Honoring Successful Initiatives of Area Agencies on Aging and Title VI Native American Aging Programs

Aging Innovations and Achievement Awards

2021
About USAgeing

USAgeing is the national association representing and supporting the network of Area Agencies on Aging and advocating for the Title VI Native American Aging Programs. Our members help older adults and people with disabilities throughout the United States live with optimal health, well-being, independence and dignity in their homes and communities. USAgeing is dedicated to supporting the success of our members through advancing public policy, sparking innovation, strengthening the capacity of our members, raising their visibility and working to drive excellence in the fields of aging and home and community-based services.

For more information about USAgeing, AAAs or Title VI programs, visit www.usaging.org.

USAgeing’s Aging Innovations and Achievement Awards staff:
Sandy Markwood, Chief Executive Officer
Amy E. Gotwals, Chief, Public Policy and External Affairs
Rebecca Levine, Senior Manager, Membership
Connor Kelly, Membership and Outreach Assistant

Additional editing by Joellen Leavelle, Director, Communications, and Caitlin Musselman, Senior Communications Associate.

About iN2L

As the provider of the leading engagement and social connection platform for seniors, iN2L has been enriching the lives of older adults since 1999. Opportunities for connection and engagement are the basis of iN2L’s purpose-built solution designed specifically for older adults, and the fundamental building blocks to reducing loneliness and improving health and wellness. Trusted by more than 3,700 senior living communities and adult day programs as well as older adults living at home, iN2L technology is the foundation for activities that facilitate social interaction, cognitive and physical exercise, education, reminiscing, areas of interest, and memory support engagement. iN2L works closely with elder care providers, including Area Agencies on Aging, in creating and implementing innovative programs utilizing our senior-friendly tablets to improve well-being and quality of life for older adults.

iN2L Leadership:
Lisa Taylor, CEO
Introduction

Every year, USAging, (formerly the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging), proudly recognizes the innovative, successful and replicable programs and initiatives of our members through the USAging Aging Innovations and Achievement (AIA) Awards program. This publication is a comprehensive listing of the 36 programs earning awards in 2021.

It is thanks to our partnership with iN2L—our new supporter of the AIA Awards program—that we have this opportunity to honor and showcase the initiatives of Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and Title VI Native American aging programs across the country.

We salute all those who have enhanced the prestige of this awards program by sharing their initiatives with their peers in the Aging Network. This sharing of cutting-edge concepts, innovative ideas and successful strategies helps inspire others, seed replication and ultimately, boost the capacity and success of all agencies.

The awards highlight leading-edge and successful programs that demonstrate sound management practices that are replicable by others in the Aging Network. They exemplify both traditional and new strategies in a range of categories including Advocacy, Agency Operations, Caregiving, Community Planning & Livable Communities, Diversity & Cultural Competency, Economic Security, Elder Abuse Prevention, Health-LTSS Integration, Healthy Aging, Home & Community-Based Services, Housing, Information & Referral/Access to Services, Intergenerational Programs, Nutrition, Social Engagement, Technology, Transportation & Mobility and Workforce Development.

Aging Innovations Awards honor the most innovative programs among all nominations received and Aging Achievement Awards recognize the most contemporary, effective and replicable programs.

Annually, the awards are presented during the USAging Conference and Tradeshow. This year during the USAging Annual Conference and Tradeshow, held virtually, 15 programs were honored with Aging Innovations Awards and 21 programs received Aging Achievement Awards. In addition, through the generous support of iN2L, the top three highest-ranking recipients received monetary awards.

To qualify for an award, programs must have been in operation between one and five years, receive minimal assistance from outside experts and demonstrate effective approaches in either offering new services or improving existing services. Awards criteria include demonstration of measurable results, e.g., cost savings, improved client service and enhanced staff productivity. The AIA Awards are open to USAging primary members only.

Given the criteria that a program must have been in operation prior to February 2020 to qualify for an award in 2021, all programs included in this publication were implemented prior to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the program summaries contain details on how each program has adapted or adjusted in response to COVID-19. We believe that the tremendous innovations and adaptations developed by the Aging Network in response to the pandemic will likely generate future AIA-winning programs and seed other game-changing programs and practices.

Highlights of all past Aging Innovations Award recipients are available in the USAging members-only AIA clearinghouse at www.usaging.org/bestpractices.

We hope that these award-winning programs will inspire your efforts as you address current challenges, seize opportunities and implement solutions in your community. And remember, plan to share your innovations with us next year!

“iN2L is honored to sponsor the USAging Aging Innovations and Achievement Awards program, celebrating the work of Area Agencies on Aging and Title VI Native American Aging Programs to create innovative solutions that improve the quality of life of older adults. We congratulate and thank this year’s award recipients for their tireless commitment to testing the boundaries of what is possible in the design and delivery of programs that change lives. It is through the sharing and celebration of this innovative thinking that we can continue to inspire and encourage evolution and success across the entire Aging Network. Bravo!”

Lisa Taylor
CEO, iN2L
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Aging INNOVATIONS Awards 2021
Community Living Connections Collaborative Funding Process
Seattle Human Services Department, Aging and Disability Services

The Seattle Human Services Department, Aging and Disability Services’ (ADS) Community Living Connections offers a strong central access point via telephone and an integrated network of culturally and linguistically diverse community agencies that provide information and assistance, individual consultation, care coordination and family caregiver support services. With service gaps, no additional money to bring new providers on board and a need for an even stronger focus on meeting ADS’ racial equity goals, ADS devised the Collaborative Funding Process.

The Collaborative Funding Process is a new approach that enables community-based agencies to determine how they will collectively deliver services. Unlike a traditional funding process where the AAA or, in this agency’s case, a panel, makes funding recommendations, collaborative funding means agencies work together to decide funding allocations and service expectations. Over seven months, participating agencies met with a racial equity consultant as they identified funding and service delivery levels for each network provider agency.

Budget:
Costs specific to the Collaborative Funding Process included consultants, language interpreters and meeting expenses. Costs vary depending on the going rate for consultant services, territory size and number of community partners and languages.

Accomplishments:
The Collaborative Funding Process resulted in more than $3.7 million allocated across 19 provider contracts, five of which were added through the process, beginning in January 2020. Collaboration enabled network expansion to support new agencies serving LGBTQ+ people, South Asian older adults and African American caregivers. The network also has greater capacity to serve south King County residents, where needs are greatest.

Replicability:
Leadership buy-in, solid data and frequent network communication are keys to success. Other organizations can replicate this process with sufficient time for research, design, development, follow-up networking and the funding to hire an experienced facilitator to moderate discussions and negotiations.

CONTACT:
Andrea Yip
Planning Manager

Seattle Human Services Department, Aging and Disability Services
P.O. Box 34215
Seattle, WA 98124
206.386.0035
Andrea.Yip@seattle.gov

COVID-19 Adaptation:
Partner agencies continued monthly meetings to ensure clients received wellness checks and adequate nutrition through home-delivered meals, food boxes or grab-and-go meals. ADS promoted online opportunities for social connections through agency partner communications.

