TO: The Honorable Toni Nathaniel Harp
              The Honorable Toni Walker
              Co-Chair, Appropriations Committee

              Members, Appropriations Committee

              The Honorable Anthony J. Musto
              The Honorable Peter A. Tercyak
              Co-Chair, Human Services Committee

              Members, Human Services Committee

FROM: Roderick L. Bremby, Commissioner

DATE: November 29, 2011

RE: Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders
             Annual Report for SFY 2010

I am pleased to notify you of the availability of the SFY 2010 Annual Report for the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders. The report may be accessed on the Department of Social Services web site at www.ct.gov/dss (click on Publications, then Reports). The Connecticut Home Care Program exemplifies the state's long-standing commitment to comprehensive community-based care for elder persons in need of long-term care. By enabling and providing supportive services at home, the state has helped to preserve the dignity and autonomy of older persons and has assisted families struggling to maintain older relatives at home.

In the interest of cost savings, we are not distributing hardcopies of the report but can do so upon request if you would like one. The report includes comprehensive financial data, including service claims that can take up to a year to complete before they can be compiled and analyzed

Development of home care options has helped to curb the spiraling costs of institutionalized care. However, its most important impact has been on the quality of life for Connecticut's older citizens. We thank you for your crucial support of these principles at the General Assembly over the years.

At the close of SFY 2010, approximately 14,500 Connecticut residents were being served by the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders. At the time of this transmittal, in November 2011, we are serving 14,656.

The program combines federal and state funds to cost-effectively serve older adults according to their needs. Care plans are developed within the limits of 25%, 50% and 100% of the average nursing facility cost.

The cost depends upon which Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders functional category corresponds to the individual's needs. This report describes the criteria for each category served by the program.

This report represents the final year of a five-year renewal for the Home- and Community-Based Services Waiver. The federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has since renewed the waiver for five years, effective July 1, 2010. As part of the renewal and approval process, the Department developed a set of performance measures to meet the assurances that states make to CMS when it is operating a waiver.

DSS continues to work collaboratively with the Department of Community and Economic Development, the Connecticut Housing Finance Authority, the Department of Public Health and the Office of Policy and Management to implement the Assisted Living Demonstration Pilot Project. By offering assisted living services in the demonstration programs, residents are offered a viable choice that will allow them to maintain a degree of continued health, dignity and independence at significantly less cost than a nursing home. Four sites, The Retreat in Hartford, Herbert T. Clark in Glastonbury, Luther Ridge in Middletown and Smithfield Gardens in Seymour, are fully operational. Under the umbrella of the Connecticut Home Care Program for Elders, 75 clients are receiving services in private assisted living facilities. More than 200 clients were provided with assisted living services in state-funded congregate and HUD communities.

The Department continued to implement two changes to the program that became effective in SFY 2010. The first added Personal Care Assistance as a service under the program, and the second created a cost-sharing requirement for state-funded, non-Medicaid program participants.

Public Act 09-64 added Personal Care Assistance as a Home Care program service. To accomplish this, a waiver amendment request was submitted to CMS and approval was received on June 26, 2010. Consequently, the waiting list that existed under the pilot program was eliminated and everyone on the list was offered Personal Care Assistance services. On August 9, 2010, CMS approved a five-year renewal of the waiver program. In the renewal, an option was added to include agency-based, as well as fully self-directed, Personal Care Assistance services.

The second change was the initiation of a 15% cost-sharing requirement for state-funded clients, effective January 1, 2010, as part of the mid-term budget adjustments. Section 21 of Public Act 10-79 reduced the share to 6%, effective July 1, 2010. This was increased to 7%, effective July 1, 2011, as part of the budget process.

The Department's Alternate Care Unit, under PA 07-2, Section 29, continues to operate a pilot program implemented in October 2007 -- the Connecticut Home Care Program for Adults with Disabilities -- for up to 50 clients ages 18-64, funded with $720,000 in state appropriations.

The target population is individuals with degenerative, neurological conditions who are not Medicaid-eligible and who are in need of case management to develop, implement and monitor plans of care. Currently, 50 clients are being served under the program.

As Commissioner of the Department of Social Services, I am proud be part of the traditional pro-active role Connecticut has taken in developing innovative and effective policies and programs to address the needs of our elders and citizens with disabilities. On behalf of Governor Dannel P. Malloy, I thank you again for your continuing role moving our state forward in this vital area.

cc: Claudette Beaulieu, Deputy Commissioner
       Mark Schaefer, Director – Medical Care Administration
       David Dearborn – Public & Government Relations