



aging care connections

Your Source For Senior Care

May 1, 2015

To the Editor:

Aging Care Connections, La Grange, a not-for-profit organization working to protect the safety and independence of older adults, stands united with the Illinois Council of Case Coordination Units, AARP, and the Illinois Association of Area Agencies on Aging in opposition to the Governor's proposed FY2016 Aging budget and the otherwise preventable suffering of our elderly citizens it will cause if enacted.

As a member of the Illinois Council of Case Coordination Units, a member association of 42 statewide Case Coordination Units and Adult Protective Service agencies directly serving more than 100,000 older adults annually, primarily through the Community Care Program (CCP), we oppose the proposed CCP eligibility changes which will result in extremely negative consequences for thousands of Illinoisans, their families and communities. An analysis of the proposed budget cuts indicates that 38% of older adults now helped by CCP would not have qualified for the Community Care Program if the Governor's proposed changes had taken effect one year ago. One year from now, we will be faced with staggeringly escalated Medicaid costs due to all of the individuals who have nowhere else to turn besides emergency rooms and nursing homes.

In the communities we serve, 30% of our clients would lose services. The budget cuts would prevent an additional 30% of participants from entering the program. The reality is that the CCP program costs an average of \$800 a month to serve our clients. If these individuals are diverted to nursing homes, the cost per person is a staggering \$4,500 per month. And, as we all know, seniors want to stay in their own homes and, with the assistance of services provided by the CCP program, they can.

We realize the severity of the Illinois budget deficit, however, short-term solutions will lead to more serious deficits in the long-term. We urge Illinois residents to contact their State Senators and Representatives to speak out against these proposed changes.

Thank you.

Debra Vershelde
Executive Director
Aging Care Connections, La Grange

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