

# Elder Services of Berkshire County

## Celebrating 35 Years of Service to Seniors 1974-2009



## A Message from Elder Services

This is Elder Services 35th year of service to the Berkshire community. We provide Berkshire seniors, caregivers, and individuals with disabilities with the programs and services which allow them to continue to live in their own homes with dignity and independence. In recognition of our 35th anniversary, we thought we would share some of the highlights of Elder Services' past 35 years in this special supplement. As you can see from the following pages, the number of programs and services we provide has grown significantly over the years as we have continued to evolve and adapt to best serve the Berkshire community. The journey which began in 1974 with three staff continues today with more than 100 staff and 400 volunteers.

Elder Services has been the federally designated Area Agency on Aging for Berkshire County since 1975 and the state designated Aging Services Access Point since 1997. Berkshire County encompasses 946 square miles and thirty-two cities and towns. Elder Services appreciates the tremendous amount of support we receive from the Berkshire community.

Although the number of Berkshire County residents has decreased over the last few years, the number of seniors age 60 or older continues to grow. According to the 2000 US Census, Berkshire County was home to 135,000 individuals, more than 30,000 of whom were 60 or older. Although the county's overall population decreased by 3.2% from 1990 to 2000, the number of Berkshire County residents age 75 or older grew by 16.5%. Seniors age 60 or older represented 22.4% of the county's total population, which was significantly higher than the statewide average of 17.3%, and was the second highest percentage in Massachusetts. According to 2007 US Census data, Berkshire County's senior population continues to be the second highest percentage in the Commonwealth.

This past year we served more than 10,000 seniors, caregivers, and individuals with disabilities. The typical senior served in our Home Care and Meals on Wheels programs is between the ages 75 and 90, female, widowed, living alone, and on a fixed, limited income. As the number of individuals age 75 and older continues to grow, so will their need for home and community-based services.

There are many challenges that lie ahead, particularly during these uncertain economic times. We will continue to work to provide the highest level of service and to be there when needed. We will continue to advocate for true choice regarding long-term care services, so that seniors and individuals with disabilities can receive their long-term care services in their own homes, if that is their choice. And, we will continue to believe that there is no place like home.

**Robert P. Dean**  
**Executive Director**  
**Elder Services of Berkshire County**

*"My family and I send our heartfelt thanks for all your help, care and kindness during my mother's last years. You made a dramatic difference in our ability to keep her comfortably at home. Please know what a positive and happy influence you have on other people's lives."*

# Elder Services Timeline

## 1974

Berkshire County Commissioners vote \$16,000 in seed money to establish a non-profit Home Care Corporation to provide in-home services to county's seniors through a contract with state's Department of Elder Affairs. Berkshire Home Care Corporation is incorporated on June 25, 1974. Board of Directors hires Frederick H. Whitham as Executive Director, to start Berkshire Home Care Corporation, which is staffed with three employees

## 1975

Berkshire Home Care Corporation designated as county's Area Agency on Aging, under the federal Older American's Act. Title III Subgrants established. Elder Nutrition Program becomes part of Berkshire Home Care Corporation.

## 1977

Long Term Care Ombudsman Program is begun.

## 1981

Berkshire Home Care Corp changes name to Elder Services of Berkshire County, Inc.

## 1983

Adult Foster Care program and Protective Services for seniors are begun.

## 1988

Elder Services purchases monthly newspaper, "Berkshire Senior," for \$1,000.

## 1989

Catherine R. May named Executive Director. Elder Services Caregiver Support Group begins.

## 1991

Elder Services' offices consolidated at 66 Wendell Avenue, Pittsfield.

## 1992

To address insufficient funding, fund-raising to support Meals on Wheels begins.

## 1994

Elder Services establishes its own kitchen in Lanesboro to prepare meals. Money Management Program begins. Information and Referral and Intake Department is computerized.

## 1997

Elder Services is designated Massachusetts ASAP (Aging Services Access Point) for Berkshire County. Elder Services becomes contact point for SHINE (Serving Health Information Needs of Elders) and Senior Pharmacy Programs.

## 1998

One-millionth meal prepared by Elder Services' kitchen.

