



# Hamilton County's Elderly Services Program

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## 2016 Annual Report

## About the Hamilton County Elderly Services Program

As we age, most of us want to stay in our homes as long as we can – even if we need help caring for ourselves. For older adults in Hamilton County, the Elderly Services Program (ESP) provides basic, yet essential services that preserve quality of life and prevent unnecessary nursing home placements.

The Elderly Services Program is a testament to Hamilton County's commitment to care for its older residents – people who served as teachers, office and factory workers, soldiers, homemakers and nurses. The ESP model – one in which county residents support the program via a property tax levy – is so unique that PBS featured it in their documentary, *Caring for Mom & Dad*.

Another distinctive aspect of ESP is that it is a community partnership:

- Council on Aging (COA) administers the program via a contract with Hamilton County Commissioners.
- Commissioners appoint county residents to an advisory council that brings valuable input to the program.
- COA contracts with area business and non-profit organizations to deliver in-home care services to clients enrolled in the program.

The program's clients and their caregivers are vital to this partnership. About 31 percent of ESP clients, based on their income, assets and medical expenses, contribute to the cost of their care via a co-payment. Additionally, ESP is designed to supplement – not supplant – care that is already provided by family caregivers. Because of these important client and caregiver contributions, ESP can serve more people with the tax dollars.

All of this is possible thanks to the support of Hamilton County's taxpayers. The first tax levy to support the program was approved in 1992. Subsequent levies passed in 1997, 2002, 2007 and 2012. The current 1.29-mill senior services levy, which will expire at the end of 2017, generates \$19.3 million and costs property owners \$29.34 per \$100,000 of property valuation annually. These local tax dollars cover more than 90 percent of the program's costs. Learn more about other funding sources and how tax dollars are spent on pages 10-11 of this report.

Voters see the program as a compassionate alternative to nursing home care, but they also recognize it as cost-effective. ESP costs about \$367 per month per client, compared to more than \$4,000 a month for Medicaid nursing home care, also funded by tax dollars.

ESP is not the only publicly-funded in-home care option in our region. For older adults who qualify for Medicaid, Ohio's PASSPORT and Assisted Living Waiver programs are good options. However, Medicaid's strict eligibility guidelines put many older adults in a difficult position – they have too much money to qualify for Medicaid, but not enough to pay out-of-pocket for their care. Evidence of this can be seen in the program's enrollment numbers. In 2016, Hamilton County ESP served 5,797 older adults, compared with about 4,200 county residents who were served by Ohio's Medicaid in-home care programs.

The Elderly Services Program is an important option for many Hamilton County older adults. It offers a choice between staying home or going to a nursing home. ESP is their connection to their homes, communities, families and memories.



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

**(513) 721-1025  
(800) 252-0155**





## The Elderly Services Program is a Community Partnership:

### Hamilton County Commissioners:



From left to right: Denise DrieHaus, Chris Monzel, Todd Portune

### Hamilton County Elderly Services Program Advisory Council:

A volunteer community advisory council whose members are appointed by Hamilton County Commissioners to help with oversight of the program. **Members who served in 2016:**

Gwen Bender  
Charlie Norman

Martha Jean Hill  
Michael Robison

Jacqueline Kebede  
Rose Stertz

Catherine Mills

### Hamilton County Elderly Services Program Providers:

*With valid contracts January 1 - December 31, 2016*

A Miracle Home Care	Guardian Medical Monitoring, Inc.	Nova Home Care Co.
Active Day of Cincinnati	Helping Hands Healthcare, Inc.	Oxford Seniors Community Adult Day Service
Acumen	Hillebrand Home Health	People Working Cooperatively
Advanced Medical Equipment, Inc.	Home Care Network	Personal Touch Homecare
Algo Termite & Pest Control	Home First	Prime Home Care, LLC
All Gone Termite & Pest Control, Inc.	Hyde Park Multi-Service Center for Older Adults	Scarlett Oaks Retirement Community
American Ramp Systems	Interim HomeStyles of Greater Cincinnati, Inc.	Senior Deserved Day
Assisted Care by Black Stone	Jewish Family Service	Senior Independence
Bayley Adult Day	Ken Bryan Construction, Inc	St. Joseph Construction
Bernens Medical	Maple Knoll Outreach	Stateline Medical Equipment
Cincinnati Area Senior Services, Inc.	Mayerson JCC	Superior Home Care, Inc.
Comfort Keepers #172	Meda-Care Transportation, Inc.	The Visiting Nurse Association
Custom Home Elevator & Lift Co. Inc.	MedAdapt Ltd.	Tri-State Maintenance
Day Share Senior Services	Milt's Termite & Pest Control	Universal Transportation Systems
Deupree Meals on Wheels	Mullaney's Pharmacy & Home Health Care	Wesley Community Services
Emerson Heating & Cooling Company	North College Hill Senior Center	

### Program Administrator:



175 Tri County Parkway  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45246  
(513) 721-1025  
(800) 252-0155  
[www.help4seniors.org](http://www.help4seniors.org)

## Dear Friends and Supporters,

On behalf of the Hamilton County Elderly Services Program Advisory Council, I am pleased to present our 2016 Annual Report.

