

Few assisted-living homes take part in Medicaid plan

The Associated Press

How it works

COLUMBUS — Few assisted-living centers in Ohio are participating so far in a new program in which the state pays for the care of senior citizens who don't want to live in nursing homes but need too much help to stay in their homes.

Ohio began offering Medicaid coverage Saturday at assisted-living centers for up to 1,800 people, the 43rd state to pay for some services at the facilities that can help residents with bathing, dressing and eating. State lawmakers have set aside \$18 million for the program.

As of Thursday, 47 Ohioans had applied for assisted-living coverage and only nine facilities had received state approval to accept the Medicaid recipients.

Many facilities still are trying to make sure they meet state requirements, such as ensuring that Medicaid residents are offered private rooms and private baths, said Roland Hornbostel, deputy director of the Ohio Department of Aging.

The state expects more providers and applicants to come forward by the end of the year, he said.

About 18,000 Ohioans are in 400 assisted-living centers statewide, according to the nonprofit Ohio Association of Area Agencies on Aging.

The average age of a resident is 83, and costs range from \$2,000 to \$4,000 per month — most of it paid for by families or in some cases by insurance policies.

Ohio's new assisted-living program

Ohio began offering Medicaid coverage Saturday for a limited number of senior citizens who wish to move to assisted-living centers. The \$18 million program provides coverage for up to 1,800 people.

■ The program is available only to Medicaid recipients already living in nursing homes or receiving in-home care through one of three state programs: Passport, Choices or Ohio Home Care.

■ So far only nine facilities have received state approval to accept the Medicaid recipients: Beechwood Home in O'Brvonville, Jenkins Memorial in Wellston, Good Shepherd in Fostoria, Elyria United Methodist Village in Elyria, Algart Health Care in Cleveland, Athenian Assisted Living in North Royalton, Sateri Homes in Youngstown, Sycamore Glen Health Center in Miamisburg and Orchard Grove in Bellevue.

Source: Ohio Department of Aging

will pick up the cost of a resident's care — \$50 to \$70 a day, depending on the level of service. However, the cost of room and board still must be paid for by the resident.

The state has capped that cost at \$553 per month.

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