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Contact:
Andrea Yip
Planning Manager

Seattle Human Services Department, Aging and Disability Services
P.O. Box 34215
Seattle, WA 98124
206.386.0035
Andrea.Yip@seattle.gov

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Fairfax Caregiver Alert Notifications
Fairfax Area Agency on Aging

Caregiver Alert Notifications enable family caregivers to remain informed, obtain education and easily access programs and services offered by Fairfax Area Agency on Aging and other county departments via text messages, emails and/or voice communication. Caregivers subscribe to the AAA/Caregivers option through Fairfax Office of Emergency Management’s Fairfax Alerts System and receive weekly notifications with information about workshops, webinars, support groups and other supportive services.

The program contributes to family caregivers’ quality of life and well-being by promoting meaningful community engagement, connection and awareness of caregiver resources. During 2019–2020, the program sent out 86 text and email notifications to 504 caregivers on different supportive services.

Budget:
This new program used existing resources and did not require any additional expense. A caregiver support specialist updates and schedules the alerts weekly and collects data about the program.

Accomplishments:
As caregivers have signed up for alerts, there has been a 73 percent increase in attendance at caregiver webinars, a 621 percent increase in views of archived recordings of caregiver webinars and panel conversations, and a 45 percent increase in caregivers accessing the caregiver telephone support call center, as well as increased incoming calls and referrals to the Aging Disability and Resource line. Currently, the Caregiver Alert Notifications program serves 734 family caregivers.

Replicability:
This program can easily be replicated in partnership with an emergency alert system program.

CONTACT:
Tara Turner
Director
Fairfax Area Agency on Aging
12011 Government Center Parkway, Suite 504
Fairfax, VA 22035
703.324.7460
Tara.Turner2@fairfaxcounty.gov

COVID-19 Adaptation:
Since the pandemic began, the number of caregivers who have signed up for Caregiver Alert Notifications has increased rapidly. The program shared information aimed at preventing the spread of and mitigating the risk from the virus, as well as supporting and informing caregivers about local pandemic response efforts. COVID-19 information is available in multiple languages.
“It's All About Me” is a 140-page, comprehensive workbook that gives older adults peace of mind that their wishes can be carried out by trusted family members or friends if they become ill or incapacitated, or die. Specific prompts help people record their family history, special memories and daily habits alongside documentation related to assets, debts, passwords, inheritances and more.

The workbook was created to help individuals outline every aspect of what is important to them and walk their loved ones through a difficult journey. Many older adults find it difficult to talk about death or possessions, but the workbook reframes these necessary discussions as a documentation of their thoughts, making it much easier. Once it is filled out, it can be given to a trusted loved one to keep until caregiving is needed or an end-of-life situation must be handled.

**Budget:**
The workbook took a year of production time, including months spent talking to older adults to determine what was most important to include. Printing costs approximately $22 per book.

**Accomplishments:**
Since creating “It's All About Me,” SeniorAge has distributed the workbooks free of charge as well as through sales to individuals and senior living communities to gift to their residents. Many family members have expressed how helpful the book has been as they are dealing with the end of a loved one's life and/or their death.

**Replicability:**
SeniorAge created a digital version of the publication that can be purchased and customized to fit specific agency needs.

CONTACT:
Juli Jordan
Marketing Director
SeniorAge Area Agency on Aging
1735 S. Fort
Springfield, MO 65807
417.868.9523
juli.jordan@senioragemo.org

COVID-19 Adaptation:
Locally, SeniorAge continues to market the book via social media, word of mouth, radio and online news. Unfortunately, its first attempt to offer the book for sale to other AAAs was thwarted by the timing of COVID-19.
Aging Roadmap
County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency—Aging and Independence Services

The Aging Roadmap is San Diego County’s framework for building age-friendly communities and supporting the needs of older adults. Guided by the County of San Diego’s Aging and Independence Services, the Roadmap organizes the county’s comprehensive system of care into 10 priority areas (health and community support, housing, social participation, transportation, dementia-friendly, caregiver support, safety, preparedness and response, the silver economy, and medical and social services).

The Roadmap fosters community engagement and intergovernmental collaboration to meet older adults’ needs from the individual level (such as caregiver support) to the community level (such as safe and accessible transportation options). Five community-led teams regularly meet to work on Aging Roadmap projects.

Budget:
The county supports Aging Roadmap using general funds to cover staff time (two full-time equivalents including a program coordinator) and the time 10 additional staff members contribute to supporting program initiatives. To achieve program goals, the county partners with other stakeholder organizations or seeks grant funding.

Accomplishments:
Aging Roadmap has helped implement housing policies inclusive of homeless older adults, hosted an Accessory Dwelling Unit Symposium with 175 attendees, collaborated with Public Health Services to receive a $750,000 grant for the San Diego Healthy Brain Initiative, supported 18 emergency departments applying for Geriatric Emergency Department Accreditation and developed a variety of community resources including a dementia-friendly activities toolkit and personal disaster plan.

Replicability:
Other AAAs can create their own frameworks to help describe their work to constituents, foster collaboration, provide a vision for future programs and services, and integrate with their area plans. AARP’s Network of Age-Friendly Communities can provide resources, timelines and best practices.

COVID-19 Adaptation:
Aging Roadmap goals were adapted, new collaborations and partnerships were formed, and emergency response processes were developed during the pandemic. Collaborative efforts ensured older adults had access to prepared meals and food boxes, internet and technology and safe transportation.

CONTACT:
Christy Patch
Community & Aging Policy Specialist
County of San Diego, Health and Human Services Agency—Aging and Independence Services
5560 Overland Avenue, Suite 310
San Diego, CA 92123
858.495.5037
christina.patch@sdcounty.ca.gov
Aging INNOVATIONS Awards

The Arlington County Virginia Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program (VICAP), part of the Arlington Agency on Aging, empowers, educates and assists Medicare beneficiaries with making informed health care decisions through individualized counseling, education and outreach. To fulfill the program’s mission and engage diverse communities, the Arlington County VICAP collaborated with the Neighborhood Health Clinic, minority-based churches, community centers, senior health fairs, Shenandoah University pharmacy students and the Arlington Food Assistance Center to share information and Medicare resources.

This expanded outreach included piloting 160 bilingual (English/Spanish) Medicare bus ads in 12 targeted Arlington Transit bus routes. Arlington County VICAP also expanded its outreach using technology and telehealth to inform and empower Medicare beneficiaries making health care decisions. These education and outreach efforts have resulted in an increase in contacts from diverse and bilingual beneficiaries.

**Budget:**
The majority of the program costs are for the Arlington County VICAP coordinator’s hours. Additionally, $250 was spent on bus ads in English and Spanish.

