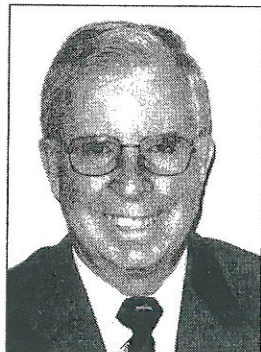


Reliable Information Needed

His e-mail to me spoke of selecting a nursing home for rehab after back surgery, and finding that “the place and room I was in was a dump.” After getting past some push-back from the nursing home staff, he arranged to transfer to another facility. In an ensuing e-mail he wrote, “I follow articles about care, and actually worked in a gerontology program in the mid-1970’s. But I had

On the Senior Agenda



By William F. Flynn Jr.

no idea about how to get the best post-hospital care. What should I have read to prepare for this?”

I responded that his story shined a spotlight on a critical unmet need that we’ve been asking the state to invest in---a better source of unbiased and reliable information about elder care from a source that’s

not selling something. At the Senior Agenda’s recent Conference and Expo, in a survey participants ranked “Improved access to information on care choices, programs, and resources” as our top legislative priority in 2018.

For years, when we have held community meetings and asked people to share their stories of “aging in the community,” invariably some of them complain about being unable to get information about help with aging problems or resources for elder care. When I asked them if they tried our state-funded aging and disability resource center, The Point, nearly all of them had never heard of it. That’s the first problem with The Point---it isn’t advertised or promoted, and it lacks a website. That’s the result of

its second problem---unlike similar programs in many other states, it receives no state funding, and only a modest amount of federal

er they or their loved one is eligible for state or federally-funded long term services and supports for seniors. We know that The

in making care decisions for their parents; and staff from elder care provider agencies.

We believe that this in-

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dollars. As a result it lacks the capabilities of other states’ aging and disabilities resource centers.

Generally speaking, people have told us they are looking for three things in connection with information and advice about aging: 1) reliable, up-to-date information and advice about available long-term services and supports; 2) expert advice on care and self-care for seniors, especially those living with chronic illnesses or disabilities, or help in locating sources of such advice; and 3) guidance on wheth-

Point has hard-working staff who do their best, but it comes up woefully short in meeting these needs due to lack of adequate funding.

State Representative Lauren Carson and Senator Maryellen Goodwin will be introducing legislation in 2018 to invest state funds in a major upgrade to The Point. If enacted, its improvements to The Point will help many people: all our seniors and their caregivers, not just those eligible for Medicaid; seniors’ adult children, especially those living out of state, who need to be involved

vestment will be the single most important component in building a much-improved long-term state elder care system for present and future seniors and their families.

William F. Flynn Jr. is executive director of the Senior Agenda Coalition. Contact him at senioragenda@yaho.com.
