

Few resources available for families fighting Alzheimer's

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Limited resources

Care options for families dealing with Alzheimer's disease are limited.

Adult day health care: The centers provide medical care and supervision several hours a day. Families covered by Medi-Cal are in limbo because of California's plan to end that funding on Dec. 1. A federal judge is expected to rule on a lawsuit seeking to block the state in November. If the funding ends, state officials say they'll find new services to replace the medical care offered by the health care centers.

Adult day care: The centers provide care for seniors but generally are not funded by the government. For example, a state grant that once helped support the Alzheimer's Day Care Resource Center at Senior Concerns in Thousand Oaks was eliminated several years ago; the day care program for dementia patients still operates through private funding and charges a fee to families.

Assisted living centers, board and care and memory care facilities: Offer residential care for patients with Alzheimer's but most are not covered by Medi-Cal or Medicare.

Home health services: Provides in-home care and, in some situations, is covered by government programs.

Nursing homes: Skilled nursing facilities will offer care that may be covered by Medi-Cal for Alzheimer's patients who meet financial requirements and also have other illnesses that require constant care.

Information: For information on care options and support groups in Ventura County, contact the Alzheimer's Association at 800-272-3900 or 484-6028. People also can contact the Long Term Care Services of Ventura County Ombudsman program at 656-1986 for pre-placement counseling and family caregiver services.