**Accomplishments:**
Since 2019, Arlington County VICAP increased its group outreach and education by 57 percent. The bus ads reached an estimated 109,370 people in 2020. From 2018–2021, Arlington County VICAP offered individual counseling to 80 percent more hard-to-reach beneficiaries whose income is below 150 percent of the federal poverty level.

**Replicability:**
This program is easily replicable if agencies target efforts based on the greatest need, partner with a marketing or branding ambassador to assist with advertising and connect with community leaders on how to best align outreach goals.

**CONTACT:**
Michelle Thomas
Program Coordinator, VICAP
Arlington Agency on Aging
2100 Washington Boulevard, Fourth Floor
Arlington, VA 22204
703.228.1700
mthoma2@arlingtonva.us

**COVID-19 Adaptation:**
Partnerships with community organizations, local churches and Shenandoah University pharmacy students ensured outreach continued during the pandemic in a virtual format. Outreach has expanded to target ZIP codes within Arlington County that contain higher concentrations of hard-to-reach populations.
Diabetes Health Coaching Program
Atlanta Regional Commission Area Agency on Aging

As the designated Area Agency on Aging for the 10-county Atlanta area, the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) designs and implements services and programs for older adults. Since 2019, ARC has partnered with the Atlanta Regional Collaborative for Health Improvement, Grady Hospital and Mercy Care Hospital Systems to jointly provide care and treatment for low-income adults at risk of complications from diabetes.

Clients who work with ARC’s Diabetes Health Coaching Program have access to evidence-based diabetes self-management education, receive personalized coaching and connect to social determinants of health supports through the AAA’s Information and Referral system: the Aging and Disability Resource Connection. Hospital systems pay ARC on a fee-for-service basis to increase client access to diabetes self-management education, and ARC offers additional supports such as coaching and referrals.

Budget:
The hospital partners provided initial funding for this project and offer ongoing staffing support. As part of the fee-for-service model, ARC receives payment at set milestones, as well as when clients complete the program. The cost to run the program (about $75,000 annually) includes one part-time diabetes coach and funding to provide clients with assistive technology and material aid.

Accomplishments:
Clients report a high level of satisfaction with the coaching program, with intervention resulting in improved clinical outcomes for most patients. Of the 70 people who have completed the program, 76 percent achieved improved eating habits, 73 percent lowered their A1C levels, 56 percent began exercising, 32 percent lost weight and 27 percent reported improved medication management.

Replicability:
Replication begins by collaborating with mission-focused health care partners to create a process that will benefit clients and partners. Create a robust catalog of in-person and online options; develop a simple process for client recruitment, enrollment and follow-up; coordinate and streamline contracting and data-sharing processes between partner agencies; and develop an evaluation process.

CONTACT:
Mary Newton
Innovations Team Manager
Atlanta Regional Commission
Area Agency on Aging
229 Peachtree Street NE
Atlanta, GA 30303
470.585.2236
mnewton@atlantaregional.org

COVID-19 Adaptation:
The telephone-based Diabetes Health Coaching Program was ideally suited for delivery during the pandemic when eligible clients with uncontrolled diabetes had limited ability to leave their homes.
**San Bernardino County Age Wise Program**

San Bernardino County Department of Aging and Adult Services—Public Guardian

**CONTACT:**
Sharon Nevins
Director—Public Guardian
San Bernardino County Department of Aging and Adult Services—Public Guardian
784 East Hospitality Lane
San Bernardino, CA 92415
909.891.3917
Sharon.Nevins@hss.sbcounty.gov

**COVID-19 Adaptation:**
Age Wise initiated the toll-free 24/7 Senior Hotline, ensuring older adults with urgent or non-urgent needs can reach a licensed clinical therapist. Services target social isolation and food insecurities, need for education and linkage to resources, behavioral health treatment or crisis intervention.

Age Wise is a community-based mental health program for older adults age 59 and older that provides behavioral health and wellness services and resources to help meet everyday needs ranging from housing to nutrition. Services include in-home and telehealth counseling services, case management, peer and family advocacy, and support and education groups.

The goal of the Age Wise program is to help individuals maintain the best possible behavioral and physical health in order to increase their ability to sustain independent living and well-being. Embedded within the San Bernardino County Department of Aging and Adult Services, Age Wise is designed to expand mental health access to high-risk and underserved older adults, including those residing in isolated regions. Referrals and consultation are available to individuals, families and agencies working with older adults.

**Budget:**
The Age Wise program operates within the San Bernardino County Department of Aging and Adult Services—Public Guardian through an established partnership and memorandum of understanding with San Bernardino County Department of Behavioral Health. This collaboration results in a cost-neutral agreement for the AAA.
The FY 2019–2020 program budget of $2,707,569 included $1,924,824 for 20 full-time positions and $782,745 for program operating costs.

**Accomplishments:**
In FY 2019–2020, key program outcomes for the two Age Wise clinics in San Bernardino and Hesperia included the following, respectively: 73 percent/78 percent of clients maintained low or reduced risk of mental health suffering, 71 percent/51 percent are deemed stable and able to access their own necessary resources for well-being, only 5 percent/1 percent of consumers experienced psychiatric hospitalization, 100 percent were linked to a primary care provider and 100 percent remained in safe housing and avoided homelessness.

**Replicability:**
Replication can be achieved by establishing partnerships with local mental health departments, agencies and professionals; collaborating with health plans and insurance providers; and creating a memorandum of understanding between collaborative entities.
**Homeless Solutions**

**Bay Aging**

Bay Aging (BA) uses a hub-and-spoke model that focuses on housing as the foundation for successful outcomes for older adults. BA’s diverse housing opportunities provide safety and stability for older adults experiencing homelessness, bridging the gap between Area Agency on Aging services and the homeless services Continuums of Care (CoCs) provide.

With BA’s existing rental housing and approval to implement a homeless preference during need determination developed in conjunction with the local CoC, BA can quickly identify older adults experiencing homelessness, match them to unique housing that meets their needs and limit the amount of time spent homeless, altogether reducing trauma and improving health measures. Once older adults transition into permanent housing, they benefit from an expanded Homeless Solutions venture offering health assessments, home-delivered meals, employment training, insurance counseling, transportation and more.

**Budget:**
The 2021 operating budget of approximately $210,000 includes Homeless Solutions program personnel and overhead costs ($150,000) plus additional funding for direct services. Funding from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development covers most costs.

**Accomplishments:**
The average wait time for placement is 59 days, reduced by 25 percent since 2018. Of the 31 people served in BA apartments, only one resident has exited to an unknown location. BA attributes this to support services that meet the needs of residents as they transition to permanent housing. An additional 189 older adults have been served by BA’s homeless response system.

**Replicability:**
This program can be replicated across the country through formal partnerships between AAAs and CoCs to establish pathways for mutual clients’ stability.

