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PAR addresses concerns about reducing funding for elderly, disabled

The Public Affairs Research Council of Louisiana is addressing issues in the state's proposed budget for long-term care for elderly and disabled adults. In a brief titled "Working toward a client-centered and cost-effective approach to Medicaid long-term care for the elderly," the council raises concerns about shifting funding away from in-home care services and increasing funding for nursing home services. Louisiana system lags behind other states in its progress toward providing more long-term care services in home and community-based settings outside of nursing homes.

The state has increased the share of its long-term care budget that supports home and community-based services from 1.4% in 2002 to 29% by 2010, as compared to the national average of 40%. But if the executive budget is enacted as proposed, Louisiana will reduce the share of long-term care funding it provides for those services. The proposed share is 24% for fiscal year 2011. State-funded nursing homes have a high vacancy rate with more than 9,000 empty beds and no waiting list for nursing home care. The waiting list for in-home care services is about 18,000 people. "The Louisiana system has traditionally favored providing Medicaid care for the elderly in nursing homes, but has been shifting resources in recent years to provide more care at home and in the community," says Jim Brandt, PAR president. "It is crucial that this budget not reverse those gains."

Click [here](#) for a copy of the report.