In 2016, Hamilton County's Elderly Services Program (ESP) helped **5,797** older adults to remain independent in their homes with services such as home-delivered meals, transportation and home care assistance. Without this basic, yet essential care, many of these vulnerable older adults may have been prematurely forced to enter a nursing facility.

Last year was an important one for Hamilton County ESP. After three years, we were able to eliminate a waiting list and open up enrollment to eligible residents who needed care. At its peak, the waiting list included more than 1,400 people.



*Suzanne Burke*

As administrator of this program and stewards of the tax dollars that support it, we continually look for ways to serve the residents of Hamilton County. For example, in 2017 we will bring our successful Fast Track Home program to three Hamilton County hospitals. Through this program, hospitalized seniors can be assessed in the hospital and in-home services are set up immediately, on a temporary basis. This type of care can help patients avoid costly nursing home placement as well as repeat trips to the hospital, a common occurrence when patients aren't ready to care for themselves at home without help. Before the temporary services end, Fast Track Home clients receive a complete eligibility assessment for ESP.

2017 is an important year for the program. The senior services levy that provides more than 90 percent of the program's funding will expire at the end of 2017. We have enjoyed strong support from the voters since the first levy passed in 1992. In fact, November will mark 25 years of providing compassionate and cost-effective in-home care to our county's older adults. To continue that tradition of care, voters will be asked to support the senior services levy when they vote in November.

This report tells the story of the Elderly Services Program through the words and photos 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 high-quality services while delivering good value for taxpayers.

Suzanne Burke, CEO  
Council on Aging of Southwestern Ohio

## 2016 Program Highlights

**End of Waiting List and New Enrollments** – In May 2016, the waiting list for the Hamilton County Elderly Services Program ended after three years of managed enrollment. In 2016, Hamilton County ESP had 1,790 new enrollments, accounting for more than 30 percent of all clients served during the year. Program growth is moderate overall because people continually disenroll from the program for a variety of reasons.

**Additional Providers** – To support client needs and improve service quality, Council on Aging added five new home modification providers. The expanded home modification provider list offers greater options and improved quality for ramps and other safety and accessibility modifications, such as grab bars, railing installation and bathroom modifications. Additionally, to address the shortage of home care aides in the region – a growing national challenge – and increase the program's capacity to serve clients, new home care providers were also added to the network.



*"I'm pretty sure that these are my happiest days because I get to take care of my brother. It means everything to us to be able to stay at home."* Myra

After complications from chronic health conditions landed her in the hospital, Myra, 63, received help from Council on Aging's Care Transitions Program to get home so she could resume caring for her brother, Richard. Myra's Care Transitions coach noticed that she was struggling with her caregiving responsibilities and that she needed care herself. The coach referred the pair to the Hamilton County Elderly Services Program for on-going help. Through ESP, Myra and Richard received an emergency response system and home modifications that made it easier to shower without hands-on assistance. Through ESP's consumer-directed care option, Myra and Richard were able to choose and hire their own home health aide. In addition, their COA care manager, Cassie, visits them often to ensure their needs are met.

## 2016 Highlights Continued

**Satisfaction Survey Improvements** – In an effort to better gauge client satisfaction with medical transportation services, a new Service Adequacy and Satisfaction Index (SASI) survey was launched. In addition, the SASI surveys were developed in an electronic portal, allowing care managers the opportunity to capture satisfaction data in real time.

**Innovation Team** – An new innovation team was formed to brainstorm and introduce new innovations and best practices in care that will benefit ESP clients. For example, in recognizing that personal goals play an important role in a client's health and well-being, the team developed and implemented a person-centered goal-setting model in which care managers work with clients to determine what goal(s) they want to achieve. Understanding clients' goals can help care managers identify appropriate services that can help clients attain their goal(s).



## Client Profile: Shirley

Shirley never learned how to drive. A reliance on family, friends or public transportation might imply a dependent nature, but that's not Shirley.

