



# Hamilton County's Elderly Services Program



2014 Annual Report



## About the Hamilton County Elderly Services Program

The Hamilton County Elderly Services program helps older adults remain independent within the familiar surroundings of their own homes for as long as possible.

Nursing homes are often necessary, but most people do not want to go there before their time. With the help of services such as home-delivered meals and personal care, many older adults can delay or prevent nursing home placement.

Of all the options for long-term care, in-home care is also the least expensive. It costs about \$383 a month per client in Hamilton County ESP, compared to almost \$5,000 a month for nursing home care.

Hamilton County's Elderly Services Program is supported by 1) a local tax levy, 2) funds distributed by Council on Aging of Southwestern Ohio (COA) from Title III of the Older Americans Act, and 3) co-payments from participants who are able to contribute to the cost of their care. Donations are also accepted, but not required, for home-delivered meals.

COA administers the program under contract with Hamilton County Commissioners and works with the Hamilton County Elderly Services Program Advisory Council, a volunteer community advisory council.

COA handles assessment, intake, and care management. COA also processes all billing, and provides program planning, reporting, auditing, contracting and provider services, technical assistance, and community engagement activities. Organizations contract with COA to provide in-home services such as home care assistance (housekeeping help, personal care), electronic monitoring systems, and transportation.



### **Hamilton County's Elderly Services Program** Helping older adults maintain independence in their homes

**(513) 721-1025**

**(800) 252-0155**

**Credits:** This report was produced by the Communications Department of Council on Aging of Southwestern Ohio. Data compiled and provided by Council on Aging's Business Intelligence and Accounting departments.

## The Elderly Services Program is provided by:

### Hamilton County Commissioners:



From left to right: Greg Hartmann, Chris Monzel, Todd Portune

### Hamilton County Elderly Services Program Advisory Council:

The Hamilton County Elderly Services Program Advisory Council is a volunteer community advisory council whose members are appointed by Hamilton County Commissioners to help with oversight of the program. Members as of 12/31/2014:

Jonathan Dever

Andrea Herzig

Martha Jean Hill

Jacqueline Kebede

Catherine Mills

Erica Riehl

Michael Robison

### Program Administrator:



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Cincinnati, Ohio 45246  
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(800) 252-0155  
[www.help4seniors.org](http://www.help4seniors.org)

Dear Friends and Supporters,

It is my pleasure to present the 2014 Annual Report for the Hamilton County Elderly Services Program.

**In 2014, we helped 5,399 older adults to remain independent in their homes** with services such as home-delivered meals, transportation, and home care assistance. Many of these seniors have chronic conditions that would force them into a nursing home if it were not for the Elderly Services Program.

ESP is a community program of which we can be proud. It is paid for by the citizens of Hamilton County for the benefit of our senior residents and their families. It also uses and helps strengthen local provider organizations and businesses.

Our Elderly Services Program is unusual. While some communities throughout the country do have tax levies that benefit older adults in various ways, relatively few have taxpayer-supported programs that are devoted almost entirely to in-home care services for frail seniors. In Hamilton County, we are in a better position than many other places to serve the aging population.

That said, due to demand outpacing available funding, Council on Aging has been forced to manage enrollment in HCESP. That means we have a waiting list, which started in June 2013. In 2014 we were even forced to close the program temporarily. It has since reopened and we do regularly enroll people who meet certain criteria.

To stretch the tax dollars and serve as many seniors as possible, we have taken steps to save money via competitive bidding for providers. You can read about those successes in these pages.

This report tells the story of the Elderly Services Program through the words and photos of two of our clients along with information such as client demographics, names of contracted providers, program outcomes, and expenses. We watch the program closely for trends and manage accordingly so that it will continue to provide compassionate, high-quality service while delivering good value for taxpayers.



*Suzanne Burke*

Suzanne Burke, CEO  
Council on Aging of Southwestern Ohio



“Before we started doing this, she always called on us when she needed help in an emergency,” Justin (right) said. “One of the big things is just spending time with her,” Jonathan (left) added. “It’s very lonely to sit here by yourself.”

For 10 years, Dottie, a Hamilton County ESP client, lived with her daughter and helped raise her twin grandsons, Justin and Jonathan. Now, they are giving back to her as her helpers and caregivers. Since 2010, they’ve been handling her housework, laundry, grocery shopping, and are generally available for whatever help she needs.

## 2014 Program Highlights

**Cost savings through competitive bidding:** Council on Aging implemented new contracts for two services that resulted in significant cost savings for the program and more consistent service delivery for clients. Through a competitive bidding process, COA reduced the number of contracted providers for electronic monitoring systems from six to one. In Hamilton County, the estimated cost savings is more than \$1.3 million over five years. In addition, Council on Aging sought bids for home care assistance services which ultimately resulted in cost savings of more than \$318,100 annually. Savings do not accrue to Council on Aging, but instead enable the program to serve more seniors.

