

A familiar place and a familiar face with the help of ESP

Glenora is the matriarch of a large, tight-knit family. She raised three children, who in turn gave her 14 grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren. “And I know every one of them,” she said proudly. “I know when they were born; I can tell you their ages, their birthdays, and all. One thing for sure is God has still blessed me with a good mind.”



And even though she’s not able to get out much anymore, the family still gets together regularly – but at her house. It’s become the family gathering place. “It’s easier on her,” daughter Alberta said.

It’s the home where Glenora and her husband moved 20 years prior, from a small farm. While he worked at General Motors, Glenora focused on raising their children at the farm and tending to their horses and large garden. “She had enough flowers for a nursery, so she worked on them all the time,” Alberta said.

“My husband got so he wasn’t able to do the work. He got Alzheimer’s disease,” Glenora said. “I was my husband’s caregiver until he had to go to the rest home. He was there for nine months before he died. I never missed a day going there.”

In the years after, Glenora developed debilitating arthritis, and her eyesight deteriorated, but she still got out on her own a bit. Then a fall on ice resulted in a badly broken foot and the need for someone to stay with her 24/7.

Alberta could stay at night, but that left the daytime hours, so she called around to see what outside help was available and found the Elderly Services Program (ESP). In addition to providing an emergency response system and home modification equipment to help Glenora stay at home safely, ESP also offered a consumer-directed care (CDC) option for hiring a home health aide.

With CDC, clients become “employers” and hire their own “employees” instead of using a home care agency to provide certain services, which are paid for by ESP. In many cases, the employee is someone the client already knows.

“It makes our clients a little more comfortable knowing that they’re going to have the same person, that it’s somebody that they hopefully know,” said Amber, Glenora’s ESP care manager. It also helps alleviate the effects of the nationwide home health aide shortage that’s being felt in Southwestern Ohio and uses ESP resources more effectively. There is also more flexibility in the type of work that can be done for the client when the aide is not employed by a home care agency.

Amber set up CDC right away, and Glenora’s son’s girlfriend became her first paid home aide. A few months later, Alberta’s husband Paul took the position, and has been there ever since. “He’s a natural caregiver,” Alberta said.

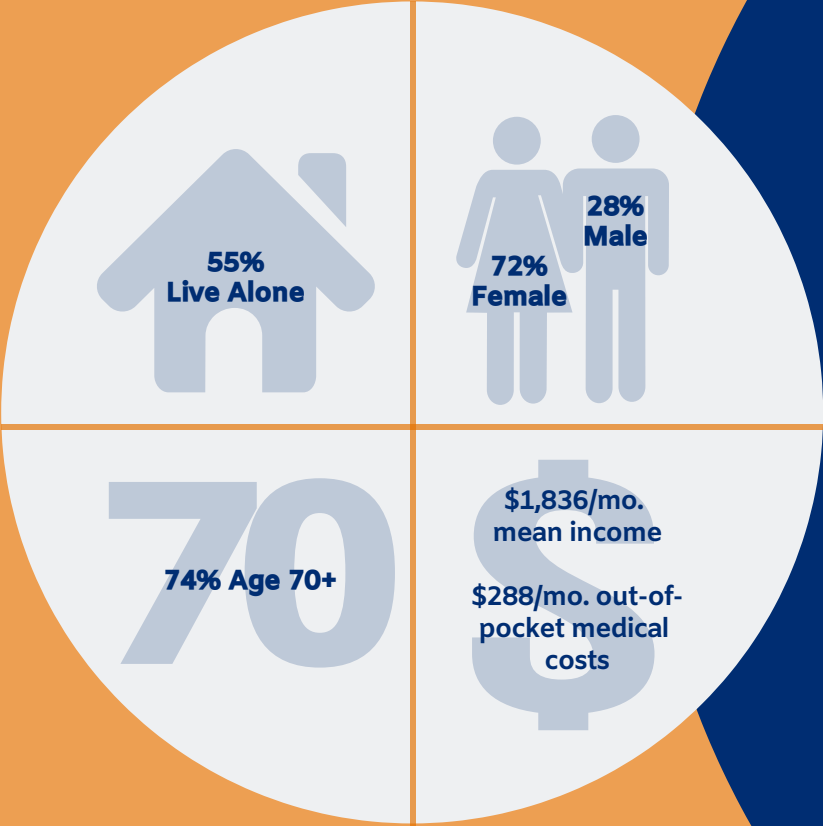
Paul is paid for a pre-set number of hours per week helping around Glenora’s house. “I clean her kitchen, her stove, bathrooms, and sweep and mop the floors,” he said. He also takes out the garbage and helps with just about anything else Lenora requests ... except laundry. “So far, she’s been able to do that. She likes to do whatever she can herself. She says it keeps her going,” Alberta said.