**CONTACT:**
Kathy Vesley  
President and CEO  
Bay Aging  
5370 Old Virginia Street  
P.O. Box 610  
Urbanna, VA 23175  
804.758.2386  
kvesley@bayaging.org

**COVID-19 Adaptation:**
COVID-19 has exacerbated the housing crisis and heightened the importance of ensuring that older adults have and can maintain housing. An influx in additional resources prioritized for the most vulnerable has resulted in adults with the highest needs gaining access to meals, transportation, in-home care and other services.
Ritter’s Run Apartments is an innovative development of 12 single-story apartments designed to serve a low-income, aging population and make use of vacant land in an urban area in need of revitalization. Ohio District 5 Area Agency on Aging, Inc. formed a unique partnership with the Richland County Land Bank, City of Mansfield, Mechanics Bank and Praxia-Partners to develop the affordable apartments for adults age 55 and older.

The project is cost-effective thanks to land donation by Richland County Land Bank. Modular home construction ensures the apartments are built for maximum construction and operation efficiency. Rents will be kept below the market rate and affordable to low-income adults. Once the apartments are complete, Ohio District 5 AAA will reach underserved populations through community outreach.

**Budget:**
Capital costs include a construction budget of $1.3 million, with $600,000 in Community Development Block Grant HOME funding from the City of Mansfield and a $700,000 mortgage from Mechanics Bank. Donation of land from the Land Bank helped reduce development costs. Operating costs are $38,966 annually. Net rents after utilities are deducted are $105,936 annually.

**Accomplishments:**
Ritter’s Run positively impacts partners’ missions and goals. It aligns with the City of Mansfield’s Consolidated Plan 2019–2023. The apartments are in the Neighborhood Target Area of OhioHealth Mansfield Hospital and in an area targeted by the city and Richland County Land Bank as in need of revitalization. Future residents will have access to supportive services connecting them to nutrition, health care, advocacy and other services that increase their quality of life.

**Replicability:**
AAAs can help drive the expansion of affordable housing in their service areas. Begin by documenting the need, building partnerships with key stakeholders and identifying a location. Evaluate vacant land for buildability, correct zoning, utilities and more. Project financing will drive the timing.
The Power of Personalized Music: Intergenerational Music & Memory/Alive Inside Program
AgeGuide Northeastern Illinois

AgeGuide Northeastern Illinois expanded the reach of the Music & Memory program beyond nursing facilities to include people living in the community and a more diverse population of Hindi, Korean and Spanish-speaking adults. AgeGuide partnered with Chip Staley, a retired music educator and founder of ARTSpeaks, to develop an innovative curriculum that helps high school students learn about dementia and trains them on how to create personalized music playlists for older adults.

AgeGuide provides the training and helps connect student volunteers with adult day centers in the region. The students and older adults meet for an initial 45-minute interview, then the students create a personalized playlist that is legally downloaded and saved onto a Micro SD card inserted into a specially designed MP3 player built into headphones. At the second meeting, the students deliver the headphones loaded with music and sit (or dance) with their older adult partners. Older adults keep the headphones for personal use.

**Budget:**
Costs for the FY 2020 pilot program in three counties included a Mac computer ($1,200), two AgeGuide staff certifications in the Music & Memory Program ($950), AgeGuide personnel expenses ($20,000), 30 headsets with SD cards ($750), iTunes music ($600), water and snacks ($100) and consultant fees ($8,375). FY 2021 regionwide program costs include the Music & Memory license renewal ($250), 30 headsets with SD cards ($750), headset shipping ($210), additional iTunes music purchases ($100) and consultant fees ($9,867). The program was originally funded as a direct service through an ACL Alzheimer’s Disease Supportive Services Program grant. After it ended in January 2020, AgeGuide has been funding the evidence-based program as a direct service through the Illinois Department on Aging Alzheimer’s Disease & Related Dementias General Revenue Funds.

**Accomplishments:**
The program has increased engagement between younger and older generations. Young adults now have increased knowledge of how to interact and communicate with people who have dementia. People with dementia experience decreased social isolation and improved mood and functioning.

**Replicability:**
Engage high school music departments as sponsors. The existing curriculum can be replicated. The Alive Inside app (goo.gl/FBrz1b) helps students generate playlists.

**CONTACT:**
Marla Fronczak
CEO
AgeGuide Northeastern Illinois
1910 S. Highland Avenue, Suite 100
Lombard, IL 60148
630.293.5990
mfronczak@ageguide.org

**COVID-19 Adaptation:**
AgeGuide pivoted to a fully virtual Intergenerational Music & Memory/Alive Inside Zoom platform program beginning in September 2020.
The Nutrition and Supportive Services for Healthy Outcomes program, offered by the San Francisco Department of Disability and Aging Services (DAS), Office of Community Partnerships and Project Open Hand (a DAS provider), delivers nutrition support tailored to meet the needs of older adults who are food insecure and have chronic diseases. Outreach to San Francisco medical providers and clinics helps identify potential program participants.

Participants commit to the program for one year and follow up with their medical provider after being enrolled for six months. A combination of healthy and culturally appropriate meals or groceries, one-on-one nutrition counseling, nutrition education and cooking classes ensure patients experience improvements in their health and wellness and in the management of their chronic health conditions. At the end of the program, participants are transitioned to other community nutrition programs.

**Budget:**
The annual budget of $680,000 includes $300,000 for staffing and $380,000 for operating costs and overhead. Staff include a full-time wellness manager and part-time social workers and registered dietitians.

**Accomplishments:**
In FY 2019–2020, approximately 463 clients participated in the program. Client surveys collected demonstrated that 58 percent of clients experienced a decrease in their HbA1c levels for diabetes, 84 percent had a reduction in hospitalization and/or hospital stays, 93 percent reported that program participation helped them maintain or improve their health, and 78 percent reported increased knowledge of nutrition as a means of addressing chronic disease.

**Replicability:**
Organizations will first need to decide which specific chronic diseases are prevalent in their community and should determine all potential funding streams. Organizations must invest in quality food and meals that are culturally appealing.
Three Rivers Senior Hunger Coalition
Three Rivers Area Agency on Aging

Three Rivers Area Agency on Aging (TRAAA) Senior Hunger Coalition, comprised of faith-based organizations, law enforcement officers, first responders, medical staff, private or state agencies, nonprofits, food banks and other Aging Network partners, is an initiative of Georgia’s state plan to reduce food insecurity and hunger among older adults. The Coalition has developed and implemented a regional plan to collaborate with first responders, law enforcement and medical personnel to connect older adults to TRAAA and other available resources.

One effort to decrease senior hunger involves a voucher program that provides free meals at senior centers. Vouchers are given to older adults who are at risk for hunger issues and have been in contact with a first responder, are a patient at a free medical clinic or have participated in a food bank. Older adults may also be given a shelf-stable meal box to address immediate needs.

Budget:
The Georgia Department of Human Services Division of Aging Services provided a $5,000 grant to fund the Senior Hunger Coalition, which covers printing of specialized training flyers and meal vouchers for two local senior centers and the purchase of shelf-stable meal boxes. This year’s funding will be used for additional printing of vouchers and transportation to the senior centers.

