

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Connecticut Legal Assistance1-800-413-7796
Consumer Protection.....1-800-842-2649
Unclaimed Property Hotline.....1-800-833-7318
CT Tax Department1-860-297-5962
Veterans' Benefits and Information.....1-800-827-1000
ConnPACE1-800-423-5026
Medicare Hotline1-800-633-4227
CT Partnership for Long-Term Care1-800-547-3443
Infoline211
CT Department of Veterans Affairs.....1-800-550-0000
CHOICES1-800-944-9422
Healthcare Advocate1-866-HMO-4446
DSS Elder Services1-866-218-6631
Dept. of Insurance Consumer Affairs ...1-800-203-3447
Area Agency on Aging860-887-3561
Middletown Senior Center.860-343-5424
Middletown Senior Services860-344-3513

Provided by Representative Joseph C. Serra
860-240-8500

Joseph C. Serra • Representing Middletown



Joseph C. Serra
State Representative

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING, ROOM 4021
HARTFORD CT 06106-1591
AT THE CAPITOL: 1-800-842-8267 (TOLL FREE)

E-MAIL: JOSEPH.SERRA@CGA.CT.GOV

PRSRT STD
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
HARTFORD, CT
Permit No. 3937

State Representative
Joseph C. Serra



Health Care for Seniors

**33rd District
Serving Middletown**

New Standards for Hospice Care

If our loved ones are terminally ill, we often rely upon hospice care. Hospice programs are known for high standards of compassion and care. To maintain this reputation, before an organization can use the title of hospice, or describe itself as a hospice care program, it must now be licensed by the Department of Public Health and certified by Medicare. All organizations seeking their initial hospice license must agree to provide hospice care services for terminally ill patients on a 24-hour basis. Services must be provided in private homes, nursing and residential care homes, or other specialized residences which provide supportive services. To maintain appropriate levels of care, an organization must also show the Department of Public Health that it has the qualified personnel to provide the services.

Administration of Flu and Pneumonia Vaccines

To help prevent the spread of flu or pneumonia, we have worked to increase access to vaccinations. Nurses employed by licensed home healthcare or homemaker-home health agencies can now provide these vaccines to patients in their homes without obtaining a physician's order for each shot. Trained nurses have been running flu clinics outside the home for years, and this new law makes it easier for these professionals to keep us healthy.



Connecticut Homecare Option Program

To enable more seniors to live at home and delay the need for costly nursing home care, we have created the Connecticut Homecare Option Program. This program allows participants to make deposits into a Homecare Trust Fund account. Interest earned on fund accounts will be exempt from state income tax. The participant or a designated beneficiary can later withdraw funds to pay for qualified home care expenses. Any unspent account funds will become part of a beneficiary's estate when he or she dies.

Additionally, to help encourage home care options, seniors can now hire their own personal care assistance attendants directly instead of going through a home health care agency.

Prepaid Medicare Premiums

No one should be penalized for prepaying a Medicare premium. If a person cancels a Medicare Supplement Policy prior to its expiration date, they will now receive a refund on any prepaid premium for coverage that will not be used because of the cancellation.

Nursing Homes

To protect our seniors, this bill prevents any nursing home, rest home, residential care home, or intermediate care facility for the mentally retarded from closing or greatly decreasing its total bed capacity until a public hearing has been held and the Department of Social Services' Commissioner has approved the facilities request.

Controlling Cancer Treatment Costs

Costs can be prohibitive when a patient can only receive their treatment at a hospital outside the network of their health insurance policy or HMO contract. Now, for certain cancer clinical trials, patients will only need to pay their usual in-network service copayment or deductible required under their health plan.

Duties of Unlicensed Assistive Personnel in Residential Homes

Unlicensed assistive personnel in residential care homes may now perform limited health-related activities for residents. They may obtain and record a resident's blood pressure, temperature, and weight. They may also assist diabetic residents in using glucose monitors for documenting blood glucose levels.

Alzheimer's Programs

Unlicensed and unregistered staff who provide direct care to patients in Alzheimer's special care programs must be given a minimum of one hour of Alzheimer's and dementia specific training every year. The State-wide Respite Care Program is also now open for people with Alzheimer's disease who receive Medicaid.