

## POWAY: Hundreds rally against adult day care cuts in Poway

By GARY WARTH [gwarth@nctimes.com](mailto:gwarth@nctimes.com) | Posted: Tuesday, November 8, 2011 6:15 pm



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Ruth Falardeau, a client at the AmeriCare Adult Day Health Care Center in San Marcos, joined dozens of other people out front of the Poway Adult Day Health Care Center during a rally to tell Gov. Jerry Brown to stop the elimination of funding for Adult Day Health Care. DON BOOMER | [dboomer@nctimes.com](mailto:dboomer@nctimes.com)



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Poway Adult Day Health Care Center Administrative Director Kathryn Holt addressed the crowd outside the facility during a rally on Tuesday to tell Gov. Jerry Brown to stop the elimination of funding for Adult Day Health Care. DON BOOMER | [dboomer@nctimes.com](mailto:dboomer@nctimes.com)

About 200 people attended a rally Tuesday outside Poway Adult Day Health Care to oppose state funding cuts they said will eliminate jobs and end up costing California more in the long run.

"Stop, stop, stop, don't close our center," chanted the crowd, which included many people who wore symbolic red shirts for the event.

Adult day care centers are staffed with nurses and social workers and provide recreation and socialization opportunities for seniors or others who are medically frail or disabled.

More than 300 centers in California get roughly \$76 a day for each person under their care, but the benefit has been cut under a budget proposed by Gov. Jerry Brown. About 35,000 people in the state use adult day care centers, said Lydia Missaelides, executive director of the California Association for Adult Day Services in Sacramento.

The cuts are scheduled to take effect Dec. 1, although a legal challenge is scheduled to be heard by a judge Nov. 15. Brown has said the state cannot afford the payments, and in July he signed a bill that would allow centers to operate without Medi-Cal licensing to serve participants who pay for their own care or who are covered by private insurance.

Missaelides said an association survey showed that most people who use the centers now probably will end up in more expensive nursing facilities, and many will have to use emergency rooms to treat injuries and other mishaps that otherwise could have been prevented or treated at the centers.



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Dozens of people gather outside the Poway Adult Day Health Care Center, including many of clients from several other adult day health care facilities, during a rally to tell Gov. Jerry Brown to stop the elimination of funding for Adult Day Health Care. DON BOOMER | [dboomer@nctimes.com](mailto:dboomer@nctimes.com)

"Within 30 days, 25 percent would be discharged to a nursing facility and by six months, a total of 62 percent would be placed in a nursing facility," she said about the survey's findings about what would happen if the cuts go through. "Within 90 days of closures, there would be roughly 85 percent of patients seeking medical care in emergency rooms."

Several speakers Tuesday reiterated the argument that the cuts would end up costing the state more in urgent-care expenses.

"Research has shown that closing these centers is not going to reduce the state's budget deficit, only make it worse," said Kathryn Holt, administrative director of the Poway Adult Day Health Center.

Poway City Councilman Jim Cunningham said the cuts will be costly in the end and result in hundreds of jobs being lost.

"This issue cuts across political lines," he said. "From a fiscally conservative point of view, most studies show that the governor's proposal will drive costs and the taxpayers' burden up by driving these fine, independent users of day services into already-crowded 24-hour care institutions or be confined to their homes (waiting for the ever-elusive home-care nurse to arrive.)"

Bob Keiser, an AARP volunteer from San Diego, said California had been a national leader in demonstrating how to care for the frail and elderly, but it was at risk of losing that recognition.

"The elimination of the program is not only wrong today, it will cause a greater harm to people tomorrow," he said about the effects of the planned cuts.

Marsha Linehan, whose sister uses the Poway center, said there are no other programs in the state that provide the same level of care while letting the elderly and disabled remain in their own homes.

"It is a respite for us, her caregivers," she said about the center's care for her sister, Anita Moss. "I know on the two days a week that Anita goes to the center, she will be monitored, freed and nurtured."

Besides the Poway center, Missaelides said on Monday that other North County facilities that would be affected by the budget cuts include the George G. Glenner Alzheimer's Family Center in Encinitas, North County Adult Day Health Center in Vista, AmeriCare Adult Day Health Center in San Marcos and Redwood Elderlink in Escondido.

Missaelides said about 23 centers in the state have closed this year, and three more have told her they may close by the end of the year if the cuts go through.

Rallies similar to the one in Poway on Tuesday have been held in San Francisco and Los Angeles.

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