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## Recent Executive Actions Continue to Concern AGS Regarding Care We All Need as We Age

**New York (April 18, 2018)**—In response to regulatory actions that took aim last week at essential health benefits for all Americans and support systems for the poor, experts at the American Geriatrics Society (AGS) again cautioned that such changes could jeopardize the health, safety, and independence of us all as we age.

“To ensure we have access to high-quality, person-centered care, we need to support policy solutions that can help *all* of society benefit from increased longevity,” noted AGS Chief Executive Officer Nancy Lundebjerg, MPA. “Solutions that strip health protections for Americans while also risking important gains for some of society’s most vulnerable individuals remain counterproductive to what we all need as we age.”

These warnings come just days after President Trump signed an Executive Order mandating work requirements for people receiving food assistance, Medicaid, and low-income housing subsidies because they already live at or below the federal poverty line. With many of America’s more than 43 million caregivers relying on such supports to make caregiving possible, such a sweeping directive could risk care quality for older adults now while jeopardizing well-being for more Americans in the years to come.

The Executive Order outlining this work requirement also follows another Trump Administration-led change finalized by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) last week. The new CMS rule loosens regulations protecting “essential benefits” that must be included in insurance plans. States now will be able to pick and choose from a broader, more watered down list of benefits for “benchmark” plans (which define services that must be covered by insurance issued in the state). Outside experts continue to voice concerns that the switch could lead to poorer care quality and more restrictive coverage for most Americans. The new rule also raises the premium rate increase cap for insurance plans from 10 percent to 15 percent, which—when coupled with other changes that impact everything from benefits to the amount insurers must spend on medical claims—could lead quickly to rising healthcare costs for us all.

The AGS continues to call for bipartisan collaboration and ample opportunities for feedback on health reform from the American public. “Ensuring a thoughtful debate that considers the needs of Americans at all stages of our lives,” said Lundebjerg, “is our best chance for a future when all of us can have access to consistent, high-quality, person-centered, and affordable health care.”

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### About the American Geriatrics Society

Founded in 1942, the American Geriatrics Society (AGS) is a nationwide, not-for-profit society of geriatrics healthcare professionals that has—for more than 75 years—worked to improve the health, independence, and

quality of life of older people. Its nearly 6,000 members include geriatricians, geriatric nurses, social workers, family practitioners, physician assistants, pharmacists, and internists. The Society provides leadership to healthcare professionals, policymakers, and the public by implementing and advocating for programs in patient care, research, professional and public education, and public policy. For more information, visit [AmericanGeriatrics.org](http://AmericanGeriatrics.org).