## 1999

Elder Services celebrates 25th Anniversary.

## 2000

Providence Court in Pittsfield designated first and only Berkshire County Supportive Housing site. This partnership between the Pittsfield Housing Authority and Elder Services provides assisted-living-like services to the building's residents.

Elder Services' Website [www.esbci.org](http://www.esbci.org) is established.

Elder Services' Hospital Liaison Case Manager position established at Berkshire Medical Center to provide bedside information to seniors regarding available in-home services.

## 2001

Community CHOICES program begins, allowing eligible seniors to receive more hours of service than in basic home care.

## 2002

The Family Caregiver Support Program is introduced and the Caregiver Support Fund is established to help caregivers with a variety of needs and expenses.

## 2003

Robert P. Dean named Elder Services third Executive Director. Two-millionth meal served by Elder Services' kitchen. Personal Care Assistance program begins. Eligible seniors can now hire, supervise and schedule their own personal care workers, receiving more hours of care than would otherwise be possible.

## 2004

Council on Aging (COA) Caregiver Fund is established to assist each town's COA to identify caregiver needs and provide access to funds to support them.

Renovation of Crossway Village (formerly known as the Lee Central School) begins

## 2005

In preparation for the new Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Benefit due to begin on January 1, 2006, Elder Services SHINE (Serving Health Information Needs of Elders) program conducts extensive community outreach.

In recognition of Resident's Rights Week, Elder Services Long Term Care Ombudsman program hosts the first annual luncheon for nursing facility Resident Council representatives, nursing facility staff, and volunteers from Elder Services Ombudsman program.

Full implementation of the statewide Nursing Facility Screening Initiative, a collaboration between Elder Services and Berkshire County nursing facilities which ensures that seniors receive the services they need in the least restrictive setting.

Berkshire Senior, Elder Services newspaper, celebrates 20 years of service to Berkshire seniors and the community.

Supportive Housing at Providence Court in Pittsfield celebrates 5th anniversary.

## 2006

Over 175 people gather at Crossway Village in Lee to witness a ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating the completion of the renovation of the former Lee Central School into 37 units of affordable senior housing with enhanced services. Services offered to eligible Crossway Village residents include Meals on Wheels, case-management, personal care, homemaking, laundry, health insurance counseling, and money management.

The Massachusetts Legislature passes the Equal Choice bill, which allows seniors and individuals with disabilities, who are eligible for MassHealth benefits, the right to choose to receive their long-term care in the least restrictive setting appropriate to their needs, including their homes.

Elder Services converts its client database to a cutting-edge, web-based system called SIMS (Senior Information Management System.)

## 2007

Elder Services Caregiver Support Program expands so that more family caregivers can receive one-on-one and group support in the challenging role of caring for a loved one.

Elder Services Lanesboro kitchen prepares its three-millionth meal since opening in 1994.

Elder Services, in collaboration with the North Adams Housing Authority, introduced Residential Services Coordination to the resident of the Ashland Park, Spring Park, Greylock and River View apartments.

Elder Services' Berkshire Senior TV show received the "Annie Award" from Pittsfield Community Television, in recognition of Elder Services' outstanding achievement in the use of television programming to positively impact the local community. Berkshire Senior TV shows are aired on local public access channels throughout the county.

The Richard and Rita Gallagher Alzheimer's Resource Center celebrates its 10th anniversary.

## 2008

Elder Services received a second HUD 202 grant to convert the Hyde Building at the former Central School in Lee into additional units of senior housing with enriched services, to be called Crossway Tower.

Elder Services and AdLib, Inc. sign a Memorandum of Understanding establishing an Aging and Disabilities Resource Consortium (ADRC) to make it easier for seniors and individuals with disabilities to access the services they need. Elder Services is approached by the Town of Clarksburg to explore the development of senior housing in that community.

## 2009

Elder Services holds its annual volunteer recognition dinner to honor the over 400 Elder Services volunteers who provide 30,000 hours of service to Berkshire County seniors each year. This year's theme is "Volunteers Make a World of Difference."

