# CREATING LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

## Action Plan 2012 – 2016

## Union-Snyder Agency on Aging, Inc.

# CREATING LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

## ACTION PLAN SUMMARY   2012-2016

## Union-Snyder Agency on Aging, Inc.



**Every four years the Union-Snyder Agency on Aging creates an action plan that outlines the needs of our local population of older adults and the action steps we plan to take over the next four years to help address the needs and improve their quality of life.  The USAAA uses this plan to determine how to use its resources and makes the plan available to the public.**

## *1. CREATING A MODEL FOR LIVABLE COMMUNITIES*

### WHAT WE WANT TO DO

 Our goal is to help local communities become livable communities - places where all people can grow up and grow old with the support they need to thrive.

Our strategy for the first year will be to partner with one community willing to take on the challenge of becoming a livable community. We hope that success in this community will serve as an inspiration and model for others.

This goal creates an opportunity for local action and creative, collaborative thinking on many levels – elected officials, businesses, entrepreneurs, retired professionals, universities, foundations, civic organizations, social service organizations, and civic minded people of all stripes.

The part our organization will play will be to focus on creating positive change for the older population by addressing their core needs.

**THE SEVEN CORE NEEDS OF LOCAL OLDER ADULTS**

We will begin by focusing on seven core needs identified in recent surveys of local older adults and the businesses and organizations that serve them.

1. Lack of money for necessities, especially fuel, medical insurance, and taxes
2. Lack of transportation, especially on weekends and evenings
3. Lack of home support, especially chores, home repair, housekeeping and shopping
4. Isolation, especially for rural and homebound individuals
5. Lack of access to subsidized personal care and home-delivered meals due to the AAA's waiting list for services
6. Difficulty managing and preventing chronic diseases and conditions, especially weight management, arthritis, diabetes, access to healthy foods, and appropriate exercise
7. Lack of knowledge of resources, especially benefits and services


**EXAMPLE OF HOW WE'LL BEGIN TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS**

Each need will be addressed by a think tank provided with assistance and support by the AAA.

For example, imagine how your life would change if you could no longer drive. How would you shop for groceries, go to church, visit someone in the hospital, drive to work, pick up your child after school, or join a friend for lunch? How willing would you be to give up driving if you had any choice at all?

Most of the older adults we surveyed, regardless of income or age, own cars and drive. Many live in rural or suburban areas where nothing or very little is within walking distance.  Taxi or bus service is not an option and the county -sponsored transportation service USTA (Union-Snyder Transportation Alliance) does not operate after 5pm or on weekends or holidays.  This is could be a problem if your doctor's appointment is at 3:30pm or you want to visit someone in the hospital on a Saturday.

To help address this need, our test community will form an inclusive think tank that will define the issues, catalogue existing resources, investigate alternatives that work in other similar communities, and recommend actions.  For example, the group could suggest a transportation cooperative or club or a home delivery service as part of the solution, along with next steps needed and a list of the local groups that might be able to help.

The AAA will assist in the formation of the think tanks, recruit and assign interns to assist, and help with mobilizing other resources.

## 2. ADDRESSING CRITICAL NEEDS

Other ways we will address critical needs include the following:

**MANAGING AND PREVENTION CHRONIC DISEASE**

Based on our findings from the needs assessment, we will focus on the most critical health issues that our local population is facing in our wellness education programs (Prime Time Health), such as weight management, appropriate exercise, and arthritis.

We will conduct a feasibility study for implementing the Stanford University Chronic Disease Self Management Program, a six week peer lead course that has gained national recognition for its success in helping people successfully manage their chronic diseases.

**LACK OF ACCESS TO IN HOME SERVICES**

The main obstacle people face in obtaining in- home services is the inability to pay privately and the AAA waiting list for free or subsidized services. We will develop an aggressive plan to reduce the waiting list for personal care and home delivered meals and spearhead a fundraising campaign to provide the needed care.

**LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OF RESOURCES**

We will develop and implement an outreach/public awareness plan for the AAA.

We will create a task force focused on creating awareness of all resources available to older adults, caregivers, and people with disabilities. This task force will be comprised of agencies, citizens, businesses, civic organizations and media.

We will expand our benefits counseling program (APPRISE).

We will develop and publicize Connections Cafes, where older adults can explore options for volunteering, cultural activities, socialization, etc.

## 3. AAA OBJECTIVES FOR AGENCY DEVELOPMENT

**BUILDING ON AGENCY STRENGTHS**

In addition to improving the services and external support systems for older adults, we will also look at opportunities for improvement to the AAA's internal structure, including maximizing staff strengths and talent, fostering cross unit teamwork, and sustaining high morale.

