

PRESS RELEASE

May 27, 2020

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Balancing the California budget on the backs of at-risk seniors

State budget proposes to eliminate Community Based Adult Services (CBAS)

WATSONVILLE, CA – The May Revision of the California Budget proposes to eliminate funding for Community Based Adults Services (CBAS), like Community Bridges’ Elderday program, no sooner than July 1, 2020. CBAS programs provide one of our state’s primary alternatives to skilled nursing facility placement and institutionalization. Elimination of the program will force up to 36,000 seniors into costly nursing homes, which have seen the highest instances of death during the COVID-19 crisis and have been the epicenter of where the crisis has hit hardest. Closing CBAS programs does not save the State money as the monthly cost of a private nursing home room is at least three times the cost to attend adult day health services.

“Shutting the doors of CBAS affects ALL generations. CBAS serves primarily low-income, Medi-Cal eligible seniors and adults with disabilities. Families of our participants especially need CBAS now so they can return to work to contribute to our workforce and our economy,” states Lois Sones, Elderday Program Director.

Governor Newsom has proposed a replacement program, Long Term Care at Home, to provide skilled nursing in seniors’ homes. The Department of Health Care Services would undertake oversight of the program by January 1, 2021. “However, consultation with current stakeholders, including medical advisors, long term care advocates and current members of the Master Plan on Aging, have had zero input to the potential calamities that such a proposal will have on dementia patients, clients and their families who are also seeking respite,” says Chief Executive Officer Ray Cancino. Cancino indicates that there are significant obstacles to overcome to build an entirely new program in a short time frame. There are concerns that this replacement program will encounter difficulties similar to the Great Plates program that was rolled out quickly and not able to be implemented by all counties across the state. “Most importantly,” says Sones, “the proposed Long Term Care at Home program does not solve the issue of respite for caregivers, keeps our elders confined in their homes, and is not a feasible alternative to having the daily medical interactions with staff and the social interactions with peers which programs like Elderday provide.”

The public is urged to contact their State Senator and Assembly members to express their opposition to the elimination of CBAS programs. Budgets hearings and decisions are happening now so it is important to respond quickly.

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What are Community Based Adult Services (CBAS)?

CBAS is a community-based health program that provides health and social services to seniors and adults with disabilities who are at risk of institutional placement. CBAS serves approximately 36,000 people, 34,679 of whom are Medi-Cal eligible. Participants in the program are individuals with Alzheimer's dementia, serious psychiatric disabilities, other cognitive disabilities and/or significant health issues such as heart disease, cancer or Parkinson's disease. Most participants require care and supervision by family members and other caregivers around the clock; for every CBAS participant, there is an estimated 1-2.5 family caregivers who are involved in their lives and care. CBAS provides both the medical care and supports needed for these individuals to remain at home.

About Elderday

Elderday is an adult day health care center that empower elders to live at home with independence and dignity. At Elderday participants benefit from nursing care, physical and occupational therapies, referral to resources, therapeutic activities, healthy meals and access to onsite mental health and nutrition services. Week-day hours make it possible for participants to stay independent and in their own homes for as long as possible, while offering family remembers and caregivers well-deserved respite. Elderday is free for those eligible for Medi-Cal. Costs can also be covered by the Veteran's Administration, long-term care insurance, or private pay on a sliding scale. Transportation to the center is also provided.

ABOUT COMMUNITY BRIDGES

Community Bridges envisions a thriving community where every person has the opportunity to unleash their full potential. Together, our family of programs delivers essential services, provides equitable access to resources, and advocates for health and dignity across every stage of life. To learn more, please visit www.communitybridges.org.

The Community Bridges family of programs includes the Child & Adult Care Food Program, Child Development Division, Women, Infants and Children (WIC), La Manzana Community Resources, Live Oak Community Resources, Mountain Community Resources, Nueva Vista Community Resources, Elderday Adult Day Health Care, Lift Line and Meals on Wheels for Santa Cruz County.