

NAHC Hails Legislation to Extend Hospital at Home Waiver Program

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The National Association for Home Care & Hospice (NAHC) applauds the introduction in the United States Senate of the [Hospital Inpatient Services Modernization Act of 2024](#), bipartisan legislation sponsored by Sen. Thomas Carper (D-De) and Sen. Tim Scott (R-SC) to extend the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) Acute Hospital Care at Home waiver program for five years.

The Acute Hospital Care at Home waiver program is due to expire on December 31, 2024, but this legislation would extend it for five additional years.

The hospital at home waiver program has been an [impressive success](#), improving patient outcomes, lowering costs, and reducing the burden on hospitals. The vast majority of Americans prefer to age in place, in their own homes and communities, and the hospital at home program enables providers to deliver hospital-level care to Medicare beneficiaries in the comfort of their own homes.

“The Acute Hospital at Home waiver program exemplifies the breadth and depth of quality health care that is now available in the home and demonstrates that the continuum of care should be based solely on the needs of the patient, not by the site of care,” said NAHC President William A. Dombi. “Extending the program creates stability for providers and patients alike. We thank Senators Carper and Scott and urge their colleagues to support the legislation.”

On May 7, Representatives Brad Wenstrup, D.P.M. (R-OH) and Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) introduced a companion bill in the U.S. House of Representatives. It also includes a 5-year extension of the Acute Hospital Care at Home program to allow participating providers to continue furnishing services that enhance access to care. NAHC supports that bill and urges members of the House to join their colleagues in sponsorship.

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) created the Acute Hospital Care at Home program in 2020, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, allowing providers to be reimbursed for delivering hospital-level care at home during a time when hospitals were overwhelmed with patients and the elderly were being urged to avoid unnecessary contact with anyone who could be infected with COVID-19.

Only 7.2 percent of patients treated in the home were later transferred to a hospital, from November 2021 to March 2023, according to a [study published in JAMA](#).

As of May, 330 hospitals in 37 states and across 136 systems are approved to take part in the waiver program.