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UNH State Fiscal Year 2018-19 Budget & Policy Priorities **Aging Services**

Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities— Restore \$2 million and invest an additional \$1 million for a total of \$7.05 million to stabilize the NORC program and expand to underserved areas in the State with high populations of older adults.

Funding History:

Executive FY 2017-18 Budget: \$4.05 million

Enacted FY 2017-18 Budget: \$6.05 million

Enacted FY 2016-17 Budget: \$4.75 million

Services Funded: NORCs are housing developments or neighborhoods that were not originally designed for older adults, but have naturally become home to a significant density of older adults over time. NORCs coordinate support from housing, social service, and health care providers to promote the health and stability of older adults concentrated in apartment buildings and housing complexes, as well as in slightly lower-density neighborhoods and rural areas (Neighborhood NORCS).

Challenge and Opportunity: In 2016, the State updated the legislation governing the NORC program to allow for the expansion of services. In addition, the FY 2016-2017 budget also augmented the NORC-Supportive Service Program (NORC-SSP) to allow NORCs to request and receive up to \$200,000 for programming— a \$50,000 increase from the previous limit. In response to these developments, the New York State Office for the Aging (NYSOFA) issued a Request for Applications (RFA) in December 2016, and announced awards in August 2017.

Under this procurement, nine existing NORC programs were not awarded renewed contracts, potentially leaving the seniors in those housing developments and neighborhoods without supportive services. After significant concerns that were voiced by legislators and community members alike, NYSOFA withdrew this RFA in October 2017, essentially freezing the NORC program and provider system in place until a new RFA is issued. This decision adversely impacted three organizations which will not receive funding to operate new NORC services in their communities, despite submitting successful applications to the State.

UNH recommendation: In addition to restoring the \$2 million cut to the NORC program proposed by the Governor, a further \$1 million should be invested in order to honor the legislature’s intent of increasing award sizes for current providers, as well as creating capacity for at least 15 new NORC programs to open throughout the state.

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