



Effective, efficient and timely service delivery

Investing in necessary improvements of the service delivery structure for Oregon's seniors and people with disabilities

Staff reductions in Senior and Disability field offices (DHS and Area Agencies on Aging) throughout Oregon have resulted in severe understaffing and are impacting the safety and health of seniors and people with disabilities!

- ✓ Shortage of staffing does not allow adult protective services staff to respond in a timely way to provide safety and protection needed for vulnerable Oregonians to live safely in their communities.
- ✓ If Adult Protective Services workers are not funded to the level of the actual work they are required to do, safety and protection for seniors and people with disabilities will continue to be negatively impacted. The most critical cases will be investigated while prevention and less critical cases will not receive timely attention or support due to an inadequate number of workers.
- ✓ Partnerships between local law enforcement, court systems and staff are critical to ensure the aging and disability populations are not subject to neglect, financial fraud and abuse. The staff reductions do not allow the partnerships to grow and coordinate protections and prevention activities.
- ✓ Eligibility processing for long-term services and supports is falling behind, leaving people who qualify for these services vulnerable for longer than they should be putting them at risk.
- ✓ The risk of adverse Federal actions for the Medicaid system are increased with inadequate and insufficient staffing to complete the mandated requirements for this program.
- ✓ Seniors and those with disabilities who qualify for critical services including medical help, and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps) are experiencing delays in receiving critical assistance that can help stop unnecessary emergency room visits or a higher level of need due to an increase in impairment without care.

How can the Legislature help? The Department of Human Services (DHS) has proposed Strategic Funding Initiative 108-12, which would implement a workload model for Aging and People with Disabilities in the next biennium. This investment has a federal match available with each state dollar invested realizing at least a 50-50 match. The increase proposed would bring Eligibility workers to 85% of the workload standard and Adult Protective Services to 95% of the standard necessary to effectively perform the work required. While not at 100%, it is a vast improvement and a start to building staffing up to acceptable levels.

This model of staffing would allow DHS to more accurately predict needs now and in the future, and has been used in the Children, Adults and Families programs for several years. Adequate support to the infrastructure for Seniors and People with Disabilities would allow the achievement of the DHS outcome that Oregonians are healthy and have the best possible quality of life at all ages.

Inclusion of the workload model for the Department of Human Services budgets is necessary to protect effective services and supports for Oregon's seniors and people with disabilities.

Support this investment for the 2013-15 biennium.