

Gov. Pritzker Announces Program Of All-inclusive Care For The Elderly To Expand Choices In Care For Illinois Seniors

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SPRINGFIELD — Governor JB Pritzker along with the Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) today announced the launch of the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) to better meet the needs of older adults across Illinois. The

program expands options for community-based care and serves as an alternative to traditional nursing facility care, allowing eligible seniors to continue living safely at home.

The PACE program brings another option for older adults in Illinois who are dually eligible for Medicaid and Medicare in choosing their care. It provides customized and coordinated medical care and social services for adults aged 55 and older who are certified by the state as qualifying for nursing home care but are able to safely continue living in the community at the time of their enrollment.

“Here in Illinois, we recognize that our elders thrive when they remain in our communities as they age,” said Governor JB Pritzker. “The PACE program is an innovative model that delivers a much-needed alternative to traditional nursing facility care. This program won’t just help our seniors — it will help whole families, too, by giving them the support they need to keep their family units together.”

"Our senior citizens deserve to live with dignity and joy. We recognize the contributions they have made to our state, and we are committed to ensuring they have what they need to live healthy, happy, and well," said Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton. "PACE is a major step in uplifting the care and wellbeing of Illinois seniors, making it clear that our administration stands with them today and every day."

PACE combines all the services covered by Medicare and Medicaid and adds an element of integration for members. The program creates flexibility for older adults and their families, caregivers, and health care providers to meet each individual’s health care needs while they continue to live in their homes and communities. Services include holistic care planning and coordination, long term services and supports, therapies, medications, mental health care, and hospital care, if necessary.

While the program is designed to provide community-based services as an alternative to nursing home care, if a program enrollee does require nursing facility care, PACE will fund that and continue to coordinate the patient’s care. In other words, a PACE program takes full risk for the total cost of care of an enrollee and is another form of managed care.

In order to qualify for PACE, a senior must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Be at least 55 years old.
- Live in one of the PACE service areas.
- Meet the state standard of qualifying for nursing home care, while also being able to continue living safely in the community.

HFS has chosen eight organizations in five service areas, which will serve as partners in providing these new services to seniors in their region once they pass a stringent application with federal partners as well. The five service areas are West Chicago, South Chicago, Southern Cook County, Peoria and East St. Louis.

The initial PACE awardees which HFS will support in the next step of federal application are:

West Chicago

- Kinship PACE of Illinois, LLC.
- Lawndale Christian Health Center.
- PACE of Southwest Chicago, LLC.

South Chicago

- Annie's Place PACE.
- Esperanza Health Centers.

Southern Cook County

- BoldAge PACE Illinois.

Peoria

- OSF Healthcare System.

East St. Louis

- Stella PACE at Home, LLC.

“PACE is going to have a major impact on Illinois seniors and their families,” said state Rep. LaToya Greenwood (D-East St. Louis). “By creating an alternative to nursing home care that will allow seniors to continue living safely in the community while receiving the care they need, this program will make for better health outcomes and a better overall quality of life.”

“The launch of PACE in key areas of the state is a big step toward creating a more inclusive and equitable health care system for our seniors,” said state Rep. Thaddeus Jones (D-Calumet City). “This program will create the opportunity for a more dignified future for seniors in these communities.”

“PACE will create for Illinois seniors a holistic and locally-based option that provides quality, integrated care,” said state Sen. Dave Koehler (D-Peoria). “The option to continue living safely in the community will greatly enhance the quality of life for Illinois seniors who enroll in the program.”

“PACE creates a new set of supports to assist in what most families want – for their loved one to continue living safely at home for as long as possible,” Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services Director Theresa Eagleson said. “PACE programs will be community-based and specialized in their geographic areas and take responsibility for holistic health care for seniors who choose to enroll. We are proud to be working to offer another incredible choice for care in our array of HealthChoice Illinois options and think this will mean a better quality of life for seniors and their families.”

The PACE providers are anticipated to begin providing services to Illinois seniors in state fiscal year 2024, joining 31 other states that currently have operational PACE programs. The existing programs serve an estimated 60,000 participants nationwide.