



Iowa Health Care Association
Iowa Center for Assisted Living
Iowa Center for Home Care

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Contact: Lori Ristau, Chief Marketing Officer
800-422-3106 | lori@iowahealthcare.org

Iowa Health Care Association: Iowans' Access to Long-Term Care Threatened by Proposed Federal Staffing Mandate Issued Today

DES MOINES, Iowa – The Iowa Health Care Association (IHCA), representing 318 Iowa nursing homes and other long-term care facilities across the state that care for more than 20,000 Iowans by providing 7 million days of care each year, released a statement in response to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) proposed rule, Minimum Staffing Standards for Long-Term Care Facilities and Medicaid Institutional Payment Transparency Reporting, issued today.

The following statement can be attributed to IHCA President and CEO Brent Willett:

Today's rule is punishing to Iowa seniors and devastating to rural communities. The import of the rule is simple: the Biden Administration is mandating the hiring of people who do not exist to care for people who do. The Administration has demonstrated a shocking lack of awareness of what is actually happening in long-term care in this country by calling for an unfunded and illogical federal staffing mandate for nursing homes in the face of an historic workforce shortage. The CMS rule issued today to enforce the Administration's proposed mandate will needlessly exacerbate the extraordinary health care workforce crisis, tear at the fabric of our rural communities, and threaten access to long-term care services for Iowans who depend on those services to meet their most basic human needs.

The Administration is mandating the impossible without offering any meaningful resources to recruit and retain more staff needed to maintain access to care. We urge CMS to withdraw this inoperable and counterintuitive rule given the obvious lack of available workers to comply and to focus on real solutions to America's health care worker crisis, not scoring cheap political points.

Already, 27 Iowa nursing homes have closed since 2022. Today's rule, if allowed to stand, will result in further closures, introducing needless trauma into the lives of residents and preventing access to care for rural Iowans who deserve it. We will vigorously defend the access to care this misguided rule threatens for thousands of Iowa seniors and advocate for solutions to bolster the health care workforce, not punish Iowans.

About the Iowa Health Care Association

The Iowa Health Care Association (IHCA) and its divisions, Iowa Center for Assisted Living (ICAL) and Iowa Center for Home Care (IHC) represent Iowa organizations that provide a continuum of long-term care options to Iowans through nursing facilities, assisted living, residential care, senior living communities and home health agencies.

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