

Long-Term Care

Monday, July 18, 2011

Uncertainties Surround Fate of California's Adult Day Health Care Centers

Recent budget wrangling has raised questions about the future of about 300 adult day health care centers across California, the [San Francisco Chronicle](#) reports.

The centers provide health care, physical therapy, counseling, exercise and other services for about 37,000 seniors and people with disabilities (Lagos, *San Francisco Chronicle*, 7/17).

Recent Budget Action

The [recently-approved state budget package](#) cut about \$170 million from Medi-Cal by eliminating funding for the state's ADHC program. Medi-Cal is California's Medicaid program.

The Legislature initially intended to eliminate ADHC while setting aside \$85 million to establish a smaller-scale program called Keeping Adults Free from Institutions, which would focus on the highest-need populations (Kisken, [Ventura County Star](#), 7/15).

Although Gov. Jerry Brown (D) approved the \$85 million allocation, he vetoed budget language specifying how that money would be used (Wood, [Voice of OC](#), 7/18).

Brown said he plans to assess whether existing state services could fill the gap left by the elimination of ADHC, adding that the \$85 million could go toward transitioning beneficiaries to other programs.

The ADHC funds were set to end on Aug. 31, but state officials recently said the funding would continue for at least another month.

Pending Legislation

Both houses of the Legislature recently passed a bill ([AB 96](#)) that would use the \$85 million allocation to create the new KAFI program. Last week, lawmakers sent the measure to the governor.

A spokesperson for the governor's office said Brown would not comment on the bill before taking action on it.

Norman Williams, spokesperson for the Department of Health Care Services, said the current plan is to evaluate existing programs that could assist in transitioning people out of the ADHC program. He said, "We're moving forward with the transition plan, and KAFI isn't part of that plan." (*Ventura County Star*, 7/15).

The governor has until July 26 to veto or sign AB 96.

Legal Challenge to ADHC Elimination

Meanwhile, ADHC advocates are awaiting the outcome of a [lawsuit filed by Disability Rights California](#) challenging the state's right to eliminate the program (*San Francisco Chronicle*, 7/17).

Last week, the U.S. Justice Department filed a [statement of interest](#) supporting the lawsuit, saying the state's decision to eliminate Medi-Cal funding for ADHC violates the Americans with Disabilities Act and would put program beneficiaries "at risk of unnecessary institutionalization."

A hearing on the case is scheduled for July 26 (*Voice of OC*, 7/18).