Though she comes from a family of 10 and made many friends while she worked at a local paper mill, Shirley is fiercely independent. She has lived on her own, in an apartment on Cincinnati's West side, for 34 years. She once lived with a boyfriend in New York City, but returned home after only a year because she wanted her own job and her own money, and did not want to answer to or be responsible for someone else.

Shirley's independent streak continued until arthritis, mobility issues and other health concerns threatened the lifestyle she valued. Gradually, it became difficult to use public transportation, even with a walker or cane.

In 2007, Shirley enrolled in the Hamilton County Elderly Services Program. Now she receives assistance with transportation, home-delivered meals, an emergency response device and an aide to help her with shopping, laundry and other physically challenging chores.

"I like it here," she said. "I have nice neighbors and a wonderful landlord. I don't know how I could stay here without the help I receive."

According to her COA care manager, Dawn, Shirley's mind is sharp, but arthritis makes it difficult for her to do much writing. The program's Independent Living Assistance service provides help with household and personal paperwork.

ESP's Consumer Directed Care (CDC) option has kept Shirley connected to a trusted aide, Carol. Shirley first met Carol when she was employed by a local home care agency. When the agency stopped providing services to ESP clients, Dawn helped Shirley hire Carol through CDC.

"She works for me now," Shirley said of Carol. "Actually, she does what I need her to, but I also really enjoy her company once a week and I really trust her. I like her."

Despite everyone's efforts, Shirley's independence was threatened four years ago when doctors discovered fluid on her brain and advised her to move to a nursing home. Not one to give up, Shirley found a surgeon who could help her.

"I've always said I'm staying here until I'm 85, then they can put me somewhere," she said. "I was only 74. That was way too early to give in so I went ahead and had the surgery."

The surgery was successful and Shirley is still at home, where she is able to do a little bit of cooking and other light homemaking activities for herself with continued support from Hamilton County ESP.

"I just can't say it enough. Dawn and everybody in the program have just been wonderful to me. It is a great program."



**Top Photo: Shirley with her  
ESP care manager, Dawn**

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

As administrator of the Elderly Services Program in Hamilton County, Council on Aging (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**, via informational materials, public relations, participation in community events, and community presentations

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

As the state-designated Area Agency on Aging (AAA), COA 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 45,000 inquiries for help in FY 2016. Connect with the Call Center via 800-252-0155 or [www.help4seniors.org](http://www.help4seniors.org).

**Home and Community-based Services via Medicaid Waivers:** Low-income residents and taxpayers alike benefit from Medicaid-funded in-home care services that prevent unnecessary nursing home placement. Programs include PASSPORT, Assisted Living, Ohio Home Care and MyCare Ohio waivers. In 2016, 4,202 Hamilton County residents received help through these programs.

**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. Title III funding also goes to the tax levy-funded Elderly Services Program in each county. This frees up local dollars so the levy programs can serve more seniors. In 2016, Hamilton County organizations spent nearly \$3 million in Title III funds allocated by COA, including Cincinnati Area Senior Services, Mayerson Jewish Community Center, Pro Seniors, Cincinnati Recreation Commission, and Hyde Park Center for Older Adults.

**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's five-year contract with the U.S. Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to deliver Care Transitions to patients at nine regional hospitals ended January 2017. Initially designed to serve 5,400 patients and save \$1 million each year, COA staff enrolled nearly 24,000 patients in the Care Transitions program (March 2012 – September 2016). The estimated annual savings to Medicare is more than \$2.5 million. Among participating hospitals, the readmission rate for Care Transitions participants was 14.8 percent, compared to the hospitals' baseline readmission rate of 21.9 percent.



Myra, a Care Transitions patient and Hamilton County ESP client, is her brother Richard's caregiver.

*"When the coaching team took over at the hospital, it was instantly the best thing to happen in our lives. We met with them and I was home two days later, with everything I needed to move forward. It was such a smooth process." Myra*

## Client Demographics

The typical ESP client is a woman in her late 70s. She lives alone on a modest income of about \$19,596 a year, from which she pays \$2,916 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 2016: 5,797.** 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 data reporting requirements in each category. Also, percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

### Client Age

The average age of Hamilton County ESP clients in 2016 was 77. Program eligibility starts at age 60, but some services are available to clients under age 60 who have dementia, including Alzheimer's disease.

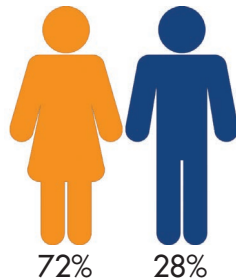
Under 60	60 - 69	70 - 79
222	1,299	1,858
80-89	90+	
1,959	459	

The largest age group served by ESP is 80-89.