How does the family feel about CDC? “We like it,” Alberta said. “I’m just glad that we’re able to take care of mom.”

With her health and safety needs being met, Glenora is able to enjoy one of her favorite pastimes: listening to audio recordings of the Bible. “I memorize it, because if I can’t read it (due to her vision) I’ve got to get it in there somewhere,” she said.

Who are Butler County ESP’s clients?

In 2018, there were 4,020 of them. They are seniors 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. Family helps as much as they can, and ESP fills in gaps in care so they can continue to live independently in their homes and communities.



BUTLER COUNTY ELDERLY SERVICES PROGRAM

ANNUAL REPORT 2018

Butler County's Elderly Services Program is a community partnership

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Butler 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.

Dear Friends and Supporters,



On behalf of the Butler County Elderly Services Program Advisory Council, I am pleased to present our 2018 annual report. This report shows how tax dollars are spent and gives a picture of the program’s impact on our county.

In 2018, the Butler County Elderly Services Program (ESP) helped 4,020 older adults remain independent in their homes.

Enrollment in ESP has remained consistent in recent years, despite challenges created by the ongoing shortage of home health workers. This is a nationwide issue that is impacting seniors in our county. In ESP, clients most impacted are those who use the program’s home care assistance service, which includes help with personal care tasks (bathing), housekeeping and errands. As the economy has improved, home health agencies – including those which have contracts to serve ESP clients – have struggled to recruit and retain staff. As a result, new clients often face delays in starting their services and existing clients experience irregularities in their service schedule and the aide who provides their care (especially in rural areas).

This advisory council has worked with Council on Aging, ESP’s administrator, to find solutions to the problem. In recent years we’ve adjusted training requirements for aides who provide only housekeeping services and we’ve tried to create efficiencies within the provider network to improve scheduling and travel time for aides. And there’s another option that may help – consumer-directed care. This option allows ESP clients to hire their own caregiver, instead of going through one of the program’s home care agencies. In 2018, 195 clients hired their own caregivers through this option, a 33 percent increase over 2017. You can read about a local family using the consumer-directed care option in this report.

Because of ESP, Butler County is in a better position to serve seniors and their caregivers. We are grateful for the support of Butler County residents and voters, who, since 1996, have been committed to meeting the needs of our elderly friends, family members and neighbors. I am proud to be part of a community that places so much value on helping its older residents live with independence and dignity.

Cynthia Stever
President, Butler County Elderly Services Program Advisory Council

COA’s role in Butler County

COA’s responsibilities for ESP in Butler County include: program development; provider management; data analysis and reporting; financial services and oversight; information technology; quality improvement; and community engagement. As a state-designated Area Agency on Aging, COA provided these additional services to county residents in 2018:



Aging and Disability Resource Center
COA’s call center and “front door” to services and community resources responded to 47,431 inquiries.



Home and community-based services via Medicaid Waivers
PASSPORT, Assisted Living, Ohio Home Care, Specialized Recovery Services and MyCare Ohio programs provided care for 1,597 residents in Butler County.

About the Elderly Services Program

ESP helps eligible county residents age 65 and older remain safe and independent in their homes by providing help with certain activities of daily living (bathing, cleaning, cooking, transportation and more), filling gaps in care that may already be provided by family caregivers.