**THE PLAN**

**Learn More**

- The complete plan is available on our website, in public libraries, at the AAA office, and at the senior centers.
- Background papers on the seven needs are available on our website or at the AAA office.
- Our goals and objectives with timeline, a list of AAA services, the AAA mission and structure, and selected demographic and trend data are included in Part B of the plan.

**Get Involved**

- To request a presentation on the plan, call the office or e-mail fzaid@usaaa17.org
- To discuss ways to become involved in any aspect of the plan, call the office or e-mail fzaid@usaaa17.org
- For more information about using our Facebook page, e-mail us for a copy of a simple users guide

**EVENTS AND RESOURCES**

- To attend or host a Connections Café, a local venue where older adults can explore options for volunteering, cultural activities, etc., please call the office or e-mail fzaid@usaaa17.org.
- To obtain a Prime Time Health  presentation schedule of health and wellness programs, see *The Source*
- Senior Center activities, location, and schedules are available in *The Source* or at the Centers
- The Source is a monthly free publication available in numerous locations throughout the two counties. To find a senior center, library, or location for *The Source* near you, call the office.

**CONTACT US**

AAA website:   www.usaaa17.org

Phone:  570 524-2100   570 374 5558

AAA Office:  116 North Second St.  Lewisburg PA  17837

<h1>INTRODUCTION TO THE AGENCY</h1>

<h2>OUR MISSION</h2>

To help older adults within Union and Snyder Counties to live independent, meaningful and dignified lives in their own homes and communities, make informed decisions concerning their care, and stay active and productive for as long as possible.

<h2>OUR STRUCTURE</h2>

The Union-Snyder Agency on Aging, Inc. was established in 1974 as a two county public agency under the sponsorship of the two Boards of Commissioners.  In 2004, the agency became a private not-for-profit agency whose purpose is to develop, implement, maintain and promote a comprehensive service system for older individuals in the two counties.

<h2>OUR SERVICES</h2>

In the 2010-2011 fiscal year, the AAA served over 1,500 people sixty and over and 754 age 80 and over (excluding Foster Grandparents).  Our services include:

<h2>LONG TERM CARE</h2>

**Assessment**:  We help people decide upon, plan, and access the services they need to remain at home, or assist them with placement.

**Care Management:** We make sure that the client's service plan is carried out properly and that the individual's changing needs are addressed.

**Waiver Program:**  We arrange for services in the home for people who are eligible for nursing home care and Medicaid.

**Nursing Home Transition**: We help older people living in nursing homes to return to the community with the support they need.

**Family Caregiver Support:**  We provide financial support to caregivers caring for an older person or raising a grandchild.

# ADVOCACY, INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

**Apprise Program:** We assist people with understanding and obtaining Medicare supplemental insurance, Medicare and Medicaid, rent and property tax rebates, and other benefits.

**Information and Assistance Service:** We provide resource and service information to older adults and their families.

**Protective Services:** We investigate and address situations where older adults are abused, neglected, abandoned, or exploited.

**Ombudsman Program:** We investigate and help resolve complaints made by or for older people living in nursing homes or personal care facilities or any consumer of long term care services.

## CENTERS, TRANSPORTATION, AND HEALTH EDUCATION

**Senior Centers:** We provide meals, social activities, education, and health programs at five centers.

**Transportation Services:** We contract with the Union-Snyder Transportation Alliance (USTA) to help pay for transportation to centers and center-sponsored activities, medical appointments, and other services.

**Prime Time Health Program:** We offer health education and prevention programs throughout the community, such as nutrition, exercise, injury prevention, and brain health.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND VOLUTEER

**Foster Grandparents Program:** We recruit, train and place older low-income adults in schools, daycare centers, and other locations where they work with special needs children.

**Volunteer Opportunities:** We recruit, train and honor community volunteers and students for many programs and services, including Apprise, Ombudsman, Prime Time Health, and resource development and planning.

**Resource Development and Planning:** We find ways to address unmet needs through one- time emergency grants, partnering with other

organizations, recruiting volunteers and interns, and exploring other ways of building support.

# INTRODUCTION TO THE PLAN

## OUR MANDATE

Every four years, Agencies on Aging across the Commonwealth are required under the Older Americans Act of 1965 as Amended in 2006 and PA Act 70, to develop an area plan.  As one of the 52 AAAs, we believe that thoughtful and creative planning for the future is essential for these challenging times.

## OUR NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROCESS

We conducted four different surveys, either in person or online through Survey Monkey, an online survey service.  Senior center members, Foster Grandparents, Bucknell Institute of Lifelong Learning members, AAA staff and board members, and members of the River Valley Senior Providers Group completed over 200 valuable surveys.