74% of clients are age 70 and older.

### Gender

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



### Race

Clients enrolled in the Hamilton County Elderly Services Program are racially diverse.

White	Black
3,389	2,316
Other	Not Specified
78	14

### Living Arrangements

ESP is intended to supplement – not supplant – care already provided by family and friends. Many clients, however, do not have anyone who helps them regularly other than through the program.

Lives Alone	3,269
Other*	1,667
Lives with Spouse	861

56% of clients live alone.

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



## Client Income and Expenses\*

Most ESP clients have modest incomes. **More than three-quarters of ESP clients have annual incomes of \$23,760 or less** (200% of the 2016 Federal Poverty Guideline for one person which is \$11,880 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.

Clients' average monthly income:	\$1,633
Clients' average monthly out-of-pocket medical costs:	\$243
Clients with a co-payment:	31%

\*Client income and expenses data excludes 372 clients who receive only home-delivered meals and are therefore not required to provide income and expense information. Calculations for the data shown in the chart above are based on 5,425 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%).

In 2016, disenrollment reasons included:

- 24% remained on the program, receiving care in their homes, until they died
- 23% needed care in a hospital or nursing facility
- 19% were not compliant\* with the program's rules or refused/declined services
- 13% moved out of the service area or no longer met the program's eligibility requirements
- 11% had their needs met in some other way, including: received care from family, friends or private pay; condition improved; and entered hospice care
- 7% became eligible for another program such as PASSPORT
- 3% left the program for other reasons

\***Not Compliant** examples include: client behavior unresolved, delinquent co-payment balance, refused to provide financial information or to pay co-payment, unable to contact.

## Where Clients Live\*

Jurisdiction	Clients Served	Jurisdiction	Clients Served	Jurisdiction	Clients Served
Cincinnati	2,584	Forest Park	135	North College Hill	82
Green Township	352	Springdale	134	Blue Ash	68
Colerain Township	319	Norwood	118	Silverton	67
Springfield Township	244	Harrison	116	Deer Park	59
Delhi Township	206	Sycamore Township	105	Sharonville	59
Mt. Healthy	156	Cheviot	96	St. Bernard	59
Anderson Township	147	Reading	84	All Others*	607
Total Clients Served in Hamilton County					5,797

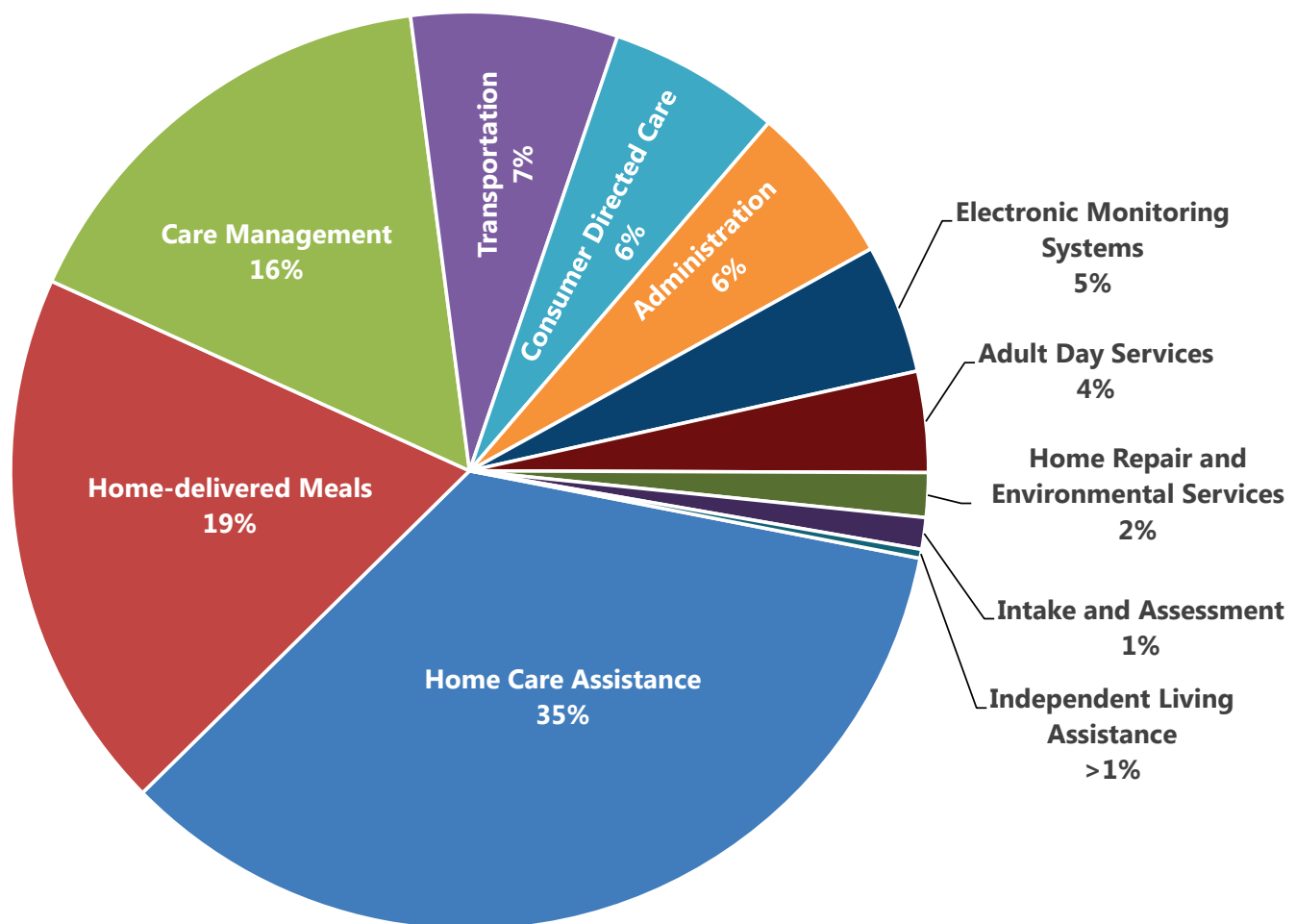
\*Municipalities shown include at least 1 percent of Hamilton County ESP census. The "Other" category includes all other municipalities where enrollment numbers were less than 1 percent of Hamilton County ESP census. Census = 5,797.

