

Home and Community-based services Fact Sheet

AARP SOUTH CAROLINA and more than 550,000 AARP members in our state want to thank our Representatives and Senators for their support of home and community based services because it has meant so much to so many older, isolated seniors. A hot meal and a smile can mean the difference between being independent and being institutionalized. We know these economic times are rough, but we ask our legislators to remember the **4,800 seniors** who receive meals, transportation to the doctor, and other services when budgets are prioritized. We are requesting a total of \$2,900,000 in recurring state funds to help seniors with choices and to allow them to remain independent in their homes.

What do the seniors look like who are receiving these services? The following is a profile of the 4,800 seniors receiving the new home and community based services:

- 54% are nutritionally at risk
- 91% lack support (needs help or someone to check on them during evacuation or disaster, needs caregiver assistance and lives alone)
- 54% have incomes less than the federal poverty level and 48% live alone
- 62% live in rural areas

What is the state's return on their investment in these services? The Office on Aging studies show that those who receive these meals and supports are less likely to be admitted to the emergency room or hospital than their counterparts without these services. Provision of services such as home delivered meals, group dining, home care, respite services, transportation and other in-home supportive services will enable seniors to maintain their health and avoid more costly institutional services funded by the state's Medicaid program. An expenditure of approximately \$600 to \$1,500 per senior may result in a savings up to \$40,429 (\$12,129 state funds) per senior in Medicaid funded institutional long term care services per year.

What services are being paid for by this funding?

- 49% are receiving home delivered meals and 26% are receiving congregate (group) meals
- 9% are receiving home care/home living support and 9% are receiving transportation
- 7% are receiving adult day care/respite services or other services

An encouraging fact:

Research shows that states that invest in home and community-based services over time, slow their rate of Medicaid spending growth, compared to states that remain reliant on nursing home care.