

Summary of the Bipartisan Policy Center's Long-Term Care Initiative Launch

April 7, 2014 – Washington, DC

The Bipartisan Policy Center (BPC) launched a new initiative on long-term care, hoping to find “a politically viable and fiscally sustainable path forward” to improve the delivery and financing of long-term services and supports (LTSS). The Long-Term Care Initiative plans to release a series of policy options and recommendations to improve the quality and efficiency of publicly and privately financed long-term care later this year.

During the launch, the BPC released a new white paper, titled [America's Long-Term Care Crisis: Challenges in Financing and Delivery](#), which provides an overview of long-term care in the United States, identifies major challenges to the delivery and financing of LTSS for seniors and individuals with disabilities under the age of 65, highlights BPC's approach to long-term care, and outlines most of the major critical policy questions that will guide BPC's work on the topic.

The Long-Term Care Initiative is co-chaired by former Senator Majority Leaders Tom Daschle and Bill Frist, former Congressional Budget Office Director Dr. Alice Rivlin, and newly appointed BPC Senior Fellow and former Wisconsin Governor and Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson.

Following introductions and opening remarks by BPC President Jason Grumet and SCAN Foundation President and CEO Bruce Chernof, the Initiative's co-chairs each gave a few brief remarks about the Initiative's work and their involvement. “Nearly 70 percent of Americans who reach age 65 will, at some point, be unable to care for themselves without assistance,” said **Senator Daschle**. “Issues of long-term care also affect millions of younger people with significant cognitive or physical functional limitations. Yet long-term care gets neither the public attention nor the policy focus that it deserves.”

Several health care policy experts then participated in a panel, highlighting their work in the area of long-term care and offering advice to the Initiative's co-chairs. **Anne Tumlinson**, senior vice president of Avalere Health, gave an overview of LTSS and long-term care, calling the current long-term care system an “economic insecurity for America's families.” **Diane Rowland**, executive vice president of the Kaiser Family Foundation, discussed the important role of housing and non-medical supports in providing LTSS and how Medicare could also play an important part in financing long-term care.

Key facts from the BPC's Long-Term Care Initiative Launch and newly-released white paper:

- The number of Americans estimated to need LTSS is expected to more than double, from 12 million in 2010 to 27 million in 2050, while the costs of LTSS grow from 1.3 to 3 percent of Gross Domestic Product during the same period.
- Diverse populations receive long-term care services, ranging from a senior citizen with Alzheimer's disease to a child with severe cognitive or developmental disorders and physically disabled adults who require personal care assistance.
- Medicaid is the primary payer of LTSS. Medicaid spending on LTSS will grow by an average of 6 percent annually from 2012 to 2021.
- LTSS accounts for at least one-quarter of total Medicaid spending, though only a small percentage of Medicaid beneficiaries receive such care.
- In 2009, about 66 million Americans provided unpaid care to family members and friends, almost one-third of the U.S. adult population.
- Only 8.2 million lives are covered by private long-term care insurance.
- Managed care plans play a role in providing LTSS, though the report does not acknowledge the rapid growth of and interest in Medicaid managed LTSS programs in states.