**Waiting list remains, but is reduced:** Hamilton County ESP has had a waiting list since 2013. At one point in 2014, it numbered more than 1,000 people and the program even had to close temporarily to reduce enrollment and stay within budget. We have been enrolling people in critical or emergency need, however. Also, by regularly contacting people on the waiting list and eliminating those who no longer need the program, we have been gradually reducing the number, which is about 250 as of this writing in spring 2015.

## Dottie's story

"I don't want to dwell on what's *wrong* with me. I want to dwell on what I *can* do."

Given her many health problems, it would be understandable if Dottie kept to the sidelines of life. At age 74, she has diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, vascular disease, and kidney failure requiring dialysis three times a week. She needs a walker to get around.

But sitting on the sidelines is not Dottie's style. Never has been. The mother of six and grandmother of 13, she worked in real estate and land development. She owned and renovated the Venice Antique Mall in Ross until she had to sell the business following a stroke in 1998.

"I never was one to sit around," she said. "What you give up, you don't get back."

For 10 years, Dottie lived with her daughter and helped raise her twin grandsons, Justin and Jonathan. Now, they are giving back to her as her helpers and caregivers. Since 2010, they've been handling her housework, laundry, grocery shopping, and are generally available for whatever help she needs.

Justin and Jonathan receive payment for their services through the Hamilton County Elderly Services Program's consumer directed care option. Consumer directed care allows a relative or friend to serve as a designated primary caregiver. Because the payment scale is reduced, consumer directed care is often used when someone's care plan cost is high or if they have difficulty working with home health aides. In addition to consumer directed care, Dottie receives transportation to dialysis from ESP.

"Consumer directed care has to be set up as a solution in the care plan," said Donna, Dottie's Council on Aging Care Manager. "And it's for people who would be at high risk for nursing home placement without this option."

Becoming Dottie's caregivers was a natural thing, her grandsons said.

"Before we started doing this, she always called on us when she needed help in an emergency," Justin said.

"One of the big things is just spending time with her," Jonathan added. "It's very lonely to sit here by yourself."

Dottie makes sure that doesn't happen often. She keeps things entertaining by hosting card parties. She's a force to be reckoned with when it comes to games; within two years of learning bridge, she was winning tournaments.

Looking around her small apartment, Dottie said, "I expect to stay here till I die, thanks to Donna and the program. Without her help, I couldn't stay here. Could you see me being in a nursing home?"



**Top:** Dottie with grandsons Justin (left) and Jonathan (right).  
**Bottom:** Dottie with her Council on Aging Care Manager, Donna

## Council on Aging's role in the Hamilton County Elderly Services Program

As administrator of the Elderly Services Program in Hamilton County, COA ensures that frail seniors receive the highest quality services at the lowest cost in order to serve as many seniors as possible with the tax dollars available.

COA's responsibilities include: program design and development, contracting and provider services, data analysis and reporting, financial services and oversight, information technology, quality improvement, and community engagement.

### Through these services, COA is able to:

- Design and change programs to fit community needs and manage costs
- Keep costs down and quality up through competition and contract management
- Provide a central point of access to information and resources
- Help service providers improve quality and efficiency via performance reviews, client satisfaction surveys, and a centralized client database
- Report program performance and trends to the public, including quarterly reports and presentations to the program's community advisory council
- Ensure stewardship of taxpayer dollars, including collection of client donations (for home-delivered meals) and client co-payments
- Raise and sustain public awareness and confidence, including program brochure, participation in community events, and community presentations

### Other services available through COA for Hamilton County residents

As the state-designated Area Agency on Aging, Council on Aging provides additional services to Hamilton County residents and their families. These include:

**Aging and Disability Resources Center:** COA's call center and "front door" to services and community resources. COA responded to more than 37,000 inquiries for help in FFY 2014. Reach the Call Center via 800-252-0155 or [www.help4seniors.org](http://www.help4seniors.org).

**PASSPORT and Assisted Living Waiver:** PASSPORT provides in-home care for low-income adults age 60 and older. The Assisted Living Waiver provides an intermediate level of care for low-income adults. On average, these programs provide care for a fraction of the cost of a nursing home. COA administers these programs which served 1,952 Hamilton County residents in FFY 2014.

**MyCare Ohio:** MyCare Ohio is a managed care program for Ohioans who receive BOTH Medicare and Medicaid. The program is administered by the Ohio Department of Medicaid. The goal is to deliver better care for lower cost by coordinating health care, behavioral health services, and long-term care services and supports for high-need, low-income consumers. People enrolled in MyCare Ohio are served by two health plans selected by the state for our region: Aetna Better Health of Ohio and Molina Healthcare of Ohio. COA provides care coordination for MyCare Ohio members via contracts with these plans. MyCare Ohio went into effect in June, 2014. COA served 1,886 Hamilton County MyCare Ohio members in FFY 2014 (between June 1 - September 30, 2014).

