

CCoA
California Commission on Aging

AGE WATCH

Confirmation on Track for Diana Dooley as Health & Human Services Agency Secretary

Diana Dooley, former President and CEO of the California Children's Hospital Association (CCHA), has been named to lead California's Health and Human Services Agency (CHHS). Dooley passed the first round of Senate confirmation to the post on March 2, having been appointed by Governor Jerry Brown in December. Final confirmation by the full Senate is anticipated soon.

Dooley brings to CHHS a lengthy resume of public service at both the state and community level. Prior to her time with CCHA, where she advocated on behalf of eight, non-profit regional hospitals providing nearly 40 percent of the inpatient care for California children, Dooley served from 1975 until 1983 as Legislative Director and Special Assistant to the first Brown Administration. She later went on to run a public relations firm before completing a law degree and going into private practice. She began her work with CHHA in 2005.

Secretary Dooley's confirmation was endorsed by numerous advocacy organizations representing children, older adults, persons with disabilities, physicians, county health officials, and hospital and health care advocates. Her many supporters cite her experience, in-depth knowledge, and her commitment and compassion for people in need.



CHHS Secretary Diana Dooley

Chair of Assembly Aging & Long-Term Care Introduces Bills to Aid Seniors

Assemblymember Mariko Yamada (D-Davis), chair of the State Assembly's Aging & Long-Term Care Committee, in February introduced a series of bills to improve services for California's older adults. Included in the package is legislation to consolidate the state's senior programs, to enhance elder abuse reporting requirements, and to assure the continuous flow of federal Older Americans Act dollars to Area Agencies on Aging during state budget standoffs. Information on the eight-bill package is available on Assemblymember Yamada's website at www.assembly.ca.gov/yamada.

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Proposed Federal Budget Includes \$5 Million for Ombudsman Program

President Obama's fiscal year (FY) 2012 Budget for the Administration on Aging (AoA) includes \$21 million in additional funding for Protection of Vulnerable Older Americans Programs designed to ensure the safety and well being of seniors at risk for mistreatment or neglect. The budget adds \$5 million in additional support for the long-term care ombudsmen, who advocate for residents of long-term care facilities. Additionally, the budget includes \$16.5 million in first time funding for State Adult Protective Services demonstrations to develop best practices and improve operations. This additional funding is a proposed increase in Older Americans Act funding for the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program and will promote AoA's enhanced focus on elder rights and elder justice to combat elder abuse.

The increase of \$5 million for the long-term care ombudsman program would be distributed through formula grants to fund interventions that would address issues before they occur. This will result in a projected decrease in the number of complaints received by the ombudsman program, a projected increase in the ability of ombudsmen to provide consultations and a projected increase in the number of facilities regularly visited by an ombudsman. Despite state and local budget challenges that have impacted the ombudsman program's outcome and output measures, AoA notes that the program continues to provide effective resident advocacy for individuals living in long-term care facilities.

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Upcoming Events

California Commission on Aging holds its next meeting April 5 and 6 in Aptos. Agenda and information on prior meetings at www.ccoa.ca.gov.

The California Council for Gerontology and Geriatrics (CCGG) holds its Annual Meeting in Sacramento on April 8, 2011. Information on the CCGG conference is available at www.ccg.org.

The American Society on Aging's *Aging in America 2011* annual conference is scheduled for April 26—30 in San Francisco. More information is available at www.agingconference.org.

California State Alzheimer's Plan Released

The California State Plan for Alzheimer's Disease was released on March 9, 2011. The State Plan provides six sets of goals addressing stigma, care coordination, caregiver support, a culturally competent workforce, advancing research, and establishing a coordinated system of care to improve care delivery. SB 491 (Alquist), which called for development of the plan, named the California Commission on Aging as a stakeholder to the advisory group. A summary of the plan is available at http://caalz.org/PDF_files/StatePlan-Summary.pdf.