

## ESP helps fill gaps left by loss

Donald met Sandra as they began their careers at Wright Patterson Air Force Base. They married, raised three children and continued working for the government. At retirement, they left the suburbs and built a house on a farm in Clinton County.



Now, 30 years later, Donald sits in that house and marvels at how Sandra managed everything in their lives, never missing a beat and always full of energy.

Considering his own health problems – knee and hip replacement, stroke, cancer, diabetes and atrial fibrillation – Donald expected Sandra to outlive him. So when she died suddenly late last year, “I was shocked to the core,” he said.

Everything happened fast and at a time when Donald himself was ill. He was home battling an infection from a recent operation when Sandra had a medical episode, causing her to fall and hit her head. Fortunately, one of the couple’s children, Susan, was visiting from Cleveland. Susan suspected a stroke and called 911. Both her parents were transported to the hospital.

Sandra’s heart was not functioning properly. Over the next two weeks, Sandra would seem to recover, and then relapse. Less than three weeks later, she died in her sleep at home.

“Everyone’s going to die, and somebody has to go first,” Donald said, “but I didn’t like the way this happened.”

With family around for the holidays and Sandra’s funeral, Donald had plenty of help. But as the visitors left, Susan and her siblings worried about him.

At Clinton Memorial Hospital, the family met Jenny, a hospital care manager with Council on Aging and the Clinton County Elderly Services Program (ESP).

Jenny works in the hospital and area nursing homes, helping patients like Donald connect to in-home care services such as meals, personal care and transportation, when they are discharged home. The service is called FastTrack Home and it’s an extension of ESP. Having these services in place when a patient goes home 1) provides support for a smooth transition home when patients are in recovery, and 2) prevents unnecessary nursing home stays and hospital readmissions that often occur when a patient is unable to care for himself without help.

A quick eligibility assessment occurs in the hospital or nursing home and services are provided at no cost to the patient for up to 60 days via the county’s senior services levy. Before the 60-day window ends, an ESP care manager conducts a full eligibility assessment for on-going ESP care. Like 28 percent of FastTrack Home patients, Donald qualified for on-going care through ESP, including a co-payment for his services.

An aide, Cheryl, comes twice a week to help with housekeeping, errands and cooking. Donald enjoys the fresh meal she prepares for him; it’s a break from his standard microwave fare. “She’s here two hours and she gets a lot done. She takes care of me.”

Donald also received an emergency response system. It alerts emergency responders – and his family – if a fall is detected. “You feel pretty good to have this on. I’m here by myself a lot, but if something happens, you know you’ve got somebody close by.”

For Susan, ESP is peace of mind. “My husband and job were in Cleveland,” she said. “I needed to be there, but I didn’t want to leave Dad. I have peace of mind knowing Jenny is overseeing everything. There’s accountability. It’s worked out really well; it’s filled the gap.”

## Who the Elderly Services Program serves

ESP serves seniors who are caught in the middle – their income is too high to qualify for Medicaid, but too low to pay for private in-home care. The typical ESP client is a 77-year-old woman, living alone on an income of \$1,713 per month. Because of health problems, she spends \$256 per month on out-of-pocket medical expenses and she needs help with basic activities like personal care and transportation. In between work and other responsibilities, her family helps as much as they can, but they worry when she is alone. ESP fills in gaps in care to help seniors avoid premature placement in a nursing home.

### Total Clients Served in 2017: 511



## ESP Clinton County’s Elderly Services Program is a community partnership

### Clinton County Commissioners:

Patrick Haley, Kerry R. Steed, Brenda Woods

### Clinton County Citizens for Elderly Services:

Kathi Spirk, Chair; Charles Breckel; Karen Buckley; Timothy Hawk; Larry Roddy; Rev. Tom Stephenson; Carol Weber; Duane Weyand



### Clinton County Commissioners

46 S. South Street, Suite 213, Wilmington, OH 45177  
<http://co.clinton.oh.us/>



### Administered by:

#### Council on Aging

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

# Clinton County

## ELDERLY SERVICES PROGRAM



2017 Annual Report

*Clinton 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 Clinton County Citizens for Elderly Services, I am pleased to present our 2017 Annual Report.

In 2017, the Clinton County Elderly Services Program (ESP) helped 511 older adults remain independent in their homes, a 7 percent increase over 2016. Many of these seniors have chronic health conditions. Without services such as home-delivered meals, transportation and homemaking help, many would have no choice but to move to a nursing home.



This is a program for our community, supported by our community. As such, we are constantly looking for ways to improve the program and bring its benefits to more county seniors. We have done both of these things through FastTrack Home – Council on Aging's award-winning program that gives seniors quick access to in-home care as they leave the hospital or nursing home, helping them recover in the comfort of their own home and avoid hospital readmissions.

The nationwide shortage of home care workers continues to impact our region. But we have been working with Council on Aging, the program's administrator and care management organization, to lessen the impact on area seniors. For example, we expanded opportunities for clients to hire their own workers and recruited a local small business to provide home care services. Read more about this and other efforts in the highlights section.

Because of ESP, Clinton County is in a better position to serve the aging population than many other places around our country. I am proud to be part of a community that places so much value on helping older adults live with independence and dignity.

