

1,400 on waiting list for Nev.'s independent living program

By Yesenia Amaro, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Marsha Rodriguez waited six months to get into a Nevada Medicaid waiver program providing home services so the disabled woman wouldn't have to move into a nursing home.

Seven years later, the 72-year-old is still receiving those services along with 4,558 other people from three different vulnerable populations – the frail elderly, blind and disabled – through a state agency to help them live independently.

"I really needed the program and I was blessed when I finally got on it," said Rodriguez at her home on Tuesday. She uses oxygen, has limited arm motion and suffers from alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency, which is a disorder that might cause lung and liver disease. "If I didn't get the help, I would have to be in a nursing home."

But another 1,415 people are on a waiting list to receive the same services, and it's estimated that it would cost about \$40.3 million to eliminate the backlog, according to data requested by the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* from the state's Aging and Disability Services Division, which administers the services.

Read the whole story