



July 22, 2021

Diana Espinosa, Acting/Deputy Administrator
Health Resources & Services Administration

SENT ELECTRONICALLY: diana.espinosa@hrsa.hhs.gov

RE: More Provider Relief Funds Needed Now

Dear Administrator Espinosa:

There are many discussions going on in Washington right now about how to help providers and invest in the Care Economy for the future. We are supportive and grateful that older persons and those who provide services to them are an integral part of this conversation. However, providers need relief now. We implore HRSA to release the remaining Provider Relief Funds now, including the funds for rural healthcare providers, to help ensure we have a foundation of aging service providers upon which to build this future.

As you know, LeadingAge represents more than 5,000 nonprofit aging services providers and other mission-minded organizations that touch millions of lives every day. Aging service providers don't have the luxury of huge reserves to sustain them. They operate on narrow margins in the best of times. The pandemic is not over for them. While in some parts of the country we are starting to see glimmers of hope that the financial tide is turning for these providers, many have been unable to come up for financial air and now many communities are witnessing the COVID-19 case counts rise again. They are weighed down by losses and ongoing coronavirus expenses for PPE, staff and resident testing and trying to hang on to exhausted staff to ensure that the older persons they care for receive the services they need.

Some nursing homes, assisted living, home care and community based service providers have been pushed to the financial brink. If these providers close, it is not just the loss of a business or the jobs they offer, but it displaces older adults and disrupts families who must scramble to find a new care provider for their loved one. For all these reasons, these providers need Provider Relief Funds now!

Back in March, 75% of our members who responded to a survey said that they still need more PRF to weather the ongoing expenses and reduced revenues from battling COVID-19 and 17% of those said they would be forced to close or sell, if no additional funds were forthcoming. Now nearly 4 more

months have passed without that relief. We have continued to take the pulse of our members in recent months, and while we have seen occupancies and move-ins improve for many, we also see that some are falling deeper into a financial black hole for which no end is in sight without additional Provider Relief Funds.

We urge you to release the remaining Provider Relief Funds and allow providers in need to apply for this assistance. Time is of the essence.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie Smith Sloan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Katie Smith Sloan
President and CEO
LeadingAge

CC: Jordan Grossman