**Ohio Home Care Waiver:** In-home care for financially eligible children and adults who have significant disabilities and/or mental health needs. COA provided case management to 204 Hamilton County residents in FFY 2014.

**Care Transitions:** Health coaching for older adults who have been hospitalized for serious and usually chronic conditions, such as heart failure. The goal is to prevent unnecessary and costly hospital readmissions and emergency department visits. COA has a contract with the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to deliver Care Transitions to patients at nine regional hospitals, including The Christ Hospital; Mercy Health: The Jewish Hospital, Anderson Hospital, and West Hospital; and the University of Cincinnati Medical Center in Hamilton County. Since June 2012, more than 10,000 patients have participated in the program with a readmission rate to participating hospitals of 10.5 percent (compared to the 2010 national average of 21.3 percent).

**Title III of the Older Americans Act:** COA administers this federal funding for services delivered by senior centers and other organizations that provide services such as transportation, congregate meals, caregiver support, legal help, and wellness education.

## Parthenia's story

Parthenia had been living alone in her home in Avondale when her son decided that being on her own was no longer safe. She agreed to move as long as he could find her a place where she could be around other people and make lots of new friends. He found the perfect spot.

For the past 13 years, Parthenia, 86, has lived in a small apartment at The Mercy Community at Winton Woods, a former Franciscan seminary converted to senior housing. Neighbors and friends drop in all the time, bringing groceries, books to read, or just to chat. Nearly every day there is some special activity – a party or concert or class in chair exercises. And the setting is special, with lots of trees and a lake.

"Friends? Oh my, all kinds," Parthenia said. "Everybody is so nice to each other. They check on each other. And they've got a library where you can go if you want to be quiet and just look at the birds and the ducks on the lake and the deer coming across the field. It's beautiful."

A housekeeper in a hospital for 29 years, Parthenia has difficulty with her legs and has had a knee replaced. She uses a walker to get around. She heard about Council on Aging from a staff member at the building who could see that she needed additional help after foot surgery. Parthenia enrolled in Hamilton County ESP in 2005 and today receives homemaking services, an electronic monitoring system, and home-delivered meals.

"I'm going to stay here until the good Lord drags me on out of here," Parthenia said. "This little corner, it's very special to me."



## Profile of a typical Elderly Services Program client

Because of health problems and disability, ESP clients aren't out and about as they once were. But in their younger days, they were teachers, office and factory workers, homemakers, nurses, and civic volunteers – in short, the backbone of the community. Today, the Elderly Services Program helps them preserve their independence and dignity.

The typical ESP client is a woman in her 80s. She lives alone on a modest income of about \$19,300 a year, from which she pays \$2,844 in out-of-pocket medical costs.

Her income is too high for Medicaid, the government insurance program for the poor, but too low to allow her to hire in-home help. Her family helps, but cannot provide all the care she needs.

Because of health problems, she can no longer do certain basic activities without help, like shop for groceries or clean her house. She is prone to falling and moves about with difficulty.

From ESP, she receives an electronic monitoring system, a daily home-delivered meal, and several hours a week of housekeeping help. ESP also added grab bars in her bathroom. With the help of her family and these basic services, she avoids premature placement in a nursing home.

