



## **News for Immediate Release**

**Feb. 5, 2013**

### **Governor Corbett's 2013-14 Budget: Helping Pennsylvanians In Need**

**Harrisburg** – Governor Tom Corbett's proposed 2013-14 budget for the Department of Public Welfare illustrates his continued commitment to providing critical services to Pennsylvanians who most need them.

"Without a doubt, the past two budget cycles have been difficult. However, thanks to continued strong reforms and fiscal responsibility, we have been able to refocus the Department of Public Welfare's limited resources to serve those individuals most in need and this budget illustrates that commitment," Secretary of Public Welfare Gary D. Alexander said.

Governor Corbett's proposal prioritizes funding in the Department of Public Welfare's budget to reach Pennsylvanians with intellectual and physical disabilities, senior citizens, children and low-income families. Highlights include:

- **Expanding Services for Individuals with Intellectual Disabilities**– \$20 million in additional funds to reduce a waiting list for home and community-based services for individuals with intellectual disabilities, providing services for 1,080 adults graduating from Special Education programs and adults in at-risk situations where their families may not be able to continue caring for them, and 118 adults who receive autism services;
- **Expanded Services for Older Pennsylvanians** – \$21 million from increased lottery funds, due to the Lottery Private Management Agreement, to account for growth in home and community-based services which would allow 1,550 additional older Pennsylvanians to receive services at home;
- **Expanding Services for Individuals with Physical Disabilities** – \$20 million in additional funds to provide home and community-based long-term living services for 1,680 individuals;
- **Child Care Assistance** – \$7.1 million in additional funds to reduce the waiting list, allowing 1,400 additional children of low-income families to receive subsidized child care services;
- **Improving the Quality of Child Care Programs** – \$3 million in additional funds for the Rising STARS initiative, which creates incentives for early child

care and education providers to provide higher quality child care for our most at-risk children, giving them a strong foundation for the future;

- **Juvenile Justice Reinvestment** – \$10 million in reinvestments into research-based prevention and intervention programs for at-risk children through a multi-agency Juvenile Justice Reinvestment Initiative; and
- **Continued Investment in Specialized Hospital Services** – \$20 million to fully fund critical supplemental payments to hospitals, including obstetrical and neonatal facilities, burn centers, trauma centers and critical access facilities.

The funding to reduce the waiting list for individuals with intellectual disabilities builds upon the commitment made by Corbett in last year's budget to provide critical services to Pennsylvanians most in need. Throughout the past two years, more than \$55 million has been committed by the administration to allow the commonwealth to provide services to more than 2,000 additional Pennsylvanians living with intellectual disabilities.

New to the intellectual disabilities waiting list initiative this year is a proposed reduction in the autism waiting list, providing additional funding to assist adults with autism to gain independence by encouraging involvement in community life, employment, improved social skills and support to caregivers.

"We have to look at our limited resources and prioritize our funding," Alexander said. "Reducing our waiting lists is the first step, allowing us to help those who need support in their homes and in their communities."

The \$21 million investment in home and community-based services for older Pennsylvanians comes as a direct result of the Governor's innovative Lottery Private Management Agreement. The department will be able to use this new money to address the need and demand for the Aging Waiver, specifically expanding home and community-based services so that older adults may continue to live in their homes.

Continuing the Governor's commitment to care for our seniors, the budget also includes a 2 percent increase in nursing home rates. Nursing homes have been transforming themselves to serve individuals with higher needs, and the increase recognizes their place in the overall continuum of long-term living services in Pennsylvania.

Investments are also made in the budget to increase access to essential health care by funding specialized hospital services and fully funding hospital payment rates. The budget encourages hospitals to continue to improve and focus on specialized care such as obstetrical and neonatal, burn and trauma services.

The budget also continues the administration's work with counties to transform the program delivery of certain critical human services programs, including county child

welfare, community mental health, drug and alcohol and homeless assistance services through the Human Services Block Grant program. Corbett's budget proposal will expand the limited 20-county pilot program statewide, by giving all 67 counties the option to participate in the block grant and the flexibility to move funding where it is needed most in their communities.

"Counties are in a better position to know the specific issues in their local area and more counties will now be able to prioritize funds for their local needs, ensuring that every penny is used effectively and efficiently," Alexander said.

The budget also includes \$2 million in additional funding for services dedicated to victims of rape and domestic violence.

For more information, visit [www.dpw.state.pa.us](http://www.dpw.state.pa.us) or call 1-800-692-7462.

**Media contact:** Carey Miller or Anne Bale, 717-425-7606

###