

HOUSE Bill 248 A Rating System for Long-Term Care Facilities

Background: Advocates have long supported a rating system for adult care homes that would help family members, often in crisis mode under a deadline of two or three days, to choose a new home in assisted living for a frail elderly person. The original bill, sponsored in this session by Representative Alice Bordsen, was entitled “ACH Star Rating Authorization/Funds” and proposed a rating system of one to five stars based on a state inspection, penalties assessed against a facility, and participation in state quality management programs and a worker-retention program called NOVA. The bill ran into opposition because it focused only on one type of long-term care and because the star system lacked comprehensive information about a facility. As a result, the bill has been extensively revised and given a new title. Although the rating system is postponed in favor of a study, advocates are in support of the bill.

H248, now “Inspection Reports for Public/Funds,” will require state inspection reports on nursing homes, adult care homes, and home care agencies to be posted on the internet and made available on request at a facility. The bill calls for a study to develop a rating system for all these facilities, including also adult day and adult day health centers. The result should be a comprehensive rating system for all types of facilities and agencies that provide long-term care.

For more information: Polly Williams, NC Justice Center, pollywil@nc.rr.com; 919-833-3805.

House Bill 98/Senate Bill 59, “Home and Community Block Grant Funds”

Background: The block grant provides funding to counties for 18 different services (counties can choose which ones), including adult day care, Meals on Wheels, and home health care. Anyone 60 and over is eligible (there is no means test, although those who can pay are asked to do so). Persons with low incomes or living in rural areas are given priority. These funds are crucial in keeping frail persons at home, rather than in institutional care, but at present there is a waiting list for services of about 11,000 individuals.

H98 and S59 would appropriate \$5 million for each year of the biennium to meet more of the needs for service.

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