## Elder Services continues to:

- serve more than 10,000 seniors, caregivers and individuals with disabilities each year.
- provide more than 1,000 seniors a month with home care services.
- serve over 1,000 meals a day — more than a quarter-million meals a year.

*As we go forward, Elder Services will continue to advocate for the services seniors, caregivers, and individuals with disabilities need to continue to live in their own homes with dignity and independence.*

# Elder Services Serves all of Berkshire County

We offer Berkshire seniors a variety of options to help them retain their independence, stay in their own homes, and improve the quality of their lives. If you or someone you know needs help to remain home with dignity and independence, call Elder Services at 499-0524 or 1-800-544-5242.

## In Home Services

- Adaptive Equipment
- Case Management
- Chore Service
- Companionship
- Elder Care Advice Program
- Elder Care Fund
- Enhanced Elder Intervention
- Grocery Shopping
- Homemaking- Personal Care
- Laundry Service
- Meals on Wheels
- Money Management Assistance
- Personal Care Assistance Program
- Personal Emergency Response Systems (PERS)
- Private Pay Care Management
- Protective Services
- Respite Care
- Transportation
- Volunteer Services

## Community Services

- Adult Day Health
- Caregiver Support Services
- COA Caregiver Support Fund
- Congregate Meal Sites
- Educational Programs
- Long Term Care Ombudsman
- Men's Discussion Group
- Nursing Home Screenings
- Older Americans Act – Title III Subgrants
- Senior Community Service Employment Program
- SHINE (Serving Health Information Needs of Elders)
- Supportive Day Programs



## Community Housing Options

- Adult Family Care
- Congregate Housing
- Group Adult Foster Care
- Nursing Home Screening
- Residential Service Coordination
- Service Enriched Housing at Crossway Village (formerly known as Lee Central School)
- Supportive Housing at Providence Court in Pittsfield

## Information Access

- "Berkshire Senior" Newspaper
- Berkshire Senior TV
- Educational Forums
- Information and Referral
- Gallagher Alzheimer's Resource Center
- Website - [www.esbci.org](http://www.esbci.org)

## Did You Know?

*As Berkshire County's Area Agency on Aging and Aging Services Access Point, Elder Services serves all 946 square miles and each of the 32 cities and towns of Berkshire County.*

*Covering the entire county, Elder Services goes anywhere and everywhere there is a need.*

Elder Services and its programs are funded, in part, by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs. As a private, non-profit organization, Elder Services always welcomes donations that help us achieve our mission: to assist Berkshire seniors to live in dignity and independence.

Checks may be sent or brought to Elder Services, 66 Wendell Avenue, Pittsfield, MA 01202.

*Thank You!*

## Elder Services of Berkshire County Celebrates 35 Years of Service to Seniors 1974-2009

### Information & Referral

Elder Services' Information and Referral (I&R) department maintains an extensive database of programs that serve elders. After assessing a caller's needs I&R specialists make appropriate referrals to programs and agencies that can best meet those needs. If information on an appropriate program is not readily available, I&R staff will conduct research to try to find a satisfactory resolution.

### Home Care Services

Elder Services provides a variety of in-home services that enable seniors to remain independent at home. Services include homemaking, personal care, meal preparation, home delivered meals, home health services, laundry, shopping, companion, and Adult Day programs.

### Protective Services

Protective Services staff assist and support elders who are victims of physical and/or emotional abuse, financial exploitation, neglect, or self neglect. Protective Services can provide casework, counseling, legal assistance, and in-home services to maintain a senior's safety and dignity.

### Clinical Assessment & Eligibility

All Berkshire County Medicaid recipients 22 years of age and older seeking admission to nursing homes must be approved for placement by requesting pre-admission screening by Elder Services. Medicaid recipients who are determined inappropriate for nursing home placement will have a community-based service plan developed by an Elder Services case manager.

### Adult Family Care

Adult Family Care provides individualized care in a home environment, allowing the senior or individual with disabilities to become a valued and productive member of the family. Family members, with the exception of spouses or legal guardians, are eligible caregivers and can receive a tax-free stipend.

### Personal Care Assistance

The Personal Care Assistance (PCA) Program assists people with disabilities or chronic disabling diseases who require physical assistance with such things as bathing, dressing, toileting and medications. The program promotes independence and provides support to enable the individual to retain self-direction and control.

