

Q. I need help to stay in my home, but I have limited finances> Are there any programs that could help me?

R. Beitterman - Sarasota

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The Medicaid Nursing Home Diversion program is designed to help the frail elderly, who are at risk for Nursing Home placement, stay in their homes. I have asked Sharon Weatherhead, MBA of Evercare Health & Home Connections to comment on this program.

The goal is to keep people in the least restrictive and most safe environment, where all their basic needs can be met. That environment may be in their own home or in an Assisted Living Residence.

In order to qualify, a person must meet both functional and financial requirements. When all completed paperwork is submitted, an Assessor from the DOEA (Department of Elder Affairs – CARES Unit) will schedule a time to do a personal assessment.

When a person is notified that they are eligible for enrollment with the Diversion Program, they will be asked to select a provider that services their area. At that time, if they are not currently on Medicaid, their chosen provider will assist with the process.

Depending on which provider you choose, the following benefits may be available to the enrollee:

- A personal Care Manager to assist you with your Medical needs
- Personal care services to help you bathe and dress
- Homemaking, chores, and meal preparations
- Home-delivered meals
- Vision, hearing, and dental
- Personal care supplies
- Medicare co-payment and deductibles (except part-D)
- Additional drug coverage (not provided by part-D)
- Assisted Living Services
- Escort services to Doctors appointments
- Personal help systems (assistance button)
- Home modifications to support mobility

There is no cost to you for this program. Below is a brief description of who is “eligible”:

TO JOIN YOU MUST:

- Be 65 years of age or older
- Have Medicare part A and B
- Meet the financial requirements set by the State of Florida
- Meet health requirements set by the State of Florida
- Live in the service area
- Have the Florida Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA – CARES Unit) say you are eligible

For further information or questions you can reach Sharon of Evercare Health & Home Connections which is a Medicaid Nursing Home Diversion Program at 239-297-1814