

Date of Hearing:

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON AGING AND LONG-TERM CARE

Adrin Nazarian, Chair

AB 2548 (Nazarian) – As Introduced February 17, 2022

**SUBJECT:** Healthier Homes - Age in Place Nursing Program

**SUMMARY:** Housing Plus Services Nursing Pilot Program (Program). Specifically, **this bill:**

- 1) Requires the California Department of Aging (Department) to establish and administer the Program in the following counties:
  - a. Contra Costa
  - b. Fresno
  - c. Orange
  - d. Riverside
  - e. Sacramento
  - f. San Diego
  - g. Shasta
  - h. Sonoma
- 2) The Program provides grant funds to qualified nonprofit organizations that specialize in resident services for the purposes of hiring one full-time registered nurse (RN) and one full-time Community Health Worker (CHW) to work at three senior housing developments in each county. The RN and CHW provides the following to residents:
  - a. Health education
  - b. Navigation
  - c. Coaching
  - d. Care
- 3) Requires the Department to submit a report to specified legislative committees by January 1, 2028, to contain, but not be limited to, all of the following:
  - a. Evaluation and success of the Program and challenges of implementation.
  - b. Data on the types of services utilized and the outcomes of services used.
  - c. Number of residents who participated
  - d. Number of participating residents who moved from the Program to long-term care (LTC) facilities.
- 4) Sunsets the program on January 1, 2029.

**EXISTING LAW:**

- 1) Establishes the Department to provide leadership to the area agencies on aging in developing systems of home- and community-based services that maintain individuals in their housing of choice.

- 2) Permits age restrictions in connection with housing and defines senior citizen housing developments for these purposes as a residential development for senior citizens that has at least 35 dwelling units.

**FISCAL EFFECT:** This bill has not yet been analyzed by a fiscal committee.

**COMMENTS:**

**Author’s Statement:** According to the author, “Research has clearly defined housing as a component of healthcare. AB 2548 highlights seniors in affordable housing have better overall outcomes when their healthcare is addressed. When we move forward linking the two, we will help older adults age in the places of their choosing.”

**BACKGROUND:**

For four years, LifeSTEPS, in partnership with USA Properties, operated the “Housing Plus Services: RN Coaching” pilot program in three communities in the Sacramento area. The pilot program linked needed social services and health care services enabling older residents to remain living independently in their homes and avoid unnecessary and costly health care services such as emergency department visits, hospitalizations and nursing home stays.

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) awarded LifeSTEPS in Sacramento, California for this model. The HUD Secretary’s Award for Healthy Homes 2020 stated, “Because Americans are living longer, this project recognized the need to adjust our systems and policies for older adult health for both increasing financial sustainability and supporting aging with dignity. Residents from backgrounds of poverty typically lack adequate health literacy skills and support to manage their chronic conditions and their acute and long-term care needs. They also need access to onsite relationships marked by trust, caring and accountability. By providing health assessments and consultations to senior residents timely and where they live, vulnerable residents are supported to manage their chronic conditions and overall health. The number of residents moving out of their apartment communities because of health needs has been reduced by more than 69% with the RN Coaching program intervention, proving that this model contributes to families’ aging in place.”

AB 2548 seeks funding through the 2022-23 budget.

In January of this year, the Governor released his Master Plan for Aging (MPA). While Assembly Bill 2548 is most clearly aligned with the first two goals, it could be argued that the Program model can be linked throughout the MPA in all of the goals:

- Goal One: Housing for All Ages and Stages
- Goal Two: Health Reimagined
- Goal Three: Inclusion and Equity, Not Isolation
- Goal Four: Caregiving That Works
- Goal Five: Affording Aging

**Argument in Support:** A letter from LeadingAge, a co-sponsor of Assembly Bill 2548, states, “Affordable housing properties linked with health and supportive services have proven to help significantly in meeting the varied needs of lower-income seniors and people with disabilities while also helping address multiple public policy priorities. Senior housing communities

provide unique opportunities for health care providers and community-based service organizations. Namely, these communities provide economies of scale, allowing providers to deliver on-site health care services to a large group of people. These partnerships save providers, Medi-Cal and Medicare money while allowing individuals to age-in-place with better health outcomes.”

**REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:**

**Support**

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**Opposition**

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