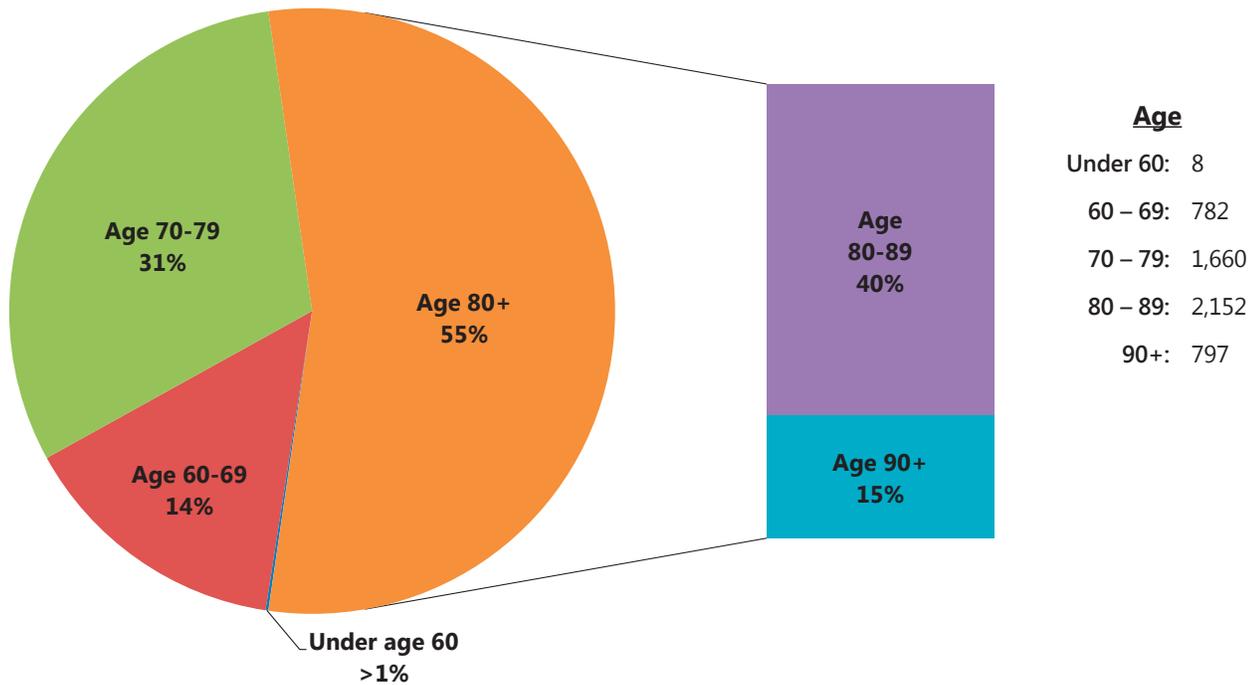
**Total clients served in 2014: 5,399.** In addition to the client stories presented in this report, the data on the following pages provide more detail about the type of person who receives care through Hamilton County ESP and how tax dollars are spent. Client totals on these pages may vary due to different data reporting requirements in each category. Also, percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

## Where Clients Live

Jurisdiction	Clients Served	Jurisdiction	Clients Served
Cincinnati	2,628	Norwood	103
Green Township	276	Cheviot	90
Colerain Township	243	Sycamore Township	81
Mount Healthy	167	Reading	80
Delhi Township	166	North College Hill	78
Springfield Township	165	Blue Ash	57
Anderson	148	Sharonville	55
Springdale	141	Silverton	53
Forest Park	124	Other	636
Harrison	108		
<b>Total Clients Served in Hamilton County</b>			<b>5,399</b>

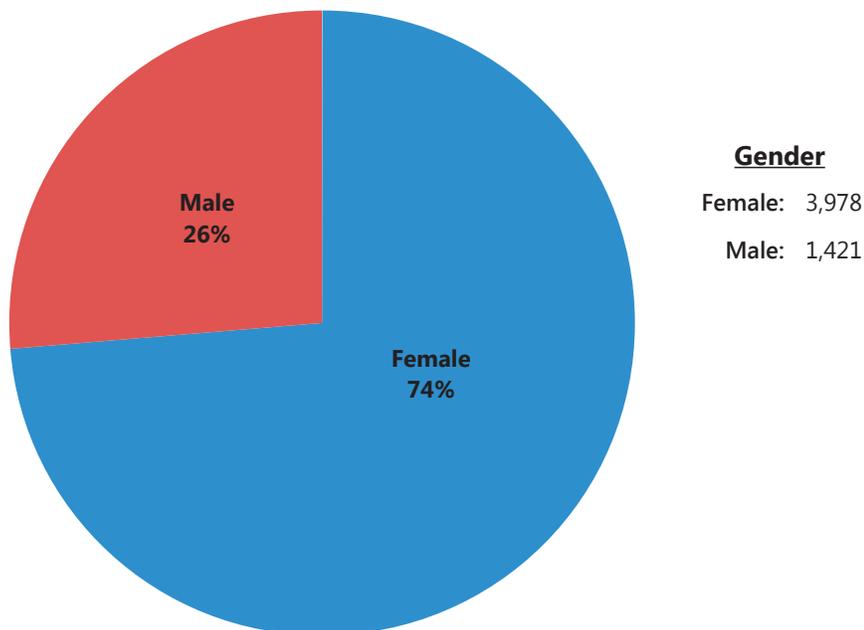
## Client Age

The average age of Hamilton County ESP clients in 2014 was 80. Eligibility for the program starts at age 60. Some services are also available to clients under age 60 who have dementia, including Alzheimer's disease. The chart below shows that more than half of ESP clients are age 80 or older.