Accomplishments:
As a result of these efforts, it’s easier for public-facing professionals outside of aging to help an older adult connect to nutrition services. For example, a sheriff’s deputy who answered a call at an older adult’s residence and noticed very little food in the home was able to offer the person a meal voucher for the local senior center, and the older adult was connected with home-delivered meals.

Replicability:
Replication begins by identifying community leaders and Aging Network affiliates who can discuss the needs of the local community and identify places where older adults may be overlooked for hunger issues or other services.

CONTACT:
Maureen Geboy
Nutrition and Wellness Coordinator
Three Rivers Area Agency on Aging
P.O. Box 1600
Franklin, GA 30217
678.552.2843
mgeboy@threeriversrc.com

COVID-19 Adaptation:
The voucher program and meals outreach did slow during the pandemic due to senior center closures, but the Coalition continued to keep vouchers on hand for use when needed. The Coalition meetings moved to a virtual platform to continue planning future expansion.
The Ventura County Area Agency on Aging’s (VCAAA) Senior Nutrition Garden sits on just over an acre of land in Oxnard, California. Operated by the VCAAA in partnership with Ventura County Probation and FOODShare, the garden produces more than 900,000 servings of fresh, organic produce each year. The produce is distributed to food insecure older adults and people with disabilities throughout Ventura County.

Initially created to provide the VCAAA Senior Nutrition Program meal sites and the VCAAA Emergency Food Pantry with regular access to low-cost produce, the garden also serves as a volunteer site for older adults looking to stay active and engaged in the community. A recent expansion, more efficient use of the garden and sustainable farming practices have more than doubled annual harvests. Garden managers select a variety of produce that is beneficial to the health of older adults, easy to cook and can be included in a diverse selection of meals.

**Budget:**
The annual budget is $85,000. About two-thirds of the budget covers two part-time managers. The remaining funding is used for seeds, plant starters, soil amendments, organic fertilizers, fencing, irrigation, plant structures, shading materials and other supplies that cannot be secured through in-kind donations.

**Accomplishments:**
The expansion of the garden increased annual harvests from approximately 23,000 servings of produce in 2015 to nearly one million servings annually. The produce selection has expanded to more than 20 varieties. Increased harvests have yielded enough crops for distribution to VCAAA community meal sites, the VCAAA Emergency Food Pantry and partnering agencies and organizations.

**Replicability:**
The garden was initially established through a partnership with Ventura County Probation and FOODShare to use a small portion of land that sits between the two organizations’ properties. Replication of the garden is possible by leveraging a similar partnership, identifying a salary for a skilled garden manager, recruiting volunteers and building relationships with local businesses to receive donated materials.
Art at Your Own PACE
Appalachian Agency for Senior Citizens

Art at Your Own PACE is an art therapy program for participants in the Appalachian Agency for Senior Citizens (AASC) Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE). It targets participants living with Alzheimer’s disease and dementia. AASC’s occupational therapy assistant oversees the project.

There is a direct relationship between aging and creativity—even when memory is diminishing, the capacity for imagination is still there. Art therapy has been demonstrated to improve the lives of those living with dementia and Alzheimer’s as well as those who love and care for them. Participants have enjoyed outings to local art centers, decorated Christmas parade floats, painted flowers on canvases while drinking fresh lemonade, worked with children on a “generations uniting against bullying” art project, painted flowerpots, created an intergenerational “live mural” and designed an ornament for the Governor’s Christmas tree.

Budget:
Alzheimer’s Foundation grant funds of $5,000 were used to purchase art supplies—including a sewing machine and an electronic die-cutting machine for cutting paper, felt, vinyl and fabric—and aprons with clients’ names.

Accomplishments:
The Art at Your Own PACE program exceeded expectations, leading to the creation of a permanent art room. The program has helped curb depression and has led to clients’ demonstrated improvements in the activities of daily living, fine and gross motor skills, and cognitive skills.

Replicability:
Dedicated staff who are creative and can engage participants in a variety of projects are the secret to success.
Multi-Agency Rural Transit Partnership
Central Plains Area Agency on Aging

In 2018, Central Plains Area Agency on Aging’s (CPAAA) transportation program, Sedgwick County Transportation (SCT), partnered with Reno County Area Transit (RCAT) to develop a transit option for riders from Reno County’s rural areas to access medical, retail, financial and other vital services in the Sedgwick County/Wichita area. SCT delivers rural riders to a transit shelter and uses Wichita Transit bus/paratransit service within the city to transport them to their destination.

This collaborative, regional approach to transit service that features three different transit agencies partnering to provide one seamless trip across three jurisdictions is the only one of its kind in Kansas. CPAAA and RCAT collaborated to identify the best day of the week to offer connector service and agreed that each agency would be paid for one leg of the trip. Riders or caregivers make one call, and the transit agencies plan and coordinate the ride. Caregivers can ride with the older adult or older adults can travel on their own.

**Budget:**
Rides were funded through existing payment structures using federal and state grant funds. Costs include $1,800 for 40 hours of coordination, program development and setup by the CPAAA transportation program manager, and ongoing costs of $22 per hour for driver wages and nearly $12 per ride for administrative, support, maintenance and fuel costs.

**Accomplishments:**
Working caregivers of older adults report this program has helped them achieve better work attendance and decreased stress. Older adult riders report they have access to vital services in the Wichita area they otherwise would be unable to access.

**Replicability:**
Other AAAs’ transportation services can easily replicate this program by collaborating with local transit agencies. Analyze data to determine the best days and times to offer the connector services.

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**CONTACT:**
Annette Graham
Executive Director

Central Plains Area Agency on Aging
271 W. 3rd Street N., Suite 500
Wichita, KS 67202
316.660.5221
agraham@cpaaa.org

**COVID-19 Adaptation:**
Transit agencies have required that all drivers and passengers wear masks. Rides are scheduled to allow for adequate social distancing, and plexiglass partitions are placed behind the driver as an added safety measure for both the driver and passengers.
Aging ACHIEVEMENT Awards 2021
**ADVOCACY**

**Advancing Advocacy**
**Pima Council on Aging**

Pima Council on Aging (PCOA) developed an innovative public policy and advocacy program by hiring a full-time director of public policy to oversee legislative strategies and grassroots and digital advocacy, which lead to PCOA becoming a leading voice for aging services in Arizona. The investment in policy prowess was then leveraged by the Arizona Association of Area Agencies on Aging, which contracts with PCOA for a portion of the policy director’s time to act as statewide coordinator, expanding the policy reach of the association.

**Budget:**
Program expenses of approximately $100,000 cover a full-time director, the quarterly Advocacy Matters publication and SoftEdge Congress Plus digital advocacy software.

**COVID-19 Adaptation:**
PCOA advocated for additional and more flexible funding and services, personal protective equipment, equitable vaccine distribution and more to address pandemic-related needs.

