



June 13, 2020

The Honorable Marylou Sudders  
Executive Office, Health and Human Services  
1 Ashburton Place  
Boston, MA 02108

Dear Secretary Sudders,

I am writing on behalf of the New England Chapter of Aging Life Care Association® representing over 200 members in New England, managing care for over 2,000 mostly frail, vulnerable individuals 65 and older.

**We are requesting consistent guidance for professional care managers to be categorized as “essential” in all lived environments.** This is key to assuring our clients, their families, and the residential settings where they reside, that we are allowed by the Office of Health & Human Services and EOEAs to visit our clients. There has been an inconsistent application of the guidelines for visits in Assisted Livings and we seek clarity. As professional care managers we operate under a strict code of ethics and advocate first and foremost for the elder. We are trained in the field of aging and disability and are healthcare professionals, social workers, geriatric care managers and gerontologists.

During the present COVID-19 crisis most in our profession have halted in-person visits to private homes, Assisted Livings, Rest Homes, Nursing Homes and Hospitals. We do this in accordance with the guidance provided from EOEAs as interpreted by assisted livings and we also respect the Stay at Home Advisory. We are the eyes and ears of distant family members and often the only “family” for some of our clients who are “solo-agers.” Our services are impartial and serve a critical need in providing advocacy on behalf of our clients, many who suffer from dementia and serious end of life conditions. Every care manager could offer a testimony as to the social isolation, loss of mobility, changes in appetite, declines in cognition and alternation in mood that constitute real risks to our clients who have endured the lock-down.

The effects of social isolation on many of our clients has been debilitating and for many, has advanced their illnesses. Resumption of visits to oversee and advise on care would serve to remediate and rehabilitate these individuals, as well as provide peace of mind to their adult children and loved ones.

We wish to convey our gratitude for your leadership and the administration’s consistent messaging coordinated with EOEAs and the CDC in this time of COVID-19. If we can be of service, please feel free to contact us at the email addresses listed below.

Sincerely,

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Cc:

Secretary Chen

Senator Jehlen

Representative Balsler

*New England Chapter of the Aging Life Care Association*