriatrics workforce at this critical time -- for all older Americans deserve quality of care, now and in the future.

Thank you for your consideration.