

Judge approves settlement on adult day healthcare

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A federal judge gave her final stamp of approval on a legal settlement preventing the closing of adult day healthcare centers, which had been targeted for elimination because of California's budget crisis.

Advocates for the elderly and disabled were concerned that closing the centers would force thousands of people to be institutionalized rather than live at home and receive therapy and other services at community centers.

Under the settlement, roughly half of the 35,000 participants will qualify for a new, intensive healthcare program called Community-Based Adult Services.

The other half would receive case management services designed to help them continue living at home.

"They're going to receive those services to ensure they remain in the community and out of those institutions," said Tony Cava, spokesman for the California Department of Health Services. "That's the goal of the program."

The settlement was reached in November and received preliminary approval from U.S. District Judge Sandra Brown Armstrong in December. The program is scheduled to transition at the beginning of March.

“This settlement demonstrates that even in these challenging budget times, our state has recognized the importance of maintaining this uniquely beneficial and cost-effective program,” said Ken Kuwayti, a lawyer who represented advocates for the elderly and disabled.

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Photo: Doriah Chung (center) at her adult day care center in Los Angeles. Credit: Genaro Molina / Los Angeles Times