



Elderly Waiver

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Fast facts

- ▲ Hennepin has more than 125,000 people age 65 and older, according to the 2000 Census.
- ▲ During 2008, 4,933 seniors living in Hennepin were enrolled in Elderly Waiver.
- ▲ To apply for Elderly Waiver, call your health plan (your Medical Assistance provider). To enroll in Medical Assistance, call 612-596-1300.

What is the Elderly Waiver program?

Elderly Waiver is a federally-funded program for people age 65 and older who are eligible for Medical Assistance (MA) and require the level of medical care provided in a nursing home but choose to reside in their homes or apartments. Community-based care is less expensive than institutional care, so Elderly Waiver saves the government dollars by maintaining seniors in their communities. Under Elderly Waiver, the cost for an individual to remain in the community cannot be greater than the estimated nursing home cost.

Elderly Waiver pays for a variety of services and supports, such as home visits by nurses, home-delivered meals, home modifications, adult foster care, medical supplies and equipment, and more. Hennepin County administers the program for residents under the direction of the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS).

Who is helped and at what cost?

In 2008, Hennepin had approximately 4,933 seniors enrolled in Elderly Waiver or about 20 percent of the state's caseload of 24,319. To determine the level of care the senior needs, social workers and public health nurses from the Human Services Department assess the individual on a variety of indicators, from ability to bath and care for themselves and their home to mental health.

Approximately \$111 million was spent in 2004 on waiver-funded services.

How does Elderly Waiver save money?

Without Elderly Waiver supports, many low-income seniors would need institutional care, such as a Medicaid-certified skilled nursing facilities or a certified board-and-care homes. The average cost of these alternative settings is \$4,882 per person, per month. This compares to the Elderly Waiver average monthly cost of \$2,485 per recipient.