

Lancaster County Office of Aging (LCOA)
Federal Fiscal Year 2016-2020
Four Year Area Plan

150 North Queen Street, Suite 415
Lancaster, PA 17603

Phone: (717) 299-7979 or 1-800-801-3070

Fax: (717) 295-2070

Email: aging@co.lancaster.pa.us

<http://www.lancoaging.org>

Jacqueline A. Burch MSW, LSW
Executive Director

Executive Summary

This document has been prepared in response to a directive from the Pennsylvania Department of Aging (PDA). It reflects state policy initiatives and priorities, federal Administration on Community Living (ACL) requirements, and local needs expressed by a wide range of consumers and their families, key community stakeholders, and the public at large. This federal fiscal year plan will be in effect from October 1, 2016 through September 30, 2020.

The primary objective of this four year plan is to outline a useful and realistic future path for developing and delivering needed services to older people and those with disabilities in Lancaster County. Potential applications of this plan are many, but at a minimum serve to:

- Educate and inform stakeholders (consumers, public, service providers, community leaders, and local officials).
- Be a management tool to prioritize and guide initiatives, decision making, and resource identification/development.
- Respond to local, unique needs and circumstances while fulfilling Pennsylvania's Act 70 and federal Older Americans' Act goals and mandates.

As the Commonwealth's designated planning and service area for Lancaster County, it is imperative to periodically examine agency efforts and performance ensuring relevance and responsiveness to the changing needs of the community and population served. To that end, input has been sought and considered from a diverse and wide range of organizations and individuals who would best represent and reveal such needs.

The sample survey instrument found at the back of this plan (English & Spanish version) was distributed during May 2016 via agency and County websites, related newsletters, targeted mailings, and visits to senior centers. Responses were also received from members of the public who visited our office during this time. A public hearing including the agency Advisory Council was held in June 2016.

A total of nearly 300 responses to this needs assessment were collected and analyzed. Most referenced the need to better understand issues related to long term care and services (access, availability, and cost). Many others cited the value of a variety of health/wellness offerings, but also noted concerns about transportation and the lack of affordable housing.

To provide proper context for this plan beyond local needs identified in the assessment process, several major issues and current trends should also be noted. They include:

... continued high demand for home and community based care that often exceeds available funding resulting in a waiting list for services.

... difficulty finding Personal Care or Nursing Home beds for those needing the state supplement or on Medical Assistance.

... steady and unprecedented growth of Protective Service reports of need (now including those age 18-59) and related investigations into allegations of abuse, neglect, financial exploitation and abandonment of older persons.

... an increase in a more ethnically and culturally diverse community of refugees and immigrants seeking services.

For purposes of this planning period and consistent with the Department of Aging's State Plan, this Area Plan will be focused on the following primary goals:

- Promoting existing services
- Improving access to services
- Enhancing quality of services
- Empowering the workforce

With regard to local, political and economic conditions in Lancaster County, no specific barriers to achieving these goals are anticipated. However, further development of certain resources (i.e. relationships with educational institutions, faith-based organizations, immigrant/refugee settlement agencies, and others serving diverse/hard-to-reach populations) will be necessary.

Agency Overview

Historically, the mission of the Lancaster County Office of Aging has been one of supporting and advocating for an older person's right to choice, risk, dignity and independence. This has evolved beyond providing basic nutrition, transportation, or help to apply for various benefit programs.

It now includes focusing on wellness, special needs of caregivers, counseling and enrolling Medicare beneficiaries in numerous health insurance/drug programs, investigating and protecting elders from complex and often dangerous abuse or financial exploitation situations, and transitioning persons once residing in nursing homes back into the community.

Though the agency's mission, core values, and standing in the community have remained essentially the same for more than four decades, it's current and future role in the aging network's service delivery system seems less clear or predictable with the Commonwealth's anticipated implementation of managed long term services and supports.

With regard to organizational structure, the agency is part of the system of local County government. As such oversight comes from an appointed Chief Clerk and elected three-member Board of County Commissioners. When fully staffed, the agency has a total of 85 employees (70 fulltime, 15 part-time) in seven major units: Long Term Living, Protective Services, Care Management, Senior Centers/Prime Time Health, Management Information/Contracting, Fiscal, and Employment/Volunteers. However, maintaining adequate staffing across all areas of operation has been a great challenge in the past year. Multiple retirements of long-serving employees combined with the impact of an eight-month state budget impasse, related hiring freeze, and stagnant starting salaries resulted in more than a dozen vacant positions, some of which have yet to be filled. (An agency organizational chart can be found at the back of this plan).

The planning and service area for which this agency is responsible consists of nearly 950 square miles within the borders of Lancaster County. Located in southeastern PA, it is bounded by Berks and Chester counties to the east, Cecil County (MD) to the south, York to the west, and Dauphin and Lebanon counties to the northwest. It is made up of 60 municipalities (18 boroughs and 41 townships, surrounding Lancaster City at the center), and presently home to 24 continuing care retirement communities, 54 personal care homes, 32 nursing homes, 102 domiciliary care homes, and nine (9) licensed adult day care sites.

