

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.” 64 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 \$54,000 in savings to ESP.

Unique service lifts Butler County’s older adults out of depression

Though they may be at an increased risk, depression should not be a normal part of life for older adults. In fact, simple things like helping isolated older adults reconnect to the outside world, or focusing on things that can be done versus things that can’t, are effective at relieving symptoms. Since 2007, a program called Uplift has provided in-home treatment for county residents age 60 and older. According to program manager, Kelsey Donnini, 82 percent of Uplift referrals come from ESP. She says this makes sense because ESP care managers are ideally positioned to identify people who need support. And, ESP care managers are excellent partners in ensuring clients get the most out of the program. Success rates are high – 89 percent of Uplift clients who complete their personal program show an improvement in symptoms. ESP client, Margot, agrees: “Being able to talk one on one with someone – to share my ups and downs without judgement – saved my life. You don’t know what’s going on in your head until someone says to you, ‘Do you want to talk about it?’” In 2019, 122 ESP clients received services via Uplift. The program is a partnership of COA and the Butler County Mental Health Board and is administered by Butler Behavioral Health.



“This is a full-time job and I already have a job and a family. It’s a leaky bucket and every day, there’s another leak. I couldn’t do it without support, including the Elderly Services Program. Whenever I call, they are very responsive. I can tell that they appreciate what I am trying to do.”

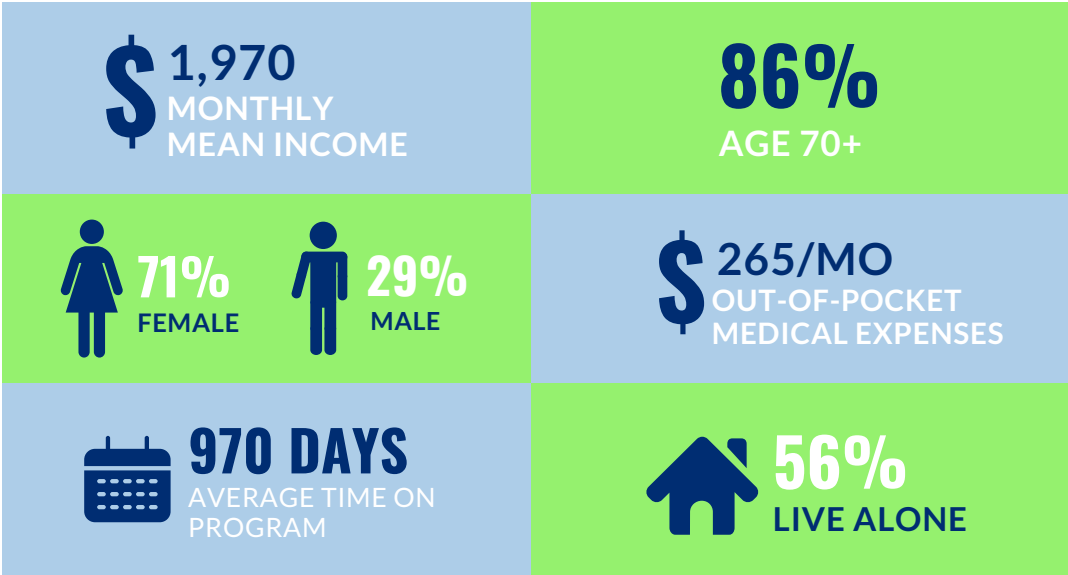
–Kathi, caregiver to her parents, who were BCESP clients

BUTLER COUNTY ESP CLIENT

STATS 2019

Butler 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.

4,121 CLIENTS SERVED



Butler County’s Elderly Services Program is a community partnership.

Butler County Commissioners
T.C. Rogers, President; Cindy Carpenter, Vice President; Donald L. Dixon

Butler County Elderly Services Program Advisory Council
John Freeman, President; Katherine Abbott, Vice President; Sabrina Jewell, Treasurer; Jared Wojcikowski, Secretary; Randy Allman; Margaret Baker; Marc Bellisario; John Centers; Julie Gilbert; Cheryl Marischen; Christine Matacic; Ann Munafo; Christy Quincy; Jennifer Roth; Melinda Wendling

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

Intake and Care Management by LifeSpan Community First Solutions
1900 Fairgrove Ave., Hamilton, OH 45011
(513) 868-9281, (800) 215-5305
www.lifespanohio.org



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.

BUTLER COUNTY ELDERLY SERVICES PROGRAM

2019 ANNUAL REPORT



Welcome



In 2019, the Elderly Services Program (ESP) provided compassionate, cost-effective care to 4,121 older adults, an increase of 101 clients over 2018.

Working with Council on Aging (COA), this advisory council strives to maintain a program that meets the community’s need while also responsibly managing local tax dollars. Information about cost-saving measures is provided in this report.