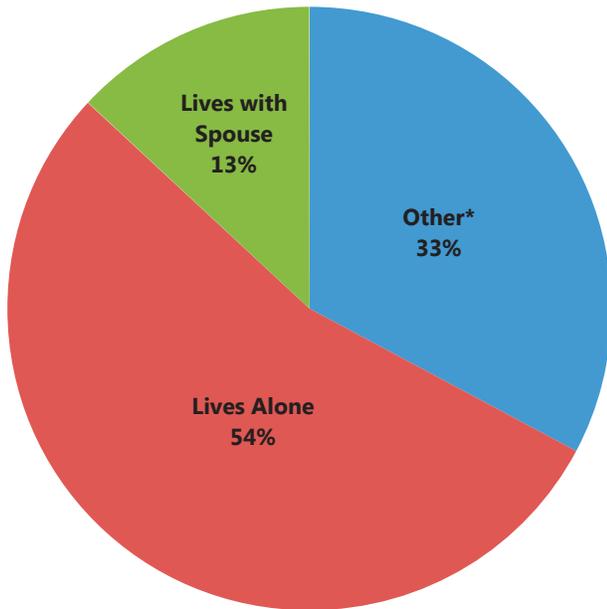
## Gender

Nearly three out of every four clients enrolled in the Hamilton County Elderly Services Program are women.



## Living Arrangements

ESP is intended to supplement care already provided by family and friends. Many clients, however, do not have anyone who helps them regularly other than through the program. **More than half of clients live alone.**



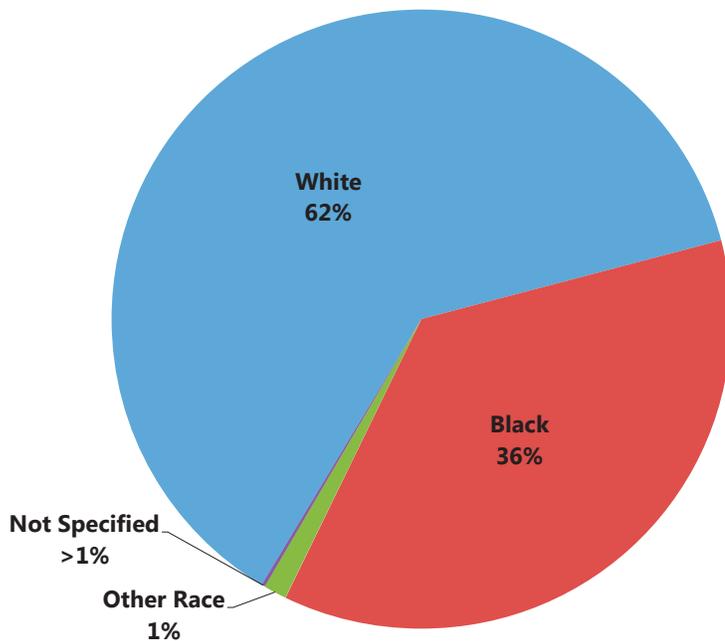
### Living Arrangements

Lives Alone:	2,922
Other*:	1,771
Lives with Spouse	706

\*Other includes arrangements such as living with other family member, friend, caregiver, or unspecified.

## Race

More than 60 percent of clients enrolled in the Hamilton County Elderly Services Program identified themselves as White or Caucasian.



### Race

White:	3,363
Black:	1,961
Other Race:	65
Not Specified:	10

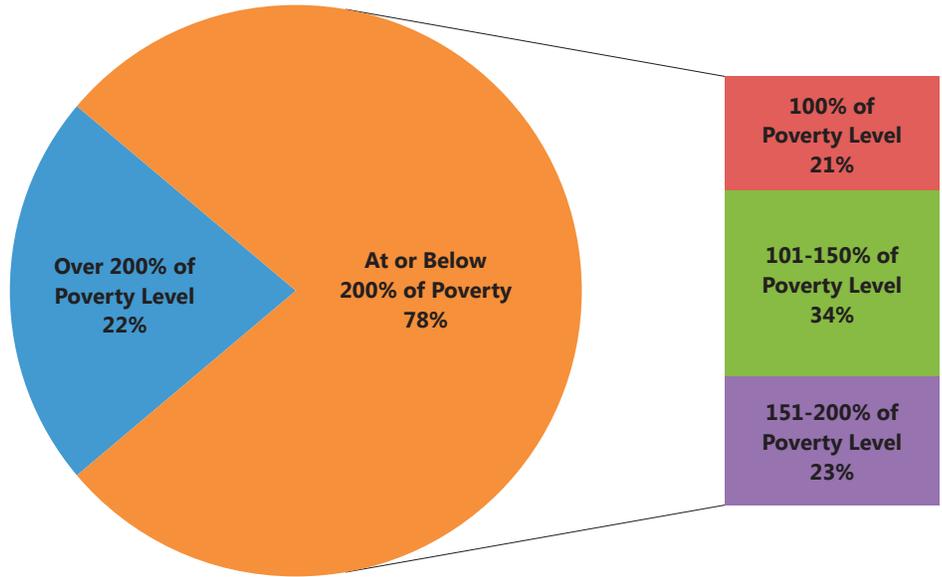
## Client Income and Expenses\*

As the adjacent chart demonstrates, most ESP clients have modest incomes. **More than three-quarters of ESP clients have annual incomes of \$23,340 or less** (200% of the 2014 Federal Poverty Guideline for one person which is \$11,670 or less). Based on a formula that takes income and health care expenses into account, some clients make a monthly co-payment for ESP services.

