



Adult Day Healthcare Gets Reprieve

Program Changes Will Leave Some Without Coverage

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BAKERSFIELD, Calif. -- Thousands of Californians are breathing a sigh of relief now that the state has agreed to continue paying for some adult day healthcare.

The state had cut the million dollar program to try and balance the budget.

After the state announced they were cutting the program, advocate groups sued and the state agreed to restore at least part of the program.

Adult day health care centers like Elder Life can be a saving grace to those with elderly family members.

"The reason this level of care is so important, this adult day healthcare, is because there are people who are not safe to be in their homes. They need to be medically monitored. They need to have the stimulation both physically and mentally, in order to keep them up and about," said Elder Life Program Coordinator Kathy Hilberg.

So when the state said they would no longer pay for adult day healthcare for Medi-Cal patients, 35,000 California families were impacted.

"They would not be able to get the kind of care that would allow them to stay independent in the community, and would force them into a nursing home," Hilberg said.

But after some groups sued the state agreed to fund a new program called community based adult services.

"It will be transitioned into a new program which might not allow this service for everybody," Hilberg said.

The state says it will save money and still provide the neediest people with services. The new program will start March first.

"At that time, there will be a new program that will be more medically stringent, but will allow for this kind of care to continue in our state," Hilberg said.

Until then, centers like Elder Life will continue to improve the quality of life for many elderly people while they figure out who will qualify for the new program and who will not.

"In our program it will be more than 50 percent because our people are much more medically needy," Hilberg said.

Local advocates say they don't have the eligibility requirements for the new program yet, but for now they are celebrating the continuation of state-funded adult day healthcare.

Link to video: <http://www.turonto23.com/news/29893127/detail.html>