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‘It means cutting people’

Hitting Medicaid again will cost thousands of health care jobs in state – and everyone suffers

(ALBANY) – When the state announced its proposal to cut 10 percent from Medicaid across the board, we asked senior care providers two simple questions: If this happens, will it affect you? How many jobs would you have to cut as a result?

The answer was resounding. The job losses from just 57 of our not-for-profit providers of senior care and services surveyed are expected to total 1,261 as a result of the proposed cuts to Medicaid.

Extrapolating that number across our total membership of approximately 600 means some 7,500 New York state residents out of work, compounding record unemployment numbers and seriously compromising access to quality services for the elderly and disabled New Yorkers.

Do you think that sounds like a good deficit reduction plan? We don’t either.

Listen to what these senior care and services providers told us:

“Layoffs will be the only solution, since 70 percent of our budget is labor.”

“A 10 percent cut will mean \$30,000 a month for us. We could not cut enough staff to make this up and still function at a safe level.”

“Our loss would be approximately \$1.7 million with an estimated loss of 31 positions.”

“We estimate 30 FTEs would be cut, most of them direct-care workers. That’s 12 percent of our work force.”

“Our greatest expense is human resources, plain and simple. It means cutting people. We have trimmed the fat over the past few years so much that there is nothing to cut other than people. That means lowering the standard of care delivered to our seniors. We just can’t do the same with less.”

“We will limit admission of dialysis patients to only those that can be transported within our current schedule to avoid additional labor costs. Residents with intense resource needs will be declined admission at a higher rate than in the past.”

We know the belt has to be tightened, but senior care services have been cut six times in the past two years. It is time for someone else to “share the pain.” It’s time to make the elderly and disabled New Yorkers a priority.

Founded in 1961, NYAHS is the only statewide organization representing the entire continuum of not-for-profit and public aging and continuing care service providers, including senior housing, adult care facilities, assisted living, retirement communities, home and community-based agencies and nursing homes. NYAHS’s nearly 600 members serve an estimated 500,000 New Yorkers of all ages annually.