

RECOMMENDATIONS

SEPTEMBER 2016 • FAMILIES CARING FOR AN AGING AMERICA

RECOMMENDATION 1

The committee calls upon the Administration that takes office in January 2017 to take steps to address the health, economic, and social issues facing family caregivers of older Americans. Specifically, the committee recommends that:

The Secretary of Health and Human Services, in collaboration with the Secretaries of Labor and Veterans Affairs, other federal agencies, and private-sector organizations with expertise in family caregiving, develop and execute a National Family Caregiver Strategy that, administratively or through new federal legislation, explicitly and systematically addresses and supports the essential role of family caregivers to older adults. This strategy should include specific measures to adapt the nation's health care and long-term services and supports (LTSS) systems and workplaces to effectively and respectfully engage family caregivers and to support their health, values, and social and economic well-being, and to address the needs of our increasingly culturally and ethnically diverse caregiver population.

RECOMMENDATION 1-a

Develop, test, and implement effective mechanisms within Medicare, Medicaid, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure that family caregivers are routinely identified and that their needs are assessed and supported in the delivery of health care and long-term services and supports.

RECOMMENDATION 1-b

Direct the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to develop, test, and implement provider payment reforms that motivate providers to engage family caregivers in delivery processes, across all modes of payment and models of care.

RECOMMENDATION 1-c

Strengthen the training and capacity of health care and social service providers to recognize and to engage family caregivers and to provide them evidence-based supports and referrals to services in the community.

RECOMMENDATION 1-d

Increase funding for programs that provide explicit supportive services for family caregivers such as the National Family Caregiver Support Program and other relevant HHS programs to facilitate the development, dissemination, and implementation of evidenced-based caregiver intervention programs.

RECOMMENDATION 1-e

Explore, evaluate, and, as warranted, adopt federal policies that provide economic support for working caregivers.

RECOMMENDATION 1-f

Expand the data collection infrastructures within the Departments of Health and Human Services, Labor, and Veterans Affairs to facilitate monitoring, tracking, and reporting on the experience of family caregivers.

RECOMMENDATION 1-g

Launch a multi-agency research program sufficiently robust to evaluate caregiver interventions in real world health care and community settings, across diverse conditions and populations, and with respect to a broad array of outcomes.

RECOMMENDATION 2

State governments that have yet to address the health, economic, and social challenges of caregiving for older adults should learn from the experience of states with caregiver supports, and implement similar programs.

RECOMMENDATION 3

The Secretaries of Health and Human Services, Labor, and Veterans Affairs should work with leaders in health care and long-term services and supports delivery, technology, and philanthropy to establish a public-private, multi-stakeholder innovation fund for research and innovation to accelerate the pace of change in addressing the needs of caregiving families.

RECOMMENDATION 4

In all the above actions, explicitly and consistently address families' diversity in assessing caregiver needs and in developing, testing, and implementing caregiver supports.

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