### Housing with Services

Crossway Village in Lee features 37 one-bedroom apartments with enhanced services. Residents are able to maintain their independence in a supportive living environment while remaining members of the larger community. Supportive Housing at Providence Court in Pittsfield is a collaborative effort between Elder Services and the Pittsfield Housing Authority to provide assisted-living-like services to all Providence Court residents. Both locations offer noontime community meals, and the presence of a part-time Elder Services' Residential Coordinator, who helps coordinate services for the residents. An Elder Services Residential Coordinator is also available to the residents of senior housing apartments managed by the North Adams Housing Authority.

### Caregiver Support

Elder Services' Family Caregiver Support program offers education, information and resources, and individual and group support to family members caring for loved ones. Caregivers caring for someone over the age of 60, or caregivers who are themselves over age 60 and caring for an adult child with disabilities are eligible for Elder Services' caregiver support.

### The Richard and Rita Gallagher Alzheimer's Resource Center

This lending library, located at Elder Services office at 66 Wendell Ave., Pittsfield provides information about Alzheimer's disease & related disorders and coping strategies for seniors and caregivers. The Center also has a computer with online access & links to related topics.

### Nutrition/Meals on Wheels Program

Elder Services' Nutrition/Meals on Wheels program covers all 946 square miles of Berkshire County — going anywhere and everywhere homebound seniors need hot, nutritious weekday meals. This past year

our Lanesboro kitchen prepared more than a quarter-million meals, and our Meals on Wheels drivers traveled more than 226,000 miles. The Meals on Wheels program also provides a well-being check for the frail, homebound seniors we serve, many of whom live alone in rural, remote areas. In many cases the Meals on Wheels driver may be the only face-to-face contact a senior will have that day. On numerous occasions, drivers have encountered seniors in need of immediate medical or other assistance and have been able to summon help.

At the 15 senior dining centers located throughout the county, volunteers and staff help make seniors feel comfortable and welcome as they enjoy both noontime meals and much-needed social interaction. Informative and interesting programs and guest speakers are regularly scheduled to follow the meals.

### Money Management Program

The Money Management Program is a volunteer-based service for income-eligible seniors who are having difficulty paying bills, balancing their checkbooks and/or managing household finances.

### Ombudsman Program

Elder Services' Long-Term-Care Ombudsman program has four main goals:

To receive, investigate and resolve complaints made by, or on behalf of residents of nursing and rest homes, to protect resident's rights, to provide information, and to advocate for positive changes to the Long Term Care System.

Ombudsman volunteers visit each of Berkshire county's 15 nursing homes and one rest home at least once a week — in most cases twice a week — to ensure residents' rights are being upheld, to monitor the general condition of the facilities, and to help resolve any complaints and problems.

### Volunteer Services

Elder Services' Volunteer Services department provides a wide variety of services including: transportation to and from medical appointments, help with grocery shopping, and companionship. Volunteers help produce Berkshire Senior TV programs and get the Berkshire Senior newspaper ready for mailing.

### Older Americans Senior Employment Program

The Older Americans Senior Employment Program is an employment and training program administered by the Area Agency on Aging. The program provides on-the-job training to unemployed seniors and subsidized employment in a local non-profit agency or government office. The goal is for the participants to transition to unsubsidized employment in the public or private sector.

### SHINE (Serving the Health Information Needs of Elders)

The SHINE program provides free, unbiased and up-to-date health insurance information, counseling and assistance to Medicare beneficiaries of all ages and their caregivers. SHINE counselors help older persons (and younger disabled Medicare beneficiaries) understand their Medicare benefits and other health insurance options.

***For additional information, contact:***

**Elder Services of Berkshire County, Inc.**

**66 Wendell Avenue, Pittsfield, MA 01201**

**Phone: (413) 499-0524**

**or**

**1-(800) 544-5242**

**TTY: (413) 499-9764 Fax: 442-6443**

**Website: [www.esbci.org](http://www.esbci.org)**

**Email: [esbc@esbci.org](mailto:esbc@esbci.org)**