 Although questions varied by group, everyone was asked to identify the most critical unmet needs that they personally experience or as experienced by their families, friends, or clients.

## OUR NEEDS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

A list of the seven most critical needs is on page 2 of the Plan Summary.

## HOW WE CHOOSE OUR GOALS

We have selected goals based on the seven most critical needs. In addition, we selected goals that will maximize our ability to address these needs now and in the future

## OUR CHALLENGES

Our greatest challenges reflect local economic and demographic factors of decreased supply and increased.

Demand for services has increased for three reasons:

- Consequences of the financial slowdown – e.g. low return on investments, less assistance available from children
- Growing number and percentage of the 60+ population, especially  those over 80 years old

- Higher incidence of chronic diseases and risk factors coupled with inflationary health care costs

Supply as decreased for three reasons:

- Shrinking or stagnant funding from local, state, and federal sources
- Increased competition for limited private funding
- Lower client donations and cost sharing income

Supply and demand factors and the scope and complexity of the seven needs led us to develop goals that focus on creative community partnerships and participation by many people on many levels.

## SOME LOCAL STATISTICS

- Both Union and Snyder Counties have experienced continued growth in the 60+ and 80+ population
- From 2008 to 2010, the estimated 60+ population for the two counties increased by 11.4% increase. The 80+ population increased by 8.9% increase. Flat funding does not address this rate of increase.
- Of those 65 and older, over 50% in Snyder County and almost 40% in Union County live in rural areas, making transportation and isolation significant issues.
- Over 70% of people 65 and older in the two counties own their own homes and over 30% live in pre -1950 housing, making affordable home repair and chore services a major issue

## OUR APPROACH

- Focusing on building age friendly, livable communities through partnerships with boroughs and townships
- Fostering innovation and experimentation that address the challenges of meeting needs in rural areas
- Maximizing the use of existing resources, especially the wealth of knowledge, creativity, and experience of our population
- Identifying ways that we can provide critical services in the most cost effective and efficient, ways possible and maintain a high level of customer satisfaction
- Addressing the challenges of meeting needs in a fragile economy

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND COMPLETION DATES

### Creating A model for Livable Communities

**Develop and implement a Livable Communities pilot program focusing on the seven critical needs**

- Prepare brief background papers on the 7 needs    9/30/2012
- Form steering committee    10/15/2012
- Complete website, Facebook page, and    11/1/2012
   other communication tools
- Establish "think tanks"    1/01/2013
- Complete reports and recommendations    4/30/2013
- Implement a minimum of 2 recommendations    6/15/2013
- Plan for expansion    9/15/2013

**Develop and test innovative ways of informing the public of opportunities for civic engagement and learning**

- Develop and distribute materials describing    9/30/2012
   opportunities
- Develop and host Connection Cafes in 3 locations    4/30/2013
- Plan for expansion    7/30/2013

### 2. Addressing Critical Needs

**Develop and implement an annual Prime Time Health Plan that addresses the most critical health issues of our older population, such as weight management, exercise and arthritis**

- Analyze AAA survey data and other local sources    9/15/2012
- Complete plan    10/1/12,13,14,15
- Implement plan    1/1/2013,14,15,16

**Conduct a feasibility study for implementing the Stanford University Chronic Disease Self Management Program**

- Complete study    1/2/2013
- Implement pilot if determined to be feasible    1/2/2014

**Develop an aggressive plan to reduce the waiting list for personal care and home delivered meals**

- Form planning team                                    9/15/2012
- Complete plan                                         3/30/2013
- Succeed in raising a minimum of $25,000               12/31/2013

**Develop and implement an outreach/public awareness plan for the AAA**

- Complete plan                                         10/1/12
- Implement plan                                        1/2/13
- Update plan annually                                  10/13,14,15,16

**Create a multi-agency/business/citizen/media task force to develop ways to create awareness of all resources available to older adults, caregivers, and persons with disabilities**

- Task force formed                                     10/15/2012
- Plan completed                                        3/30/2013

**Expand the Apprise Program**

- Recruit and train 2 new volunteers annually           1/1 /2013,14,15,16
- Establish 2 new locations annually                    1/1/ 2013, 14,15,16

## 3. AAA Objectives for Agency Development

**Create unit work groups that will make recommendations for improving the functioning of their respective units**

- Form work groups                                      10/30/2012
- Complete recommendations                              1/2/2013
- Institute at least one of the top three               3/1/2013
  recommendations in each unit

**Create one or more inter-unit work groups that will make recommendations for maximizing staff strengths and talents, fostering cross unit teamwork, and sustaining high morale.**

- Form work groups                                      1/2/2013
- Complete recommendations                              3/15/2013
- Institute at least on recommendation in               5/1/2013
  each of the 3 areas