Client's average monthly income: \$1,608

Client's average monthly out-of-pocket medical costs: \$237

Clients with a co-payment: 30%

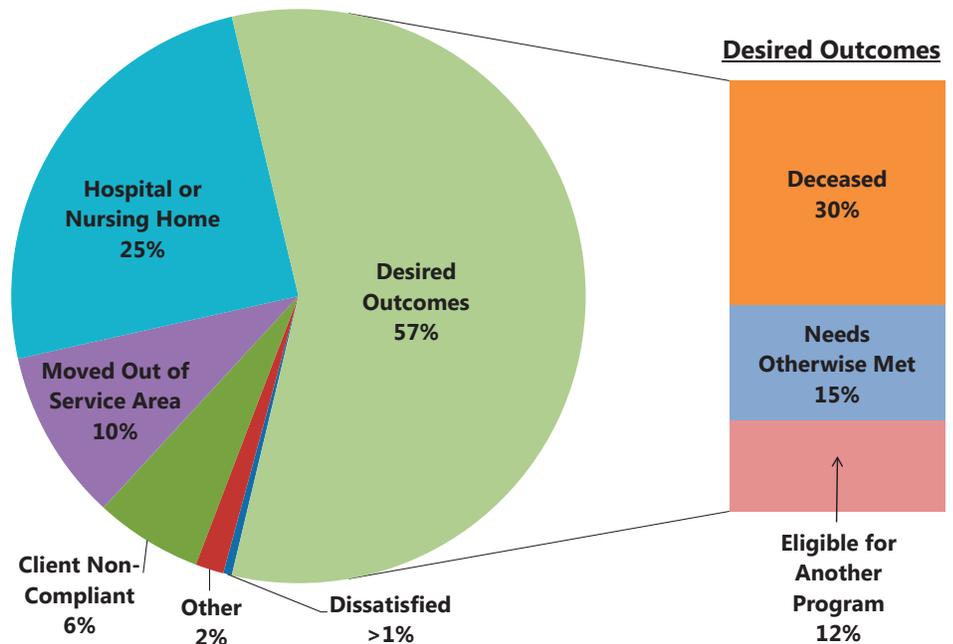


\*Client income and expenses data excludes 447 clients who receive only home-delivered meals and are therefore not required to provide income and expense information. Calculations for the data shown above and in the corresponding pie chart are based on 4,952 total clients served.

## Outcomes - Why Clients Leave the Program

We are proud of the fact that only a tiny fraction of ESP clients leave because they are dissatisfied with the program (less than 1%). The adjacent chart shows that more than half of clients leave the program because of "desirable outcomes." In 2014:

- 30% remained on the program, receiving care in their homes, until they died.
- 15% had their needs met in some other way: family or friends may have stepped in, their condition improved, or they entered hospice care.
- 12% became eligible for another program such as PASSPORT, the Assisted Living Waiver, or MyCare Ohio.



**Client Non-Compliant** examples include: client behavior unresolved, delinquent co-payment balance, refused/declined services, refused to provide financial information or to pay co-payment, unable to contact.

## The state of aging in Hamilton County

**It's a fact:** 70 percent of us will need some form of long-term care during our lifetimes. In general, three factors play a role in determining whether or not we will need care: age, disability, and income.

We are living longer, but the older we get, the more likely it is that we will have some form of disability or chronic illness that requires us to get help with everyday activities such as cooking, bathing, or going to the doctor. We also run the risk of out-living our financial resources, especially if we have to pay for care for an extended period of time.

Characteristics of People Age 65+ in COA Service Area				
County	Households with ≥1 person 65+	Total % of Population	With a Disability	Below 150% Poverty Level*
Butler	22.3%	11.5%	35.7%	15.4%
Clermont	22.1%	11.8%	36.1%	14.9%
Clinton	25.2%	13.5%	38.2%	≥15.1%^
<b>Hamilton</b>	<b>23.4%</b>	<b>13.3%</b>	<b>35.4%</b>	<b>19.4%</b>
Warren	20.9%	10.8%	32.4%	12%

**Source:** US Census. \*2014 Federal Poverty Level: \$11,670 for one person. 150% of Poverty Level = \$17,505. ^Clinton County poverty level is based on 0-125% of Federal Poverty Level.