**Accomplishments:**
PCOA’s statewide advocacy led to a $3.8 million increase in funding, reducing the statewide waitlist for home-based services by more than 50 percent. PCOA also obtained $550,000 in federal CARES Act funds (not Older Americans Act) to serve more than 620 older adults during the last four months of 2020.

**Replicability:**
Digital advocacy through social media and web-based grassroots advocacy platforms is easily replicable. AAA leaders can develop long-term relationships with elected and appointed officials to better advocate for their clients and communities.

**CONTACT:**
Maddy Bynes
Director of Public Policy & Special Projects
Pima Council on Aging
8467 E. Broadway Boulevard
Tucson, AZ 85710
520.307.5751
mbynes@pcoa.org

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**AGENCY OPERATIONS**

**Age Friendly Live**
**Seattle Human Services Department, Aging and Disability Services**

Age Friendly Live offers special events, including monthly Civic Coffee Hours, designed to reduce social isolation and increase opportunities for civic participation among older adults. In 2019, the program was revamped to better reach out to and accommodate immigrants and refugees by offering simultaneous interpretation during in-person events and streaming online events with auto-captioning in many languages. All programs are accessible online and broadcast on local television, with video recordings posted on YouTube.

**Budget:**
Age Friendly Live uses existing staff and online streaming platforms. One-time equipment costs included camera, microphones and computer memory upgrades.

**COVID-19 Adaptation:**
Staff pivoted to Microsoft Teams Live to continue to offer online engagement during the pandemic. A new series, Close to Home, was created in partnership with the local public library to reach older adults at home. Every Age Friendly Live program included local information on safety precautions, testing and vaccinations.

**Accomplishments:**
In 2020, more than 6,400 people connected with Age Friendly Live through live online events and video recordings.

**Replicability:**
Age Friendly Live is highly replicable in communities with reliable internet service and existing video-streaming platforms. For outreach, staff should offer personal invitations to specific communities and identify any unique needs or barriers to participation.

**CONTACT:**
Andrea Yip, Planning Manager
Seattle Human Services Department, Aging and Disability Services
P.O. Box 34215
Seattle, WA 98124
206.386.0035
Andrea.Yip@seattle.gov
**AGENCY OPERATIONS**

**Duett**
CICOA Aging & In-Home Solutions

Duett is a CICOA-owned, web-based platform that enables care managers to share their clients’ service needs with providers who can immediately indicate their interest in serving. The CICOA Venture Studio—the agency’s incubator of staff ideas—walked alongside Duett from conception to launch, providing input and support as well as technical assistance and funding. The goal was to reduce wait time for clients and staff time spent on the phone finding providers, as well as to increase providers’ access to real-time needs data.

**Budget:**
CICOA's start-up costs would not be incurred by replicating agencies. The only nominal cost is an annual subscription fee for the application.

**COVID-19 Adaptation:**
The COVID-19 pandemic did not impact Duett’s functionality.

**Accomplishments:**
Prior to Duett, care managers spent hours making phone calls to connect clients to services, with little choice, no transparency and staggering delays. In one case, a client in a rural community who waited six months to be connected to care had a provider at their door within hours of their care manager posting the need on Duett.

**Replicability:**
This online application is available to AAAs, their provider networks and other care coordination agencies.

**CONTACT:**
Jonathan Haag
Director of Strategy and Innovation
CICOA Aging & In-Home Solutions
8440 Woodfield Crossing Boulevard
Suite 175
Indianapolis, IN 46240
317.803.6336
jhaag@cicoa.org

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**AGENCY OPERATIONS**

**ElderSource Risk Management**
ElderSource

The ElderSource executive leadership team participated in a risk management cohort with five other local nonprofit organizations to learn about risk and develop a robust risk management process. Now, ElderSource board members and staff are trained in risk management. ElderSource also provides training to contract providers to help them reduce risk to their businesses.

**Budget:**
Initial training for 11 providers (funded by the Community Foundation for Northeast Florida) cost $18,900 and included a survey, four guided work sessions, a risk inventory, scenario planning and one-year of access to the consultant’s resources.

**COVID-19 Adaptation:**
Trainings for service providers are held via Zoom. Recorded sessions are available for new providers and Area Agency on Aging leadership staff.

**Accomplishments:**
To mitigate risk, ElderSource has put policies and procedures in place for new services, collaborated with partners on grants and programs, developed a crisis communications plan and turned down opportunities that would have incurred too much risk for the organization.

**Replicability:**
Any agency can access risk management training and implement new policies and practices.

**CONTACT:**
Linda Levin, CEO
ElderSource
10688 Old St. Augustine Road
Jacksonville, FL 32257
904.391.6610
linda.levin@myeldersource.org
AGENCY OPERATIONS
Employee Resource Group
ElderSource

ElderSource serves a diverse population of older adults and has a diverse workforce that experiences inequities based on race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity and age. ElderSource started an Employee Resource Group (ERG) as part of its Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) initiative. The staff-led ERG gives employees a safe space to share, learn and have their voices heard. Since 2018, the group has addressed issues related to race, LGBTQ+ identities, health and wellness, and more.

Budget:
The there are no costs for this voluntary group.

COVID-19 Adaptation:
ERG meetings now happen virtually during business hours to encourage participation. The group’s value to staff has increased due to pandemic isolation and attention to social injustices nationwide.

Accomplishments:
Employee morale has improved. The four ERG staff leaders were named ElderSource 2020 Employees of the Year.

Replicability:
To replicate, learn about ERGs, survey staff to assess interest and assign a leadership team member to provide support. Allow time for meetings during business hours.

CONTACT:
Linda Levin, CEO
ElderSource
10688 Old St. Augustine Road
Jacksonville, FL 32257
904.391.6610
linda.levin@myeldersource.org

AGENCY OPERATIONS
Innovating Through IT Interoperability: Building on What You Have!
Region IV Area Agency on Aging

Region IV Area Agency on Aging integrated Office 365 applications with its existing electronic health record (EHR) platforms to promote person-centered workflows and service delivery. The integration addressed limitations of existing EHRs and coordination challenges. Staff and supervisors use dashboards that provide key clinical indicators and allow tracking and reminders of deadlines and follow-up activities.

Budget:
Initial costs included Office 365 with PowerBI upgrade ($4,500), a contract to transition agency email to Office 365 ($1,500), IT staff time ($26,147) and care management director time ($380 per major workflow/program area integrated). Annual costs include Office 365 ($4,500) and staff time to maintain and update integrated dashboards ($6,300).

COVID-19 Adaptation:
The transition to remote work was made easier by the work already underway to integrate Office 365 applications.

Accomplishments:
Integrated workflows reduced transportation arrangement staffing needs by 50 percent. Improved coordination, communication and access to information increased employee satisfaction and led to optimal patient care.

Replicability:
Office 365 tools are universally available and adaptable to unique programmatic and operational needs.