Some noteworthy **demographic highlights of Lancaster County** (from 2014 Census Data with 2016 estimates) include:

- ✚ Total population: **538,207 (6th largest County in PA).**
- ✚ **Age 60+** population: **116,512 (22% of total or about 1 in 5)**
- ✚ **Age 65+** population: **90,433 (16.8% of total or about 1 in 6)**
- ✚ Persons of **Hispanic** or **Latino** origin: **10.1%**
- ✚ **Households** with one or more **age 60+**: **70,236**
- ✚ Households with **age 60+ living alone**: **24,107**
- ✚ **Grandparents** responsible for grandchild: **2390**
- ✚ Persons **below poverty** level: **10.6%**
- ✚ Historically, one of the **lowest unemployment rates** in PA.
- ✚ Number who **received one or more services** from Office of Aging in fiscal year 2015-2016: **9350**

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Measures

Promote Existing Services

- Expand knowledge and awareness of home & community based and long term services and supports among potential consumers, families, service providers, partners, and public.
 - Evaluate agency's current means and methods of conducting community education and outreach.
 - Revisit/update agency website and other printed materials; use new social medial tools to more effectively target a broad audience.
 - Identify gaps and seek new opportunities, venues, resources, and partners (churches, non-English speaking community organizations) in order to develop new approaches to collaborating with and connecting to underserved populations.
 - Strengthen coordination with Aging and Disability Resource Center partners to more fully integrate this model of person-centered information and assistance.

Performance measures to include: number of additional community engagements; new venues or partnerships achieved; increase in program enrollments or services provided.

Improve Access to Services

- Increase capacity to deliver Ombudsman & APPRISE program assistance by expanding use of volunteers.
 - Assess past practices and barriers to finding, recruiting, and training potential volunteers.

- Advocate for and coordinate with PA Department of Aging for timely, locally-provided training, and revised curriculum /certification standards appropriate for prospective volunteers.
- Explore and identify untapped sources of volunteers with community partners, faith-based organizations, and institutions of higher learning serving diverse communities.
- Expand the Ombudsman Pennsylvania's Empowered Expert Residents (PEER) program.

Performance measures to include: number of new volunteers; number receiving services or assistance via APPRISE and Ombudsman programs; new PEER programs established; meeting or exceeding APPRISE required targeted outcomes/contacts as per state and federal benchmarks.

- Provide a more prompt, effective, and comprehensive response to the needs of a changing and diverse consumer population.
 - Identify new technology and related applications to secure additional translation/interpreting resources for field staff making home visits.
 - Increase awareness of those with the greatest economic & social need; and/or particularly marginalized such as the LGBT community.
 - Examine barriers impacting access to services, and strive to create a more inclusive, person-centered environment/delivery system.
 - Provide training to enhance staffs' ethnic and cultural diversity competence.
 - Explore and establish partnership with Lancaster Conflict Resolution Services, to support development of a new Elder Mediation initiative as per the recommendation of the Supreme Court of PA's Elder Law Task Force and Orphans' Court.

Performance measures to include: use and effectiveness of resources for translation; establishment of partnerships which enhance ability to better know and meet service needs; increase in service access/ utilization among diverse populations; use and success of elder mediation intervention/alternative.



Enhance Quality of Services

- Develop and strengthen quality assurance efforts as it relates to data collection and integrity; program audits/policy and procedure compliance; and achieving assessment timeframes.
 - Engage in quarterly review and analysis of benchmark and maintenance reports to ensure improved accuracy with documentation.
 - Establish and sustain best practices for the timely completion of the new clinical eligibility determination tool as per required timeframes.
 - Prepare and deploy staff to fulfill the terms and conditions of the contract with Aging Well to perform assessments, both prior to and in conjunction with the transition to managed care.
 - Review current programs' quality assurance and monitoring expectations, and develop a protocol and schedule to achieve regulatory compliance.
 - Explore and expand evidence-based Prime Time Health offerings.

Performance measures to include: improvement in benchmarking outcomes and annual variance reports; assessment completion timeframes of 95% or better; Aging Well contract deliverables; compliance with annual fiscal and contract monitoring mandate; increase in Prime Time Health participation and events.

Empower the Workforce

- Enhance the professional development of those serving older adults.
 - Provide education and training tailored to the needs of family caregivers.
 - Support the use of volunteers and interns for possible career development opportunities.
 - Utilize the agency's 55+ Job Bank and Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP).
 - Assess need and develop training/education for new hires consistent with their program responsibilities and duties or identified gaps.

Performance measures to include: caregivers' feedback; number of new volunteers and interns hired; Job Bank and SCSEP participant placements; trainings offered/attended.