While similar programs exist in neighboring counties, Butler County stands out by offering an additional service – in-home behavioral health. Read about this service, called Uplift, elsewhere in our report.

The current tax levy that funds ESP – approved by 74.4 percent of voters in 2015 – will expire in 2020. For the program to continue, voters must approve a renewal levy this fall. Voters have shown strong support for the levy for nearly 25 years, but we will not take that for granted and are prepared to make a strong case for each Yes vote. After all, in one way or another, we all benefit from ESP. Beyond older adults, it supports 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.

This report should help you understand the value of ESP in our community – both in terms of how tax dollars are used, and the lives it impacts. I hope you are left with a better understanding of how ESP makes Butler County a great place to live for people of all ages.

Sincerely,
John Freeman
President, Butler County Elderly Services Program Advisory Council

About ESP

The Elderly Services Program (ESP) helps eligible county residents age 65 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 their income.

ESP is a community partnership. It’s managed by Council on Aging via a contract with Butler County Commissioners, who appoint a board to advise on program needs and policies. COA contracts with LifeSpan Community First Solutions to assess, enroll and care manage clients in the program. 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

\$295

MONTHLY COST FOR ESP SERVICES


VS.


\$6,000+


MONTHLY COST FOR NURSING HOME CARE

COA’s Role

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 2019:

- 

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

Home and community-based services through Medicaid-funded programs: **1,977 residents**
- 

925 individuals across COA’s service area provided support to transition from one care setting to another
- \$1.35 million**

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

Client Stories

Susan
Daughter, wife, mom, professional, elected official... Susan wears many hats. Add caregiver to the mix and things can get dicey. Susan had helped her father, Richard, manage his diabetes for nearly a decade before a sore on his foot began causing problems. Suddenly, he needed to go to the hospital for lengthy treatments seven days a week. When Susan learned the treatments would continue for at least six weeks, she decided to get help.



Margot
When you’ve spent your life helping others, needing help yourself can be difficult. But Butler County ESP client, Margot, welcomes the help. It means she can stay in her home. As she felt her world shrinking due to the loss of her sight, ESP’s Uplift service, independent living assistance and electronic monitoring system have been lifelines for Margot. “The quality of life I have now would not be what it is without this help.”



Shirley and Maxine
Caring for someone with Alzheimer’s disease is hard, even if you’re a nurse. This is the situation Shirley found herself in when she moved her mother, Maxine, in with her. Knowing she would have to care for her mom 24/7, Shirley reached out to ESP for help. In addition to other services, Maxine received respite care so Shirley could have a much-needed break from her caregiving responsibilities. “It really helped me to get away for a time, knowing that my mother was cared for by someone I knew and trusted.”



Visit www.help4seniors.org/BCESP2019 or scan code for full client stories and video.

Expenses & Revenue

How tax dollars are spent
ESP would not exist without the generous support of voters. A county tax levy in place since 1996 provides 91 percent of ESP’s funding. The most recent tax levy was approved by 74 percent of voters in 2015. The 1.3-mill levy costs property owners \$39.81 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 Butler County, COA leverages state and federal funding to cover 6 percent of ESP expenses. Additional funding comes from voluntary client donations and client co-payments (32 percent of clients make a co-payment based on their income).

Revenue

Federal and State (via Council on Aging)	\$653,858
Client Donation	\$5,910
Client Co-payment	\$290,295
Butler County Elderly Services Levy	\$9,704,295
TOTAL REVENUE	\$10,654,358

Expenses

SERVICE*	CLIENTS SERVED	SERVICE UNITS	COST
Care Management	4,121	33,531 months	\$2,133,464
Electronic Monitoring System	2,644	25,694 months	\$445,633
Home-Delivered Meals	1,783	339,817 meals	\$2,368,097
Home Care Assistance	1,647	131,109 hours	\$2,808,920
Medical Transportation	542	13,336 one-way trips	\$424,323
Home Medical Equipment	468	826 items	\$115,957
Independent Living Assistance**	427	5,995 hours	\$259,289
Minor Home Repairs	343	357 repairs	\$305,709
Consumer-Directed Care***	169	N/A	\$485,765
Non-Medical Transportation	137	1,222 one-way trips	\$33,012
Behavioral Health Services (Uplift)	122	N/A	\$125,076
Adult Day Services	50	2,642 days	\$157,468
Environmental Services****	39	111 jobs	\$40,028
Adult Day Transportation***	8	N/A	\$12,342
Intake and Assessment	N/A	N/A	\$242,261
Administration	N/A	N/A	\$697,014
TOTAL EXPENSES			\$10,654,358

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

Additional Expenses

Butler County Commissioners distributed funds from the senior services levy to the following organizations: Butler County Jobs and Family Services Adult Protective Services Unit, \$300,000 and Butler County Prosecutor’s Office for fraud prevention, \$164,874.