CONTACT:
Theresa Uhrich
Care Management Director
Region IV Area Agency on Aging
2900 Lakeview Avenue
St. Joseph, MI 49085
269.983.0177
theresauhrich@areaagencyonaging.org
AGENCY OPERATIONS

Measuring What Matters with Data and Dollars
Area Office on Aging of Northwestern Ohio, Inc.

In partnership with Miami University’s Scripps Gerontology Center and the Center for Community Solutions, the Area Office on Aging of Northwestern Ohio, Inc. developed a model for gathering quality data on consumer satisfaction and impact. Data from telephone and mailed consumer satisfaction surveys drives decisions regarding service providers, delivery and costs.

Budget:
The telephone survey tool developed by the Scripps Gerontology Center cost $23,875. Survey mailings cost $2,000.

COVID-19 Adaptation:
Surveys were adapted during the pandemic to reflect changing needs. Given the increased social isolation and caregiver stress during the pandemic, future surveying will focus on how the AAA’s programs and services can help improve social isolation scores and reduce caregiver stress levels.

Accomplishments:
As a result of changes made in response to survey data, home-delivered and dining site meal consumer satisfaction levels increased. Home-delivered meal participation increased by 13 percent, and dining site and grab-and-go meal participation more than doubled.

Replicability:
Surveys can be administered via mail, email or by phone with volunteer assistance.

CONTACT:
Justin Moor
VP of Planning & Program Development
Area Office on Aging of Northwestern Ohio, Inc.
2155 Arlington Avenue
Toledo, OH 43609
419.382.0624
jmoor@areaofficeonaging.com

AGENCY OPERATIONS

Targeted Community Outreach
Heritage Area Agency on Aging

Heritage Area Agency on Aging has become more strategic in how it implements community outreach, using data to help identify service gaps and recruit older adult advocates to become local ambassadors within rural service areas. Advocates also help promote services at farmers markets, county fairs and resource booths.

Budget:
Increased volunteer support in rural service areas has resulted in more efficient use of staff time and reduced travel costs.

COVID-19 Adaptation:
Outreach during the pandemic included sending mailings to people age 60 and over living in poverty and strengthening relationships with local public health departments to ensure consumers have vaccination information.

Accomplishments:
In FY 2019, Heritage AAA implemented targeted community outreach that reduced staff effort by 33 percent while increasing consumers served by 16.5 percent. Rural area service reach increased from 64 percent in FY 2018 to 72 percent in FY 2019.

Replicability:
To replicate, strengthen relationships with older adult advocates and give them the tools to become local ambassadors to promote AAA services.

CONTACT:
Harrison March
Community Engagement Coordinator
Heritage Area Agency on Aging
6301 Kirkwood Boulevard SW
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404
319.310.7755
Harrison.march@kirkwood.edu
CAREGIVING
Dementia Friendly Heard
Three Rivers Area Agency on Aging

Three Rivers Area Agency on Aging (TRAAA) received a grant from the Georgia Gerontology Society to make the most rural county in the region dementia friendly. TRAAA organized a group of community partners to brainstorm ways to assist caregivers and individuals living with dementia in an area with limited access to health care or support for caregivers. This led to TRAAA conducting meetings, collecting data on community need, purchasing care packages and providing educational trainings.

**Budget:**
The grant covered costs for care packets ($50–100 per client) and cards for caregivers to give to restaurant staff asking them to be patient with customers who have dementia ($10).

**COVID-19 Adaptation:**
Initial plans to provide a care conference and in-person support groups were paused. Instead, TRAAA offered care packages, transportation vouchers and respite for caregivers and/or those living with dementia.

**Accomplishments:**
Community leaders have received dementia education, resources and referral information. Ten caregivers have received assistance.

**Replicability:**
Identify community leaders and invite them to attend an initial information session. Survey local caregivers and work to build partnerships.

**CONTACT:**
Emily Rogers, Deputy Aging Director
Three Rivers Area Agency on Aging
P.O. Box 1600
Franklin, GA 30217
678.972.0481
erogers@threeriversrc.com

CAREGIVING
Respite Squad Volunteers
Age Well

The “Respite Squad” is comprised of volunteers who want to spend three or more hours a week providing support to family caregivers. Volunteers undergo a four-session training program that prepares them to provide a listening ear for caregivers, dementia-informed companionship to people needing care and practical support to help families manage household responsibilities.

**Budget:**
Program costs include training materials ($50 per participant), dementia simulation kits ($15 per kit), refreshments ($20 per person for all four sessions) and $12,044 annually in staff supervision and support.

**COVID-19 Adaptation:**
Volunteers who were matched before the pandemic are providing support by phone rather than visiting homes.

**Accomplishments:**
Currently, 15 percent of caregiving families receive respite support. This program has resulted in decreased social isolation and increased social connectedness for caregivers and care recipients.

**Replicability:**
Age Well can share materials with other AAAs that wish to train volunteers to provide respite.

**CONTACT:**
Erica Marks, Director of Volunteer Services
Age Well
875 Roosevelt Highway, Suite 210
Colchester, VT 05446
802.662.5249
emarks@agewellvt.org
ELDER ABUSE PREVENTION
LAE-FAVU Collaboration
San Francisco Department of Disability and Aging Services, Office of Community Partnerships

The San Francisco Department of Disability and Aging Services’ Office of Community Partnerships created a collaboration between the Adult Protective Services’ Financial Abuse Virtual Unit (FAVU) and Legal Assistance to the Elderly (LAE), an OAA Title III B–funded community-based legal services organization, to better meet the needs of older adults experiencing financial abuse. FAVU and LAE regularly meet with representatives from the San Francisco Police Department to review cases, evaluating them for criminal prosecution or civil legal action and social service intervention.

**Budget:**
The FY 2020 program budget of $100,000 covered costs for LAE, including one full-time attorney and operating expenses.

**COVID-19 Adaptation:**
Teams discussed potential abuse cases and collaborated with specialized law enforcement via Zoom. FAVU workers made police reports online.

**Accomplishments:**
Last year, FAVU investigated more than 200 cases of financial abuse. LAE consulted on dozens of cases.

**Replicability:**
This collaboration is one that many AAAs can replicate. Staff time is needed to develop or expand partnerships.

**CONTACT:**
Michael Zaugg, Program Director
San Francisco Department of Disability and Aging Services, Office of Community Partnerships
1650 Mission Street, Fifth Floor
San Francisco, CA 94103
415.420.9788
michael.zaugg@sfgov.org

HEALTHY AGING
AAA and Pharmacy Coordination
Region VII Area Agency on Aging

In 2018, Region VII Area Agency on Aging hired a staff pharmacist for its care transitions program and to assist with launching a dispensing pharmacy and vaccination program. The vaccination program offers vaccinations for homebound patients. The pharmacy program is still under development and will assist with medication reconciliation of discharged hospital patients.

**Budget:**
Pharmacy and vaccine program development costs are significant. The pharmacy will be self-sustaining. Ongoing costs for the vaccination program are minimal.

