

Chapter 1: Promoting Coordinated and Accessible Healthcare

Access to healthcare means that an array of affordable health services is available regardless of a person's cultural heritage, location, health status, level of functioning, or income. One crucial aspect, affordability, is an increasing problem for many seniors as a result of coverage limits, costly premiums, prescription drug prices, expensive technologies, and the growing aging population needing specialized services. While some of these issues must be addressed at the national level, there are many efforts at the local level that can, and do, have a significant impact.

Responsive healthcare requires innovative thinking, a range of approaches, careful coordination and adequately trained experienced providers. The recommendations in this chapter address the critical issues of affordable care, coordinated service delivery, and provider recruitment and training.

1. PROMOTE ACCESS TO HIGH-QUALITY HEALTHCARE, PHARMACEUTICALS AND SUPPORT SERVICES.

- 1.1 Increase advocacy for improving cost and coverage for healthcare.
- 1.2 Promote local models of affordable health services.
- 1.3 Improve communication, coordination and responsiveness of healthcare delivery in the region.

2. INCREASE RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION, AND RETENTION OF GERIATRIC-TRAINED HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS.

“Providers” includes individual physicians; nurses, nurse practitioners, and nurse assistants; physical, occupational, recreation, speech and mental health therapists; social workers; pharmacists; dietitians; alternative and complementary medicine providers, and other professionals and paraprofessionals who provide medical care or services to maintain/restore health.

- 2.1 Increase pay and benefits for certified nurse assistants.
- 2.2 Increase the availability of geriatrics-trained providers through targeted recruitment, improved training and ongoing support.

