

OREGON PROJECT INDEPENDENCE

Oregon Project Independence (OPI) serves individuals who are age 60 and older or individuals who have been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease or a related disorder. It provides in-home services to seniors who require the same level of care as people in nursing homes, but who typically do not qualify for Medicaid. Individuals with net incomes between 100 percent and 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) are expected to pay a fee toward their service, based on a sliding fee schedule. Families with income above 200 percent of FPL are expected to pay the full hourly rate of service provided.

On July 29, 2005, the Oregon House of Representatives funded OPI and ensured its stability for future years by providing \$12 million for the 2005-07 biennium. In addition, a bill ensured the future of OPI by establishing a trust fund that will receive excess monies from the senior and disabled property tax deferral program.

OPI is a key component in the future of Oregon's services to the elderly population. The number of seniors and people with disabilities is projected to grow fairly rapidly as the numbers of baby boomers start to age. Many questions regarding this program have been raised, for example:

Does OPI keep people off Medicaid?

What does an OPI client look like?

What are some of the diagnoses an OPI client has?

What are typical survival priorities for OPI clients?

How long is a client on OPI?

A study was designed to answer these questions.

METHODOLOGY:

Data sources used in this study were the 360 (Client Assessment and Planning System, CAPS) history file. This file has assessment data as far back as 1994. The Medicaid Management Information System (MMIS) was used to determine eligibility history.

Three hundred forty-two OPI clients from a 1998 360 download were randomly selected for this study. Demographic information such as marital status, gender and age was extracted. The Activities of daily living and diagnostic information for each client was also gathered. Closure dates and date of death was captured from the MMIS eligibility files (ELGR) when possible. Service priority history screens from the mainframe were also used to determine when and if a client transferred from OPI to TITLE XIX waiver services.

FINDINGS:

- 77.5% of clients in the sample were female, 22.5% were male (See Table1).
- 58% of the sampled clients are widowed. Of those, 88% were female (See Table 2).
- In 1998, the OPI clients were predominantly in survival priority levels of 3, 10 and 15 (See Table 3).
- 12% of the clients were dependent in mobility
4% of the clients were dependent in continence
24% of the clients were dependent in bathing
3% of the clients were dependent in grooming
3% of the clients were dependent in behavior
- The average age of the clients sampled was 82 years.
- 13.5% of the OPI clients had a diagnosis of diabetes.
- 28% had hypertension.
- 19% had heart disease.
- 15% had cerebrovascular related diagnoses.
- 13% were diagnosed with COPD.
- 37% had arthritis.

LENGTH OF TIME ON OPI:

We were not able to determine history on 65 clients. The number of clients used to determine length of time on OPI is 277.

- Only 25.1% (86) of the OPI clients in 1998 moved to Title XIX waiver services. Their average time on OPI was 50 months. Their average length of time on Title XIX was 26 months. (This average excludes the 26 clients who are still current).
- The average length of time on OPI for all 277 clients was 41 months. One client was on for 12 years and 1 month.
- 7.6% (26) of the clients in the 1998 sample are still receiving XIX services. Of those clients, 1 is in foster care, 8 are in nursing facilities, 4 are receiving in-home services, 8 are in assisted living facilities, and 1 is in a residential care facility.
- 4 (1.2%) are still in OPI.
- 27.2 % of the 1998 OPI clients are deceased.

Where OPI Sample Clients are Today

	Clients	Percent
Moved to Title XIX (No longer open cases)	86	25.1%
Moved to Title XIX (Still open)	26	7.6%
OPI (Still open)	4	1.2%
Deceased	93	27.2%
Closed cases - reason unknown.	68	19.9%
Not able to determine history*	65	19.0%
Totals	342	100.0%

*** It is possible that some clients had an assessment and refused services of had an assessment and did not qualify for services**

CONCLUSION:

Oregon Project Independence gives clients who are over the Federal Poverty Level assistance in their homes while keeping them off Medicaid Title XIX.

The expansion of the Oregon Project Independence would aid in helping the elderly population of the future maintain their independence without substantial additional funding for Medicaid.