



State of New Mexico

Office of the Governor

Bill Richardson

Governor

Governor Bill Richardson Announces Medicaid Personal Care Option Will Continue

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SANTA FE – Governor Bill Richardson announced today an important and fast-growing service of New Mexico’s Medicaid program will continue. New Mexico is one of a handful of states offering a Medicaid Personal Care Option (PCO) service. The service provided in-home care to 6,284 elderly/disabled adults last year at a cost of \$125 million, and is expected to reach \$157 million this year.

“I have been traveling the state, meeting with New Mexicans to hear what’s on their minds, and I’ve been hearing from residents who want the Personal Care Option to continue,” said Governor Richardson. “The PCO is a wonderful service that allows disabled adults to remain in their communities, and it helps local economies.” The Human Services Department (HSD) has stopped cuts in service hours directed by the Legislative Finance Committee last summer.

In the meantime HSD has created a short term Personal Care Option Committee that is exploring optional solutions to keep the service, yet contain costs. “We are making every effort possible to save, not eliminate, the PCO program,” said HSD Secretary Pamela Hyde. “Eliminating the program is not an option. Some changes will need to be made in the PCO service to bring proper oversight and consistency for how the service is provided,” Hyde added.

The PCO committee is to have their recommendations to Secretary Hyde by early June 2003. Their work will help HSD make decisions about how to move forward with the service at the same time increase oversight, assure quality, and control growth.

If you would like to provide the committee with comments and/or suggestions, please contact the committee chair, Ms. Patty Jennings at 622-4711, or e-mail pjennings@nmmip.com