## How your tax dollars are spent

Without the support of Hamilton County taxpayers, the Elderly Services Program would not exist. Local tax dollars cover 92 percent of the total cost of the program. As the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for southwestern Ohio, including Hamilton County, Council on Aging is able to leverage state and federal funding to cover approximately 5 percent of program expenses. Additional funding comes from client donations (requested, but not required, for home-delivered meals), and client co-payments (about 31 percent of clients have a required co-payment, based on their income, assets and medical expenses).

The table on page 11 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 three) 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 the opposite page.

## EXPENSES

<u>Service<sup>1</sup></u>	<u>Clients Served</u>	<u>Service Units</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Care Management	5,797	N/A	\$3,057,635
Home Care Assistance	3,563	328,708 <i>hours</i>	\$6,538,230
Electronic Monitoring System	3,228	29,860 <i>months of rentals</i>	\$472,906
Home-delivered Meals	2,756	555,430 <i>meals</i>	\$3,622,819
Medical Transportation	1,231	43,598 <i>one-way trips</i>	\$1,291,404
Home Medical Equipment	1,230	1,834 <i>equipment rentals</i>	\$387,630
Consumer Directed Care	321	3,185 <i>months of service</i>	\$1,148,694
Minor Home Repairs	287	316 <i>repairs</i>	\$235,086
Independent Living Assistance <sup>2</sup>	231	2,585 <i>hours</i>	\$59,460
Non-Medical Transportation	212	2,865 <i>one-way trips</i>	\$86,007
Adult Day Service	174	10,325 <i>hours</i>	\$586,222
Adult Day Transportation	90	41,778 <i>miles</i>	\$85,792
Environmental Services <sup>3</sup>	55	142 <i>jobs</i>	\$60,935
Intake and Assessment	N/A	N/A	\$210,648
Administration	N/A	N/A	\$1,070,609
<b>Total Expenses</b>			<b>\$18,914,077</b>

## REVENUE

Federal and State (via Council on Aging)	\$959,603
Client Donation	-\$6,153*
Client Co-payment	\$551,126
Hamilton County Elderly Services Levy	\$17,409,501
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$18,914,077</b>

<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

\*Negative amount for client donations is due to necessary adjustments from 2015.

### 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: \$364,105
- Hamilton County Veterans Service Commission: \$205,000

**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. Photos by Lyons Photography.





**"In our family, we do not send people to rest homes. We take care of them. My brother and I may have our disagreements, but we are steadfast with each other."**

Myra and Richard, siblings, both receive in-home care services via the Hamilton County Elderly Services Program. Myra is Richard's caregiver.



Hamilton County Commissioners  
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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.