A critical analysis of the emerging crisis in long-term care for people with developmental disabilities

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Abstract: There is an impending crisis in long-term care for people with developmental disabilities. The demand for care will likely outpace the supply for decades to come. Factors, such as limited existing long-term care resources, increased life expectancy for people with developmental disabilities, changing family demographics, legal actions, and competition for resources with the elderly population are driving the crisis. Virtually every domain of social work practice will face challenges in this area. This article argues for an immediate response from the social work community in several areas. The profession needs to provide social workers with expanded training in family-centered approaches to working with people with developmental disabilities, develop new interventions, create new organizational supports, and practice assertive advocacy.