



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David J. Valesky

AARP Commends Senator Valesky for Voting to Help NY's Family Caregivers

David J. Valesky

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Health Committee Sends CARE Act to Full Senate for Consideration; Bill Ensures Caregivers Receive Instruction in Post-Discharge Tasks

Family caregivers are too often left unprepared to provide proper care before taking their loved ones home from the hospital. State Senator David Valesky cast a key vote this week to advance legislation ensuring caregivers are offered instruction in any post-discharge tasks their older parents, spouses or other loved ones will need at home, fostering better care and potentially avoiding costly hospital re-admissions.

Senator Valesky and his colleagues on the Senate Health Committee unanimously advanced the CARE Act ([S.676](#)) this week for consideration by the full Senate.

The Caregiver Advise, Record and Enable Act, supported by a wide range of health, consumer, aging and disability organizations, requires hospitals to offer demonstrations and instructions on any post-discharge care and tasks family caregivers will have to perform at home, such as administering multiple medications, dressing wounds and operating medical equipment.

The bill also requires that patients' designated family caregivers be identified and included in official medical records and that hospitals notify family caregivers prior to a patient's transfer or discharge. AARP research shows that about half of all family caregivers perform medical and nursing tasks for their loved ones.

"Providing care for a loved one can be daunting, especially when medication and wound care is involved," Senator Valesky said. "This legislation is vitally important because it will incorporate caregivers into the discharge and instruction process. Its advancement by the Senate Health Committee is a great first step, and I look forward to full Senate passage."

"AARP commends Senator Valesky for recognizing that family caregivers need help - and for supporting a common sense solution to help caregivers be prepared to provide the care at home that our aging parents, spouses and loved ones need," said Beth Finkel, AARP NY State Director. "Helping caregivers helps our loved ones age independently, in their own homes - rather than in costly, taxpayer-financed nursing homes. We urge the full Senate and the Assembly to pass the CARE Act."

Gov. Andrew Cuomo voiced support for the key provisions of the CARE Act in his Opportunity Agenda/State of the State 2015 through the Caregiver Support Initiative (pages 305-306).

More than 90% of New York voters 50 and older think hospitals should "explain and demonstrate" to family caregivers medical tasks they'll have to perform when their loved ones are sent home from the hospital, a 2014 AARP survey found.