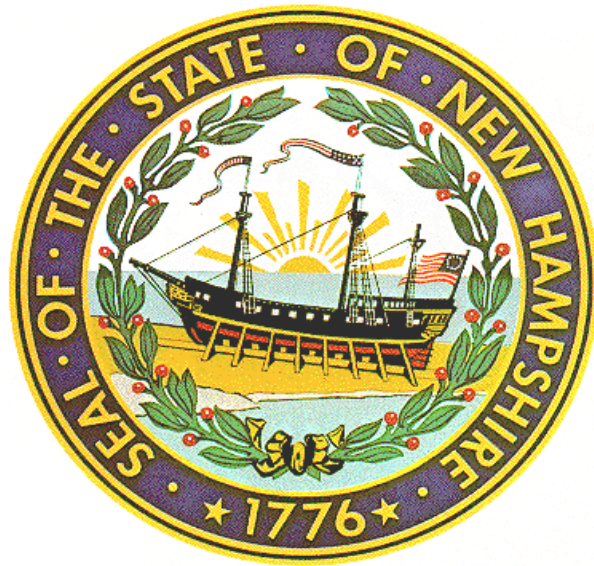


**New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Long Term Supports and Services**

Annual Report on Homemaker Services

RSA 161-F: 64



Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services

December 1, 2018

New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Long Term Supports and Services
Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services

Homemaker Services Report to Legislature
December 1, 2018
Prepared by Tracey Tarr, Administrator II

Requirement: RSA 161-F: 64

On or before December 1 of each year, the Commissioner shall submit a report on the program with recommendations for improvements to the legislature.

Program Authority: RSA 161-F: 62 Administration; Services.

Homemaker services shall be administered through the department and shall be coordinated with any existing homemaker services. The services shall be provided through the purchase of qualified service and, to the extent feasible, shall be coordinated through local agencies. To be certified by the department, any agency, whether public or private, nonprofit or profit, shall meet the basic standards for licensure under RSA 151.

Service Description and Overview of Components:

Homemaker services are provided in an individual's home, with the primary purpose of supporting household management and independent living. Tasks are carried out under the auspices of a licensed agency, which assesses the need for the service and implements a person-centered plan of care. Homemaker services include: light housecleaning tasks, meal preparation, grocery shopping and other errands, providing and encouraging socialization, evaluating the individual's progress and providing information and referral to other resources. Services also include instructing the individual in the performance of routine household tasks, household budgeting, nutrition, and food purchasing and meal preparation. Homemaker Services are one of several important, non-medical services that support individuals in maintaining their independence in their homes and communities.

Prior to employment, homemakers are required to undergo a New Hampshire Criminal Records check as well as a Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services State Registry check.

Homemaker Services are licensed by the Department of Health and Human Services (Department) and are provided by twelve agencies operating as Home Care Services Providers (He-P 822), Home Health Care Providers (He-P 809) and Home Health Agency Hospice Providers (He-P 823). In addition, the Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services defines eligibility and directs the provision of Homemaker Services through its Title III Older Americans Act Services (He-E 502) and Title XX Social Services Block Grant Services (He-E 501) administrative rules. Homemaker Services are also included in the range of services available

for individuals receiving services through the Choices for Independence (CFI) Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) 1915 (c) Medicaid Waiver.

The Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services funds Homemaker Services through Title III, Title XX and State General Funds. For Title III Homemaker Services, individuals must be aged 60 or older, present with a specific need for Homemaker Services and be socially and/or economically disadvantaged. Title XX Homemaker Services are available for adults with chronic illnesses and/or disabilities, aged 18 and older, who present with a specific need for the service and also meet income eligibility requirements. Title III and Title XX services are provided to individuals who are not receiving services through the Choices for Independence Medicaid waiver or other Medicaid 1915 (c) waiver programs offered by the Department.

In response to longstanding contract agency concerns regarding challenges with providing Homemaker Services due to workforce issues and an unchanged reimbursement rate, the Legislature approved an increase in funding for Homemaker Services effective at the beginning of State Fiscal Year 2018. Rates (in half-hour units of service) were increased from \$9.58 to \$10.06. This followed a rate adjustment made by the Department in State Fiscal Year 2017, increasing the rate from \$8.38 to \$9.58, without an increase in the total appropriation for the service.

In State Fiscal Year 2018, actual dollars expended for Homemaker Services totaled \$4,425,153.00 in Title XX funds and \$422,299.00 in Title III funds, for a total of \$4,847,452.00. A total of 2110 unduplicated clients received the service. A total of 481,854 half-hour units of service were provided.

Assessment:

The Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services is assessing the structure and provision of Homemaker Services. Contracted agencies providing the service are continuing to have significant difficulty in recruiting and retaining workers, especially in rural locations. In addition, other factors include, but are not limited to: advancing age of clients, more complex needs of clients, and an increase in the number of clients with significant challenges including untreated mental illness and hoarding present additional challenges in recruitment and in matching staff appropriately with clients.

The continuing goal of the Bureau of Elderly and Adult Services is to ensure that clients are able to receive the appropriate level of services, and to ensure that agencies utilize all of their allocated service units.