As you have seen in this report, most of the seniors served by the Hamilton County Elderly Services Program are older, frail, and have modest incomes. Without ESP, many of our clients would be faced with a difficult decision: pay out-of-pocket for in-home care, or go straight to a nursing home. Either way, the likely outcome is Medicaid enrollment.

The chart above shows how Hamilton County compares to the surrounding counties in terms of age, disability, and poverty status. With so many seniors at risk for needing care, the Hamilton County Elderly Services Program offers a compassionate and cost-effective alternative to nursing home care. It can prevent or delay the need for institutional care and helps keep people off Medicaid. **For seniors who can't afford to pay for private care, yet don't qualify for Medicaid, Hamilton County ESP is a lifeline.**

## Hamilton County Elderly Services Program Providers

*With valid contracts 1/1/14 - 12/31/14*

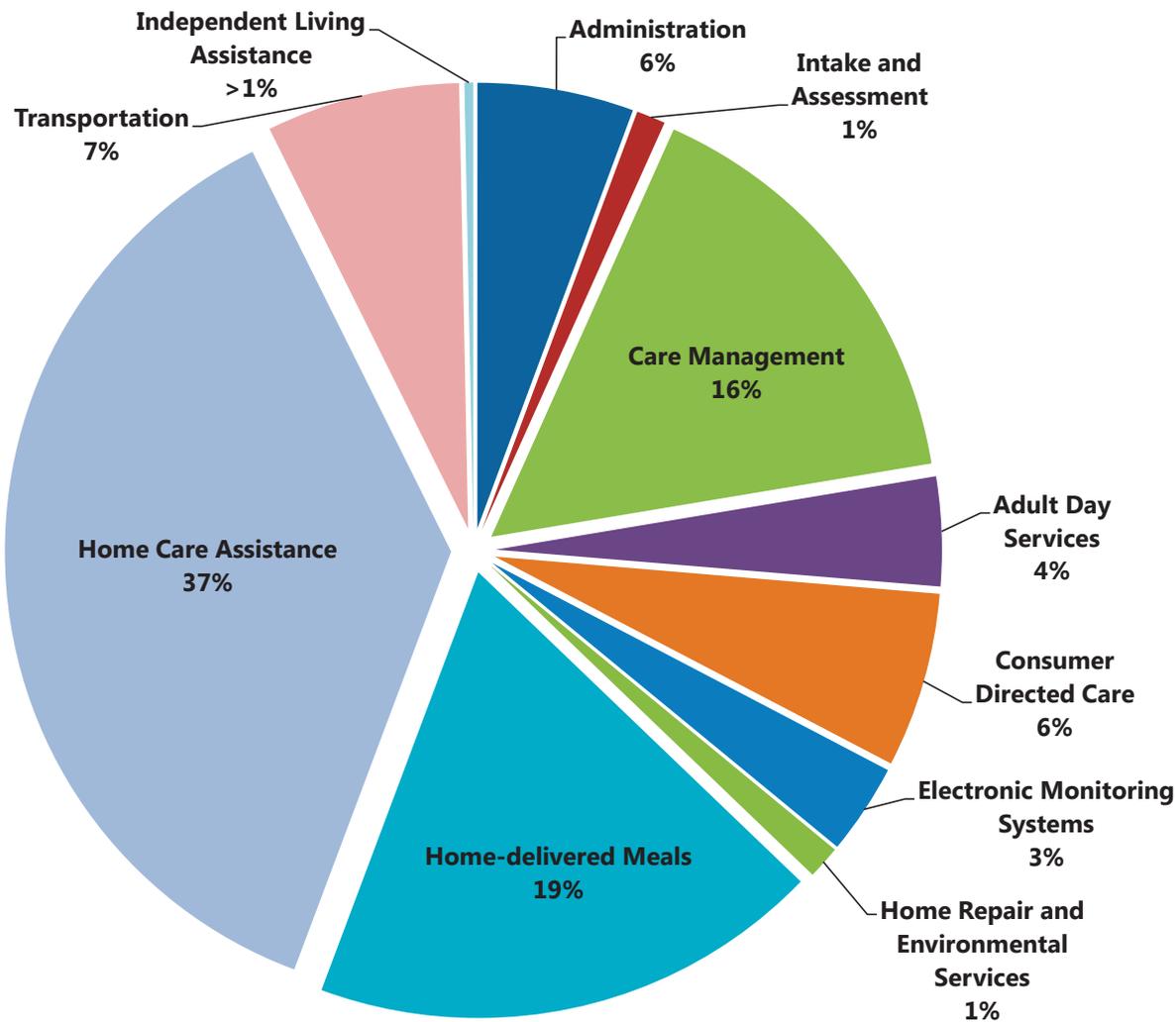
- |   |                                  |
|---|----------------------------------|
| A Miracle Home Care                             | Jewish Family Service            |
| Active Day of Ohio, Inc.                        | Mayerson JCC                     |
| Assisted Care by Black Stone                    | Nova Home Care                   |
| Bayley Adult Day                                | North College Hill Senior Center |
| Bernens Medical                                 | Pennington Construction          |
| Caring Hearts Adult Day Care                    | Prime Home Care, LLC             |
| Cincinnati Area Senior Services, Inc.           | Senior Deserved Day              |
| Comfort Keepers #172                            | Senior Independence              |
| Day Share Senior Services                       | Superior Home Care, Inc.         |
| Deupree Community Meals on Wheels               | Sycamore Senior Center           |
| Emerson Heating & Cooling Company               | The Visiting Nurse Association   |
| Helping Hands Healthcare, Inc.                  | Twin Towers Adult Day Stay       |
| Hillebrand Home Health                          | Twin Towers Residential Care     |
| Home First                                      | VRI                              |
| Hyde Park Multi-Service Center for Older Adults | Wesley Community Services        |
| Interim HomeStyles of Greater Cincinnati, Inc.  |                                  |

