

# Sustaining the Vital Investment in Home Care

## ENSURING QUALITY CARE FOR TEXANS



### 88<sup>TH</sup> TEXAS LEGISLATION

Nearly \$800 million was invested, representing a major commitment to supporting home-based care.

- Investment was made into the attendant portion to raise the base wage for community care attendants from \$8.11 to \$10.60 per hour establishing \$10.60 as the wage floor.
- This raise helped to mitigate the workforce shortage.
- The investment recognized the critical role home care providers play, especially for seniors and people with disabilities.



### AREAS TO ADDRESS

- Service Support Portion
- Attendant Compensation Rate Enhancement (ACRE)

The service support portion of the rate ensures operational viability of home care.

The ACRE program enhances home care agency's ability to offer competitive wages.

- Based on inflation growth from 2006 to present using the Consumer Price Index (CPI), the equivalent service support rate in today's dollars would be \$3.04 per hour – increased from \$2.07. The service support portion of the rate has not increased in 17 years.
  - *Without an increase, providers will continue to struggle to maintain the infrastructure required to support high-quality care and attract qualified staff.*
- The estimated cost for these adjustments is \$254M in general revenue, a necessary investment to support providers and ensure continued access to quality care.
- The Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) has proposed eliminating the ACRE program.



### THE PATH FORWARD

- Service Support Inflation Adjustment
- Hold Harmless Provision

Adjusting the serviced support portion of the rate for inflation will ensure providers can continue to operate, covering the rising costs of providing quality care.

The hold harmless provision will ensure that IF ACRE is eliminated, providers can continue to offer competitive wages and will not receive a rate cut.

- Raise the service support portion of the rate. It is -47% lower than inflation-adjusted dollars in 2024 as it has not increased in over 17 years. (Currently \$2.07 but should be \$3.04)
- IF ACRE is eliminated, a hold harmless will ensure that the rate is increased to level 35 (\$1.75) for all providers.
- IF ACRE is eliminated, maximum flexibility will ensure HHSC can/will be able to allocate the ACRE funds equivalent to the current ACRE methodology.

**Now is the time to support the home care workforce by helping both providers and the Texans they serve.**