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

The program is operated by Council on Aging (COA) via a contract with Butler County Commissioners, who appoint a board to advise on program needs and policies. COA contracts with LifeSpan, Inc. to assess, enroll and care manage clients in the program. Provider agencies deliver ESP services under contract with COA.

ESP is a compassionate and cost-effective alternative to nursing home care. On average, it costs \$294 per month to help a senior stay in their home with services through ESP, compared to more than \$4,000 a month for Medicaid nursing home care, also funded by tax dollars.

2018 highlights

More clients hiring their own workers

Giving clients the ability to hire their own caregivers is one way to alleviate the effects of the nationwide home care worker shortage, and increase client satisfaction at the same time. In Butler County, ESP care managers have been working to identify clients who would be a good fit for the program’s consumer-directed care (CDC) option. CDC allows ESP clients to hire their own “employees” (a friend, neighbor or family member other than a spouse) to provide services such as help with homemaking and personal care. ESP care managers work with clients to determine if CDC is appropriate and complete the required paperwork. The service has grown in popularity as the aide shortage has persisted, experiencing 33 percent growth in 2018.

Council on Aging invests in new case management and billing system

As administrator of the Elderly Services Program in four counties, Council on Aging invested in, and owns, a new system to manage care and costs for clients enrolled in the program. Called CareDirector, the cloud-based system replaces an outdated, unsupported technology platform and aligns the program and COA with current industry standards for security and privacy. Once fully-optimized, CareDirector will provide flexibility to grow and adapt programs to better serve clients.



Transitional care
Support to transition from hospital or nursing home care to in-home care via Community Transitions, Home Choice and other programs was provided to 846 residents across COA’s service area.



Title III of the Older Americans Act
In 2018, Butler County organizations spent nearly \$1.2 million in Title III funds allocated by COA. Funding is for services such as senior center services, transportation, meals, caregiver support and legal services.

How tax dollars are spent

ESP would not exist without the senior services tax levy and the generous support of voters. The most recent levy was passed in November 2015 by 74 percent of voters. The 1.3-mill levy costs homeowners approximately \$39.81 per \$100,000 of property value, annually. COA’s goal is to ensure the highest quality services at the lowest cost in order to serve as many seniors as possible with the tax dollars available.

As the Area Agency on Aging for Southwestern Ohio, including Butler 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 (39 percent of clients make a co-payment based on their income).

Revenue

Federal and State (via Council on Aging)	\$563,006
Client Donation	\$13,466
Client Co-payment	\$199,475
Butler County Elderly Services Levy	\$9,659,364
TOTAL REVENUE	\$10,435,311

Expenses

SERVICE*	CLIENTS SERVED	SERVICE UNITS	COST
Care Management	4,020	N/A	\$2,071,971
Electronic Monitoring Systems	2,600	25,175 months	\$429,888
Home Care Assistance	1,690	135,052 hours	\$2,876,333
Home-Delivered Meals	1,656	321,571 meals	\$2,177,896
Home Medical Equipment	679	1,180 equipment rentals	\$149,103
Medical Transportation	542	13,859 one-way trips	\$441,423
Independent Living Assistance**	454	6,946 hours	\$285,096
Minor Home Repairs	316	374 repairs	\$324,686
Consumer Directed Care	195	1,732 months	\$472,000
Non-Medical Transportation	138	1,207 one-way trips	\$31,278
Uplift (Behavioral Health Services)	114	N/A	\$57,461
Environmental Services***	54	117 jobs	\$68,735
Adult Day Services	51	2,181 days	\$125,160
Adult Day Transportation	9	5,086 miles	\$13,431
Intake and Assessment	N/A	N/A	\$228,235
Administration	N/A	N/A	\$682,615
TOTAL EXPENSES			\$10,435,311

*Services listed in order of clients served.
**Help with benefit applications and organizing personal and household records.
***Pest control, major housekeeping and waste removal.

Additional Expenses

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

- Butler County Job and Family Services – Adult Protective Services Unit: \$600,000
- Butler County Prosecutor’s Office: \$160,993

“I want to be here until I die, if I can make it that long. I want this home to go to my children.”

–Glenora

