
LEGISLATIVE ACTION BRIEF

Adult Residential Care Homes

Q. *Long term care is still such a critical issue for Hawaii residents – both the quality and availability of care. How has the Legislature responded?*

A. The Legislature addressed the availability of adult residential care homes (ARCH) by raising the ceiling on the number of nursing facility level residents who reside in type I ARCHs from two patients to three (**HB2157, HD1, SD1, CD1; Act 120**).

Q. *What's a type I home?*

A. A type I home is limited to five or fewer residents, and allows three of these to be nursing facility level residents, as a result of Act 120. A type II home may have six or more residents, with no more than twenty per cent of the home's licensed capacity as nursing facility level residents. Act 120 does not change the limits for type II homes. Currently there are 498 ARCHs with 2,643 beds in Hawaii. There are 254 type I facilities with 1,161 beds and 221 type I expanded facilities with 1,089 beds. About forty per cent of the type I expanded beds (437 beds) are at the nursing level.

Community-based facilities – such as care homes – are a critical component of long-term care options. Care homes are highly regulated by the Department of Health Office of Health Care Assurance Branch and provide the frail elderly with affordable, quality care services in home-based settings. And they do so for considerably less. The State pays \$2500 for a skilled nursing facility resident in a community based facility (i.e. care home) while a long term care facility such as a nursing home averages between \$8,000 to \$9,000 per month – three times the care home cost.

Q. *Will this help in other ways?*

A. Yes. It will also help to protect the right of choice for residents who are currently living in care homes, and may have lived there for many years. Before Act 120, care homes were allowed only two expanded or skilled nursing facility level residents in the home. If the care home had reached that limit and another resident was hospitalized and upon discharge, the level of care changed to the skilled nursing facility level, that resident would not have been allowed to return, even if the resident had lived there for some time. This has been a painful situation for the elderly residents, their families, and the care homes.

Q. *Will this be enough to make sure there are enough spaces available for frail elderly?*

A. The Legislature will monitor the progress. The Department of Health will report back to the 2011 and 2013 Legislatures on the effect of the increased capacity of type I expanded adult residential care homes. Act 120 will be repealed on June 30, 2013, unless the Legislature determines the change has been effective and extends the expansion on a permanent basis.