**Kathi Spirk**  
Chair, Clinton County Citizens for Elderly Services, Inc.

## Expenses

Service*	Clients Served	Service Units	Cost
Care Management	511	N/A	\$235,431
Electronic Monitoring Systems	363	3,235 months of rentals	\$56,871
Homemaking	298	16,449 hours	\$467,332
Home-delivered Meals	166	27,602 meals	\$213,406
Home Medical Equipment	97	141 equipment items	\$29,328
Personal Care	52	2,146 hours	\$56,673
Minor Home Repairs	24	30 repairs	\$26,838
Medical Transportation	15	161 one-way trips	\$7,024
Consumer Directed Care	8	38 months of service	\$15,197
Adult Day Services	6	272 days	\$13,055
Environmental Services**	5	14 jobs	\$4,205
Respite	4	146 hours	\$3,963
Adult Day Transportation	1	588 miles	\$1,129
Intake and Assessment	N/A	N/A	\$4,500
Administration	N/A	N/A	\$68,097
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>			<b>\$1,203,049</b>

\*Services are listed in order of clients served. \*\*Pest control, major housekeeping and waste removal.

## About the Elderly Services Program

ESP helps eligible older adults remain safe and independent in their homes, preventing unnecessary nursing home placement and filling gaps in care that may already be provided by family caregivers. The program is operated by Council on Aging (COA) via a contract with Clinton County Commissioners. A community advisory council appointed by the commissioners advises on program needs and policies. Provider agencies deliver ESP services under contract with COA.

ESP is funded by county property taxes. The most recent senior services levy was passed in November 2016 by 75.99 percent of voters. The 1.5-mill levy (a renewal) raises about \$1.3 million a year.

ESP serves eligible county residents age 65 and older who need help with certain activities of daily living (bathing, cleaning, cooking, transportation, etc.). There is no income qualification for ESP, but some clients have a co-payment based on their income. Eligibility for the program and each service is determined during an in-home assessment. Care plans are flexible and can change over time. ESP provides the right services in the right amount at the right time.

## How tax dollars are spent

ESP would not exist without the senior services tax levy and the generous support of county voters. Local tax dollars provide 86 percent of funding needed for the program.

As the Area Agency on Aging for southwestern Ohio, including Clinton County, COA leverages state and federal funding to cover 13 percent of ESP expenses. Additional funding comes from voluntary client donations and client co-payments (33 percent of clients make a co-payment based on their income).

ESP is a compassionate and cost-effective alternative to nursing home care. On average, it costs \$284 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.

## Revenue

Federal and State (via Council on Aging)	\$151,173
Client Donation	\$610
Client Co-payment	\$20,290
Clinton County Elderly Services Levy	\$1,030,976
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$1,203,049</b>

## 2017 highlights

**COA and providers work to address aide shortage** – A nationwide shortage of home health workers continues to impact our region, but Council on Aging, ESP's community board and local service providers worked together to improve service delivery for seniors in the county. For example: creating cost efficiencies by grouping providers and home care workers by region; recruiting new providers in hard to serve areas; and changing training/certification requirements for aides who provide only housekeeping services. COA is working on a plan to competitively bid home care services, including new hourly rates and revised requirements for service delivery in the levy-funded Elderly Services Programs.

**FastTrack Home receives quality improvement award** – Council on Aging's FastTrack Home program, which began as a pilot project at Clinton Memorial Hospital in 2016, received

the Health Collaborative's Leadership in Quality Improvement Award. FastTrack Home fills an unmet need in the health care community, connecting seniors to ESP's in-home care services when they are needed most – as they are discharged from a hospital or nursing home. With support waiting at home, seniors can avoid nursing home stays and hospital readmissions. In 2017, FastTrack Home served 47 seniors in the county and also expanded into three Hamilton County hospitals. Read more about FastTrack Home in our client profile.

**Clients have option to hire their own workers** – As part of the effort to alleviate the effects of the home care worker shortage and to increase client satisfaction, county commissioners approved Consumer Directed Care (CDC) as an alternative to traditional home health agencies. 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. In 2017, eight clients began using the service.

## COA's role in Clinton County

As administrator of the Elderly Services Program in Clinton County, 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.

In addition to eligibility assessments and ongoing care management, COA's responsibilities include: program development; provider management; data analysis and reporting; financial services and oversight; information technology; quality improvement; and community engagement.

As the state-designated Area Agency on Aging, COA provides additional services to county residents:

Service	2017 in Clinton County
<b>Aging and Disability Resource Center</b> COA's call center and "front door" to services and community resources.	Responded to <b>more than 46,800</b> inquiries
<b>Home and Community-based services via Medicaid Waivers</b> Care for residents of all ages via PASSPORT, Assisted Living, Ohio Home Care, Specialized Recovery Services and MyCare Ohio programs.	Served <b>224</b> residents
<b>Transitional Care</b> Support to transition from hospital/nursing home care to in-home care via FastTrack Home, Community Transitions, Home Choice and other programs.	Served <b>130</b> residents
<b>Title III of the Older Americans Act</b> Federal funding administered by COA for senior center services, transportation, meals, caregiver support, legal help and wellness education.	In 2017, Clinton County organizations spent <b>\$287,109</b> in Title III funds allocated by COA

