

### Electronic monitoring systems – more than a lifeline

ESP's electronic monitoring systems (EMS) service makes a real difference for clients like Margot, who has macular degeneration. More than the traditional "lifeline" device, EMS is a flexible service that meets a variety of needs – from emergency response and medication management to remote caregiving and wandering risks. In addition to traditional lifeline pendants, EMS includes medication dispensers, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, Alzheimer's boundary alarms and GPS tracking devices, among others. "It's very scary when you're lying on the floor," Margot said. "My lifeline is my saving grace. If I didn't have it, I'd probably be gone." 49 percent of ESP clients have EMS.



### New service contracts yield savings in ESP

As ESP's administrator, COA contracts with area organizations to deliver services to clients. Contracts are awarded through a competitive bidding process. In 2019, COA issued Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for five services, including home medical equipment. The RFP process is a time for COA, ESP advisory councils and providers to collaborate on changes that positively impact cost, quality and service levels. For example, when new contracts were awarded for the home medical equipment service, fixed competitive prices were established for most equipment and processes were put in place to ensure insurance plans are billed first, when appropriate. Providers were also required to deliver all equipment to the client, provide education and installation/assembly. The changes resulted in more than \$254,000 in savings to ESP.

### Transportation grant will improve options for area seniors



Scan for full story

Council on Aging received a grant from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) aimed at funding innovative projects to support transportation solutions that expand access to health care. COA will use the grant to improve transportation options and service for area seniors, beginning with a pilot project in Hamilton County ESP.

### FastTrack Home helps seniors and families when it is needed most

COA's innovative FastTrack Home Program expanded to Good Samaritan and Bethesda North hospitals, helping more older adults at a critical time – as they recover at home after a hospital or nursing home stay. Utilizing the existing ESP provider network and services, FastTrack Home has services ready when an older adult is discharged home. This is key because subsequent illnesses, injuries and readmissions are most likely to occur in the first 30 days an older adult returns home. Most FastTrack Home clients need care for a short period of time. As a result, ESP can serve more people with available tax dollars at a lower cost. FastTrack Home also benefits family caregivers who may have other responsibilities, such as work and families, while their loved one recovers at home. In 2019, 622 older adults received care through FastTrack Home.



Serving as a full-time caregiver for her mother was taking its toll on Rachelle's physical and emotional health. Then she connected with ESP's caregiver support nurse and got some help. Through ESP, Rachelle's mother began attending adult day care and qualified for a lift chair, shower chair and bedside commode. "I don't know what I would do without these things," Rachelle said. "I couldn't help my mother shower without that chair."

## HAMILTON COUNTY ESP CLIENT

# STATS 2019

Hamilton County ESP clients are caught in the middle: with income too high to qualify for Medicaid, but too low to pay for private in-home care. They need help with basic activities like personal care and transportation. Between raising a family and going to work, family members help as much as they can, but ESP fills in gaps in care so our older neighbors and loved ones can continue to live independently in their homes and communities. ESP is a program that benefits our entire community.

# 7,762 CLIENTS SERVED

\$1,782  
MONTHLY  
MEAN INCOME

77%  
AGE 70+

69% FEMALE  
31% MALE

\$250/MO  
OUT-OF-POCKET  
MEDICAL EXPENSES

42%  
MINORITIES

58%  
LIVE ALONE

Hamilton County's Elderly Services Program is a community partnership.

#### Hamilton County Commissioners

Denise Driehaus, Stephanie Summerow Dumas, Victoria Parks

#### Hamilton County Elderly Services Program Advisory Council

Rose Stertz, Chair; Bianca Edwards, Vice Chair; Connie Bigony; Janice Hunter; Clarissa Rentz; Matthew Worth

#### Council on Aging

175 Tri County Parkway, Cincinnati, OH 45246  
(513) 721-1025, (800) 252-0155  
www.help4seniors.org



Hamilton County ESP services are funded by a special tax levy. ESP does not supplant care provided by families but rather secures the necessary additional care the family is unable to provide. ESP expects families to take responsibility to care for family members to the fullest extent possible. ESP does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, age, sex, national or ethnic origin, or disability.

## HAMILTON COUNTY ELDERLY SERVICES PROGRAM

# 2019 ANNUAL REPORT







As our county ages, the need for the Elderly Services Program (ESP) continues to grow. Since passage of the last senior services levy in 2017, enrollment has increased more than 24 percent. In 2019, ESP provided compassionate, cost-effective care to 7,762 older adults.

Working with Council on Aging (COA), this advisory council strives to maintain a program that meets the community need while also responsibly managing local tax dollars. While enrollment grows, we’ve sought ways to bring costs down. The highlights section of this report outlines some of these efforts.

At the same time, we want to bring the benefits of ESP to as many people as possible. ESP’s FastTrack Home service does that. It helps seniors at a critical time – as they recover at home after a hospital or nursing home stay. In 2019, FastTrack Home expanded to more hospitals and served more than 600 seniors.

ESP benefits our entire community. It supports sandwich-generation caregivers struggling to juggle the responsibilities of family, career and elder caregiving. ESP provides supplemental care that enables family caregivers to continue working, which is good for business and our economy.

I am proud of this program. It’s a promise to our neighbors that they can live with independence and dignity, no matter their income. On behalf of everyone involved in ESP, thank you, taxpayers, for your unwavering support.

