

## Adult daycare director reacts to ADHC slashing

July 25, 2011 8:48 AM

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THE PORTERVILLE RECORDER

Gov. Jerry Brown's decision to eliminate the state's Adult Day Health Care program doesn't sit well with Cheri Taylor.

"Closing any kind of organization that is there to help the elderly is scary to me because we're pulling them out by the roots," said Taylor, Porterville Adult Day Services' executive director. "Once the roots are out, it takes more money to build them back up again."

As part of his effort to close an ugly budget gap, Brown said all of California's 330 ADHC centers — some of which have already shuttered — have to be closed by Sept. 1. The move will save the state \$169.6 million in fiscal year 2011-12, but some believe the closure of ADHC centers will, in the long run, hurt more than help considering that the centers keep seniors and people with disabilities out of expensive nursing homes.

Taylor's center is not an ADHC program. It is a nonprofit, social daycare that relies on the out-of-pocket model, donations, fundraisers, a federal grant and money from the United Way to stay alive. In fact, there is not a single ADHC center in Tulare County.

"I know that the economy is in crisis. I know that cuts needed to be made. I am aware of that," Taylor said. "But I'm scared that we're not doing it wisely, that we're not thinking of the future and how we can be helpful to those in need — the need being 50 percent of our population."

About 35,000 beneficiaries use ADHC services each month in California. The governor did decide to set aside \$85 million to help these people make the transition to other types of services and long-term care.



Raymond Bartlett, left, sings a song with Alejandra Torres during their group activity session Thursday at Porterville Adult Day Services in Porterville.

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Cheri Taylor talks about how the governor's newly signed budget affect PADS Thursday at Porterville Adult Day Services in Porterville.

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CHIEKO HARA

“The government’s not going to provide programs to help them,” Taylor said. “It’s going to have to come out of pocket. The families are going to have to be there to support them.”

According to the California Association for Adult Day Services, 92 percent of ADHC patients rely on Medi-Cal for their health care. Taylor’s center, which is licensed by the state, is not dependent on Medi-Cal in any way.

“I can’t be dependent on Medi-Cal. Neither can they,” Taylor said. “They’re going to have to think of a different way to get that money, and they’re going to need state and federal funds to make it run. They’re going to have to use a different model.”

PADS currently employs a staff of six and has 18 clients, most of whom have some type of dementia. Taylor asks that caregivers make a \$5/hour donation for the services — which include short- and long-term care, showers, grooming, family counseling, personal counseling, managed-care counseling, and a van that picks up and drops off clients at their homes — that are provided to clients at PADS. She added that scholarships are available to whittle down the cost even further.

“How much do people pay for childcare? I think that the elderly are just as important,” Taylor said. “Personally, I think that how we take care of the elderly reflects the morals and values of our nation.”

The whole idea of Taylor’s center, like the soon-to-be-deceased ADHC program, is to prevent clients from prematurely being institutionalized.

“We don’t want to leave our homes,” Taylor said. “I believe that if we want honor, dignity and choice for ourselves, which is what the baby-boomer generation wants, then we better start thinking about our neighbors and helping them receive honor, dignity and choice.”

Taylor’s center already has taken a \$92,000 hit. Two years ago, the \$80,000 grant that she had been receiving to fund the Alzheimer’s Daycare Resource Center, which had been around for more than 25 years, was yanked away. On top of that, another \$12,000, which she had been collecting from the Kings-Tulare Area Agency on Aging for a nutrition program, quickly disappeared.

“All of the staff took cuts,” Taylor said. “We cut everything in half, and we just opened our doors and prayed that people would start walking in so that we could at least retain clients and support what we were doing here. Our doors are still open two years later by the grace of this community and the organizations that have donated.”

And Taylor and her staff are hoping that PADS’ doors will remain open for many more years.

“It’s important to honor our father and our mother and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

We need to go back to that,” Taylor said. “But we need to know our neighbors and what their names are. We need to come together as a community and as individuals to work together.”

For more information on PADS, call 783-9815, e-mail [pads@ocsnet.net](mailto:pads@ocsnet.net) or visit [www.padsinfo.com](http://www.padsinfo.com).

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