## How your tax dollars are spent

Without the support of Hamilton County taxpayers, the Elderly Services Program would not exist. Local tax dollars cover 90 percent of the total cost of the program. As the Area Agency on Aging for southwestern Ohio, including Hamilton County, Council on Aging is able to leverage state and federal funding to cover approximately 6.5 percent of program expenses. Additional funding comes from client donations (requested, but not required, for home-delivered meals), and client co-payments (about 30 percent of clients qualify for a co-payment, based on their income and medical expenses).

The table on page 15 shows the number of clients who received each type of service, the number of service units they received (hours, trips, etc.), and the total cost for those units. The chart below shows that our three greatest expenses are for home care assistance (a service that combines personal care, homemaking, companion, and respite services), home-delivered meals, and care management. ESP is not a one-size-fits-all program. It is flexible in order to provide the right services, in the right amounts, at the right times.

Provider agencies (see list, page 13) deliver these services under contract with Council on Aging. COA handles contracting, program policy development, financial administration, information technology, quality improvement, communications, and data collection and analysis. As southwestern Ohio's Area Agency on Aging, COA is charged with identifying, planning, facilitating, and monitoring services to improve quality of life for older adults, including those living in Hamilton County.



Some services were consolidated in this chart for formatting purposes. Detailed expense information for each service can be found on page 15.

## EXPENSES

<u>Service<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>Clients Served</u>	<u>Service Units</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Home Care Assistance	3,249	360,115 <i>hours</i>	\$7,347,870
Electronic Monitoring System	2,879	26,253 <i>months of rentals</i>	\$440,509
Home-delivered Meals	2,518	564,468 <i>meals</i>	\$3,684,150
Medical Transportation	1,160	44,621 <i>one-way trips</i>	\$1,308,770
Home Medical Equipment	863	1,231 <i>equipment rentals</i>	\$215,248
Consumer Directed Care	335	3,264 <i>months of service</i>	\$1,261,936
Independent Living Assistance <sup>2</sup>	239	2,850 <i>hours</i>	\$63,246
Minor Home Repairs	207	238 <i>repairs</i>	\$195,463
Non-Medical Transportation	190	2,928 <i>one-way trips</i>	\$83,568
Adult Day Service	183	12,299 <i>hours</i>	\$693,393
Adult Day Transportation	92	48,787 <i>miles</i>	\$94,575
Environmental Services <sup>3</sup>	47	171 <i>jobs</i>	\$45,852
Care Management	5,399	N/A	\$3,113,809
Intake and Assessment	N/A	N/A	\$207,874
Administration	N/A	N/A	\$1,125,377
<b>Total Expenses</b>			<b>\$19,881,640</b>

## REVENUE

Federal and State (via Council on Aging)	\$1,288,121
Client Donation	\$37,033
Client Co-payment	\$652,008
Hamilton County Elderly Services Levy	\$17,904,478
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$19,881,640</b>

### Additional Expenses

To provide additional help to older adults in the county, including protection from fraud, scams, and abuse, Hamilton County Commissioners distributed Elderly Services levy funds to the following Hamilton County organizations:

- Hamilton County Job and Family Services - Adult Protective Services Unit: \$351,109
- Hamilton County Veterans Service Commission: \$190,367

<sup>1</sup> Services are listed in order of number of clients served

<sup>2</sup> Help with benefit applications and organizing personal and household records

<sup>3</sup> Pest control, major housekeeping, and waste removal



"I'm going to stay here until the good Lord drags me on out of here.  
This little corner, it's very special to me."

Parthenia, 86, Hamilton County Elderly Services Program client since 2005



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