Sincerely,  
Rose Stertz  
Chair, Hamilton County Elderly Services Program Advisory Council

The Elderly Services Program (ESP) helps eligible county residents age 60 and older remain safe and independent in their homes by providing help with activities of daily living (bathing, cleaning, meals, transportation and more), filling gaps in family-provided care.

ESP is flexible to meet clients’ changing needs. Eligibility and care needs are determined during an in-home assessment. A professional care manager coordinates and monitors clients’ care. While income is not an eligibility factor, some clients have a co-payment based on income and assets.

ESP is a community partnership. It’s managed by Council on Aging via a contract with Hamilton County Commissioners, who appoint a board to advise on program needs and policies. Provider agencies deliver ESP services via competitive contracts with COA. Clients, caregivers and taxpayers round out the partnership. ESP is a compassionate and cost-effective alternative to nursing home care.

Cost of Care to Taxpayers

\$364  
MONTHLY COST FOR  
ESP SERVICES

VS.

\$6,000+  
MONTHLY COST FOR  
NURSING HOME CARE

As the program’s operator, COA provides: eligibility assessments; care management; program development; provider management; data analytics; financial services; information technology; quality improvement and community engagement. As a state-designated Area Agency on Aging, COA provided these additional services to county residents in 2019:



Requests for information and referral: **50,329**



Home and community-based services through Medicaid-funded programs: **5,574 residents**



Support to transition from one care setting to another: **771 clients**

\$3.1  
million

Title III funding allocated to local organizations for congregate meals, legal assistance, wellness education, caregiver support, transportation and other supportive services

Anita & Chris

Anita and her husband, Chris, work full-time as nurses. They also have school-age children. So, when Anita’s mother called to share the news that her father had Alzheimer’s disease, the family had to act quickly to find a way to manage his care needs while also juggling the other responsibilities of working and managing a family. Watch their story and learn how ESP supports working caregivers like Anita and Chris.



Aimee

A mom and wife with a rewarding career, Aimee excelled at balancing all her responsibilities – it was something she took pride in. But as her mother was preparing to be discharged from the hospital, the full impact of her care needs sank in and she realized she needed help. ESP’s FastTrack Home service was there for Aimee and her mom. “They were sort of this breath of fresh air when I probably didn’t realize I was suffocating.”

Jean

Knee replacement, breast cancer, heart problems, a global pandemic...Jean, 73, has been through a lot. Through it all, the Elderly Services Program provided the support she needed to stay in her home. “This has really changed my life. Because of ESP, I am still living at home.”



Chandni

When Chandni’s mother developed Alzheimer’s disease, there was no question about moving her to Chandni’s home. Then, a wandering incident prompted Chandni to reach out for help. Chandni connected to ESP’s caregiver support nurse and found the support she needed to balance her career responsibilities, raise her family and keep her mother safe at home.

Visit [www.help4seniors.org/HCESP2019](http://www.help4seniors.org/HCESP2019) or scan code for full client stories and video.



How tax dollars are spent

ESP would not exist without the generous support of voters. A county tax levy in place since 1992 provides 92 percent of ESP’s funding. The most recent tax levy was approved by 72 percent of voters in 2017. The 1.6-mill levy costs property owners \$40.25 per \$100,000 of property valuation annually. COA’s goal is to ensure the highest quality services at the lowest cost in order to serve as many people as possible with the tax dollars available.

As the Area Agency on Aging for southwestern Ohio, including Hamilton County, COA leverages state and federal funding to cover 5 percent of ESP expenses. Additional funding comes from voluntary client donations and client co-payments (23 percent of clients make a co-payment based on their income and assets).

Revenue

Federal and State (via Council on Aging)	\$1,182,515
Client Donation	\$2,778
Client Co-payment	\$558,443
Hamilton County Elderly Services Levy	\$20,327,321
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$22,071,057</b>

Expenses

SERVICE*	CLIENTS SERVED	SERVICE UNITS	COST
Care Management	7,762	55,778 months	\$3,829,560
Home Care Assistance	3,946	349,117 hours	\$7,288,206
Electronic Monitoring System	3,766	34,048 months	\$646,343
Home-Delivered Meals	3,377	660,341 meals	\$4,540,330
Medical Transportation	1,324	43,433 one-way trips	\$1,280,011
Home Medical Equipment	779	1,090 items	\$200,727
FastTrack Home Care Management	622	837 months	\$460,715
Consumer-Directed Care**	317	N/A	\$1,077,010
Minor Home Repairs	311	353 repairs	\$274,999
Non-Medical Transportation	307	5,334 one-way trips	\$161,633
Adult Day Services	158	9,239 days	\$586,870
Independent Living Assistance***	108	1,360 hours	\$36,854
Adult Day Transportation**	84	N/A	\$101,484
Environmental Services****	49	121 jobs	\$73,577
Intake and Assessment	N/A	N/A	\$165,678
Administration	N/A	N/A	\$1,347,060
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>			<b>\$22,017,057</b>

\*Services listed in order of clients served.  
\*\*Due to coding changes that occurred when COA launched a new care management platform, we are unable to report units delivered for these services in 2019.  
\*\*\*Help with benefit applications and organizing personal and household records.  
\*\*\*\*Pest control, major housekeeping and waste removal.

Additional Expenses

Hamilton County Commissioners distributed funds from the senior services levy to the following organizations: Center for Respite Care, \$210,575; Hamilton County Job and Family Services Adult Protective Services Unit, \$351,109; Hamilton County Veterans Service Commission, \$137,995.