



Protect Fair Funding and Access to Skilled Nursing Care



ADVOCACY REQUEST:

Support Skilled Nursing Patients

Restore Workforce and Quality Incentive Program (WQIP) in the State Budget

California's more than 1,000 Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs) provide essential **24-hour medical care to over 445,000 of California's most vulnerable patients**. As California faces an on-going budget deficit, looming federal Medicaid cuts, and the upcoming negotiation of a new Medi-Cal rate for SNFs, **Governor Gavin Newsom and lawmakers must prioritize fair funding for SNF patients and their caregivers**.

The SNF Workforce and Quality Incentive Program (WQIP) is a performance-based funding mechanism designed to reward SNFs for improving care quality, advancing health equity and investing in their workforce. Most importantly, **WQIP works**: According to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), California ranks among the top four states in ten separate nursing home quality performance categories.

However, In July 2025, a state budget cut led to a \$300 million reduction in WQIP funds, slashing critical resources that support **safe, high-quality care hundreds of thousands of skilled nursing patients rely on**.

As Governor Newsom and the California Legislature work on the 2026-2027 budget, it is imperative that WQIP funding be restored to:



Support Skilled Nursing Patients

- WQIP funding provides nearly \$300 million to support SNFs that provide essential 24-hour medical care to over 445,000 vulnerable patients each year.
- WQIP funding ensures SNF patients have access to comprehensive medical care ranging from physical, occupational and speech therapy to medication management, rehabilitation, nutrition and dietary care, and end-of-life and palliative care.



Strengthen Workforce Recruitment & Development

- More than 100,000 caregivers, including registered nurses, licensed vocational nurses, certified nurse assistants, physicians, therapists and medical directors, provide specialized medical care to SNF patients each year.
- WQIP funding helps SNFs offer competitive wages and training programs that attract and retain qualified medical professionals. Without it, SNFs risk staffing shortages, reduced services and potential facility closures.



Safeguard Access to Care

- Over 70% of SNF patients rely on Medi-Cal, many of whom have no other viable care options.
- Chronic Medi-Cal underfunding means SNFs lose money every day. A facility serving 100 Medi-Cal patients loses about \$5,000 daily in dollars already spent on services and care from low reimbursements, adding up to almost \$1 billion in total losses for SNFs across California each year.
- Without WQIP funding, SNFs will be forced to cut staff, scale back patient services and even risk closure, threatening access to care for hundreds of thousands of patients.



Reduce Hospital Overcrowding

- WQIP funding ensures SNFs have the staff and resources to help patients safely transition and discharge out of hospitals and emergency rooms to appropriate post-acute care settings, reducing hospital overcrowding and saving the healthcare system billions of dollars.

SUPPORT SKILLED NURSING PATIENTS:

RESTORE WQIP FUNDING



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