

State plugs Web site on long-term care

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Gov. M. Jodi Rell and health care advocates are encouraging Connecticut residents to visit a state Web site that provides information about long-term care, including legal assistance, housing and home care.

Officials hope to generate more traffic to the site, launched in 2006, after a recent study found many people are unprepared for long-term care. The Web address is www.ct.gov/longtermcare.

The study, funded by the General Assembly and the state's Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, found that 25 percent of those surveyed could not afford to pay anything for long-term care. Another 25 percent said they could afford to pay less than \$10,000 a year.

The numbers are frightening, considering the need for such care, said Robert Norton, a spokesman for the Connecticut Commission on Aging.

Long-term care is offered in forms that include home-delivery meal service and 24-hour institutional care.

The demand for services among those 40 and older is expected jump nearly 30 percent by 2030.

"The assessment reinforced what people already knew in a big way," Norton said. "It brought home the fact that too many people don't know what long-term care is, who pays for it and how they should go to plan for it."

The Web site offers information and resources on how to plan and pay for long-term care, what kinds of services and housing options are available, and links to adult day-care and skilled nursing providers and others.

The commission worked with senior citizen advocates and healthcare agencies statewide to determine what to list on the site, Norton said. When the site started in fall 2006, about 200 hits were tracked daily, he said. After the hits tapered off, Rell joined the campaign to promote the site.

"It's a work in progress, but we think it's very comprehensive and can help anyone needing care," Norton said.

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