

Readers' Forum for Jan. 29

From Marin Independent Journal readers

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HEALTH CARE

Foolhardy cuts

Thank you for your recent article about the proposed cuts to Adult Day Health Care Services budget.

I am gravely concerned about the governor's recent proposal to slash funding for Adult Day Health Care and Multipurpose Senior Services Program.

This is fool-hardy and short-sighted.

As a vocational rehabilitation counselor, specializing in the elderly, I have seen, first hand, the important and life-saving work done by these programs.

Providing essential nursing care to low-income seniors in adult day health care, such as physical therapy, occupational therapy and wound care, as well as care for chronic diseases like diabetes, ultimately saves the state millions of dollars by reducing emergency room visits, sustaining independence and slowing the rate of physical and mental decline.

If we do not provide these essential services within day health care programs, the state will be burdened by greater costs for our low-income seniors in increased and longer hospitalizations, as well as increased costs for skill nursing facilities.

In addition, Multipurpose Senior Services Program provides an important adjunct service by arranging for and monitoring the use of community services to prevent or delay premature institutional placement of these frail clients. These services are provided at a cost lower than that for nursing facility care; also saving the state of California millions of dollars.

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