



Alternative Care

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Fast facts

- ▲ Community-based care is often less expensive than institutional care, so the state created Alternative Care to help low-income, frail seniors remain in their homes.
- ▲ As of February 2009, Hennepin had 462 seniors enrolled in the Alternative Care Program. This compares to 1,400 in January 2003. Incentives for this program have been decreased which reduced enrollment numbers.
- ▲ Alternative Care clients may pay fees, sometimes up to 30 percent of the cost of services, which may include help with housework, assistance with personal care and managing medications, attending adult day programs, respite care and home-delivered meals.
- ▲ To apply for Alternative Care, call 612-348-4500.

What is Alternative Care?

Alternative Care is a state-funded cost-sharing program that supports certain home- and community-based services for eligible seniors. The goal is to help low-income seniors remain in their homes versus more costly nursing home care.

Alternative Care clients may pay fees – sometimes up to 30 percent of their income – for services. In addition, the state may seek recovery of the state cost of services through estate claims.

How many are helped and at what cost?

As of February 2009, Hennepin was serving 462 seniors on the Alternative Care program.

The average monthly cost per Hennepin Alternative Care client is \$955. In contrast, the statewide average monthly Medical Assistance payment for nursing facility residents is \$4,772. Hennepin's 2009 budget for Alternative Care clients is \$5.2 million.

Hennepin has more seniors than any other Minnesota county, including the largest percentage of minority elders (39 percent of minority elders age 60 and over). According to the 2000 Census, 5.5 percent of Hennepin seniors live below the poverty level. (The 2009 federal poverty guideline is \$10,830.)

Who uses Alternative Care and to what benefit?

Seniors (65 and older) who:

- ▲ have been assessed by a county social worker or public health nurse as needing care;
- ▲ are at risk of nursing home placement without care;
- ▲ choose to remain in the community instead of moving to a nursing home; and
- ▲ would be eligible for Medical Assistance within 135 days if they had to pay for nursing home care.