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## **GOVERNOR: EXECUTIVE BUDGET TO INCLUDE IMPORTANT NEW HOME AND COMMUNITY-BASED CARE INITIATIVES FOR NY SENIORS**

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### **Includes New "Access to Home" Program, Other New and Expanded Initiatives**

Governor George E. Pataki today announced that his 2005-06 Executive Budget, which will be unveiled on Tuesday, will include a series of new and expanded home and community-based care initiatives for New York's seniors.

"We're proud that during the past ten years, we've instituted a new approach to health care in New York - one that empowers people to make the decisions that affect their health and their lives," Governor Pataki said. "We've given New Yorkers, their families and their doctors more options and taken decisions out of the hands of government bureaucrats."

"My Executive Budget will include a number of important new and expanded health care initiatives that will provide New York seniors greater opportunities to remain in their own homes and in their own communities, surrounded by family and friends who love them," the Governor said. "These new initiatives offer seniors and their families with less costly alternatives to traditional nursing homes and institutional options, while giving them the critical support they need to achieve a level of independence in the comfort of their own home."

The Governor's Executive Budget will include the following:

- A doubling of annual funding for the Expanded in Home Services for the Elderly Program (EISEP) from \$25 million to \$50 million over two years to allow elderly New Yorkers to maintain their independence in their own homes, while receiving critical assistance with tasks such as shopping, light work and repairs. In addition, these funds will assist seniors whose incomes exceed Medicaid eligibility levels by providing them with case management services, caregiver respite services, personal care services and special equipment.
- Create a new "Access to Home" program that will invest \$10 million to make the homes and apartments of low and moderate income New Yorkers with disabilities more accessible. Under the program, home improvements and alterations would be made to permit the elderly and disabled to remain in their own homes, rather than enter a more costly and more intrusive nursing home setting. Examples of the home alterations could include construction of a handicapped accessible ramp or a handicapped accessible bathroom.
- Propose legislation authorizing demonstration projects to promote cost effective and high-quality long-term care services in community-based settings. These demonstration projects are an effort to provide personal care and respite services in the home with the assistance of family members or neighbors. Under this proposal, the State will enhance home care rates for medically complex cases while it seeks a Federal long-term care services waiver to provide other services - - including caregiver respite - - through these programs. Once again, the goal of the Medicaid waiver will be to avoid a more costly nursing home placement where an individual can continue to live in their own home with the appropriate support.
- Provide an additional \$250,000 in the Community Services for the Elderly (CSE) Living Program to assist the elderly living at home who are at risk of being placed in nursing homes and inpatient

facilities with daily chores, shopping needs and transportation. Adult day care services and counseling are also available through the CSE program.

Many of these proposals are the result of the recommendations made by the State Senate and the Governor's Health Care Reform Working Group which addressed a broad range of issues designed to modernize and strengthen the State's health care system. Most importantly was the Working Group's call to find new and innovative ways to allow providers to deliver health care outside of the traditional institutional setting. ###

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