Seniors Speak Campaign LinkedIn Article

**When Nebraska seniors speak, are we listening?**

It’s estimated that by 2030 the number of Nebraskans aged 65-74 will be nearly double what it was eight years ago. By 2050, the number of Nebraskans needing elder care will outnumber those needing childcare.

The rate our baby boomers are aging is, well, booming, which means a lot more people will need skilled nursing or assisted living services. We knew this was coming. What we didn’t anticipate was the increasing number of seniors who will, one day, rely on Medicaid to pay for their care.

Aging is an expected part of life and retirement accounts are designed to help us save money to pay for our needs as we live out our golden years. It’s all great in theory until we outlive those funds. Or are confronted with unforeseen medical bills. Then what? There are certain truths about aging in Nebraska that we all need to hear.

@Seniorsspeakne is a powerful initiative that sheds light on the realities of growing older in Nebraska. The initiative, a collaboration between @Nebraskahealthcareassociation and @LeadingAgeNebraska, paints a realistic picture of what our seniors are facing now and what they will be facing in the future. It allows them to voice their concerns and be heard by those who can help.

Seniors Speak Nebraska shatters the stereotype of seniors receiving public assistance. Many seniors who rely on Medicaid funded services worked their whole lives, raised families, sent kids to college and contributed to their retirement account. They never expected to need assistance when they grew older.

Right now, 53% of nursing facility residents and 25% of assisted living residents rely on Medicaid to pay for their care. But that’s just today. These percentages are expected to increase as Nebraska’s aging population grows.

It’s our responsibility to take care of our seniors as they once cared for us. We need to ensure that Medicaid funding for seniors remains a priority in our state budget by letting our legislators know it’s important to all Nebraskans.

We encourage you to visit seniorsspeakne.org to learn the truth about aging in Nebraska. You will be shocked at the alarming facts, the fears our seniors face and the extent of what is yet to come.

Jeremy Hohlen, CEO Heath Boddy, President & CEO  
LeadingAge Nebraska Nebraska Health Care Association