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State budget ends waiting lists for senior services

LANSING, Mich. – For nearly a decade thousands of older adults in the state have had to wait each year to get much-needed services like Meals on Wheels. Not anymore, thanks to a \$20 million investment in the state budget that will make Michigan a “no wait state” for senior services.

“This year’s state budget is one of the most aging-focused in nearly a decade. Waiting lists for services have been a problem for many years that thousands of older adults have had to face,” said Kari Sederburg, director of the Michigan Office of Services to the Aging. “Thanks to strong leadership by the governor and Michigan Legislature, older adults will not have to wait any longer to get the help they need.”

More than 4,500 older adults are currently on a waiting list for services. A lack of funding for Meals on Wheels and other in-home services leaves older adults with unmet needs, increasing reliance on more costly medical and institutional care. To make Michigan a “no wait state” the budget includes:

- **\$5 million investment for Meals on Wheels and In-Home Services.** These services provide assistance to individuals so they can live independently at home.
- **\$9 million investment for the MI Choice Waiver Program.** This program provides opportunities for individuals who are nursing home eligible to continue living in their own homes, or transition back to their home.
- **\$5.7 million investment for the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE).** PACE provides the entire continuum of services to nursing home eligible older adults so they can remain in their homes if they prefer.

The budget also includes a \$1 million investment for elder abuse prevention efforts and a \$150,000 investment for an Alzheimer’s disease pilot program.

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