**COVID-19 Adaptation:**
COVID-19 resulted in increased need for the vaccination program. At the same time, issues with contracting and obtaining equipment during the pandemic have delayed pharmacy development.

**Accomplishments:**
Vaccine rates have increased among homebound individuals. During the pandemic, more than 250 clients received the influenza vaccine and more than 400 received the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine.

**Replicability:**
In areas with clear need, a pharmacy and vaccination program can be developed through partnerships with local health departments, which can be motivated to assist in establishing specialized pharmacies to help meet needs they currently cannot.

**CONTACT:**
Nathaniel Bergman, Pharmacist
Region VII Area Agency on Aging
1615 S. Euclid Avenue
Bay City, MI 48706
989.893.4506
bergmann@region7aaa.org
HEALTHY AGING
AllCARE Aquabilities
Appalachian Agency for Senior Citizens

The AllCARE Aquabilities therapy program enables individuals in the rural Appalachian Agency for Senior Citizens’ Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly to participate in exercise, wellness and skilled therapy activities in an aquatic environment. The program runs from April through October with six-week cohort groups. Transportation is provided to the local YMCA, and the class is taught by a certified aquatic physical therapist.

**Budget:**
The only ongoing cost is the $150 monthly fee for two hours per week of handicap-accessible YMCA therapy pool use. Nominal startup costs included pool noodles and water weights.

**COVID-19 Adaptation:**
The adult day center and aquatic therapy programs were closed due to the pandemic but reopened at limited capacity with adherence to safety guidelines in spring 2021.

**Accomplishments:**
All participants reported significant improvement in mobility and overall well-being, with 58 percent reporting pain reduction.

**Replicability:**
Replication requires a facility with a pool (preferably a therapy pool with a lift) and a physical therapist with knowledge of aquatic therapy and safety.

**CONTACT:**
Regina Sayers, Executive Director
Appalachian Agency for Senior Citizens
P.O. Box 765
Cedar Bluff, VA 24609
276.964.4915
rsayers@aasc.org

HEALTHY AGING
CCAAA Outreach: Oral Hygiene Kits for Older Adults
Clearfield County Area Agency on Aging, Inc.

Oral health among older adults is a major public health concern. The Clearfield County Area Agency on Aging, Inc. (CCAAA) created oral health kits with toothbrushes, toothpaste, denture tablets and educational materials. These packets are distributed to older adults through CCAA’s home-delivered meals program and its Centers for Active Living.

**Budget:**
Total costs include supplies ($9,780); approximately 335 staff hours to develop, design and package oral health kits ($7,370); and delivery ($996 per delivery for gas, vehicle usage and driver rate).

**COVID-19 Adaptation:**
The model was adapted to meet older adults’ increased needs during COVID-19. Older adults received masks, hand sanitizer and COVID-19 educational materials with their kits.

**Accomplishments:**
More than 3,000 kits are packaged for distribution, with 400 to 600 kits distributed each quarter. More older adults are requesting transportation to dental appointments.

**Replicability:**
This project easily can be tailored to the specific needs of each community. Linking with AAA providers and community sites helps expand reach in a resourceful way.

**CONTACT:**
Kathleen Gillespie, CEO
Clearfield County Area Agency on Aging, Inc.
600 Cooper Road
Curwensville, PA 16833
814.765.2696
kgillespie@ccaaa.net
HOME & COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES

Caring Circles
Area Agency on Aging, Region One

Caring Circles is an Area Agency on Aging, Region One program through which 29 AmeriCorps members age 55 and older serve homebound, isolated older adults throughout Maricopa County. AmeriCorps members provide social support such as visiting and phone calls, transportation, grocery shopping and prescription pick-up to help meet the unmet needs of clients on the waiting list for home and community-based services. The AmeriCorps members also recruit community volunteers to assist them in meeting client needs.

Budget:
For the current program year, the total budget was $399,989, with $200,000 provided by the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) and $199,989 from AAA, Region One match.

COVID-19 Adaptation:
The Caring Circles program was central to Operation HOPE, AAA, Region One’s COVID-19 response. Volunteers helped deliver more than 5,500 emergency food boxes and made 2,500 weekly reassurance calls.

Accomplishments:
Since September 2017, Caring Circles has served 2,423 unduplicated older adults who feel more confident in their ability to remain in their homes. AmeriCorps members benefit from increased social connection.

Replicability:
Agencies need to apply through the competitive CNCS process or their state AmeriCorps administrator.

CONTACT:
Mary Lynn Kasunic, President & CEO
Area Agency on Aging, Region One
1366 E. Thomas Road, Suite 108
Phoenix, AZ 85014
602.264.2255
kasunic@msn.com

HOME & COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES

Health Interns Program
Marin Area Agency on Aging

Nursing and other health profession students from local universities support clients through the Marin Area Agency on Aging health profession internship program. Students conduct assessments and help connect clients with community-based medical and social services.

Budget:
This program is integrated into ongoing operations, so the primary cost is the Information & Assistance supervisor’s time (about $27,000 in salary and benefits).

COVID-19 Adaptation:
The program morphed to a telehealth model in March 2020. Interns connected clients with free or low-cost digital devices and internet connections to assist with attending virtual doctor’s appointments and obtaining services. This approach will continue after the pandemic.

Accomplishments:
More than 100 students completed the required community-based health rotation during fall 2020 and spring 2021. More than 200 clients with chronic medical conditions were linked to primary care providers, and provided supports such as nutrition, assisted transportation, health education, goal setting and more.

Replicability:
This program requires strong relationships with local academic institutions, establishing HIPAA-compliant communication tools, developing a referral process and identifying lead staff to supervise.

CONTACT:
Lee Pullen, Director
Marin Area Agency on Aging
10 North San Pedro Road
San Rafael, CA 94903
415.473.2689
lpullen@marincounty.org
HOME & COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES
Prince William Adult Day Health Care
Prince William Area Agency on Aging

Prince William Adult Day Health Care (ADHC) monthly outings provide an opportunity for people with cognitive impairments and dementia to engage in the community. Outings are arranged by a recreation specialist with feedback from a participant council, staff and family members.

Budget:
Yearly outing program costs include transportation ($244) and on-call staff ($432), with expenses for outings (not exceeding $20) paid by participants.

COVID-19 Adaptation:
When the ADHC closed in March 2020, the recreation specialist created taped virtual outings, including trips to China and cruises on the Mediterranean. New COVID-19 protocols are being drafted and implemented in preparation for future in-person outings.

Accomplishments:
Caregivers report that participants with dementia have less agitation and sleep disruption as well as display better cognitive skills on outing days.

Replicability:
Any organization can easily replicate this program by creating a council of participants to provide input, locating and arranging transportation, and creating permission forms for caregivers.

CONTACT:
Lorraine Eckhardt
Human Services Manager
Prince William Area Agency on Aging
15941 Donald Curtis Drive
Woodbridge, VA 22191
703.792.4991
leckhardt@pwcgov.org

INTERGENERATIONAL PROGRAMS
Bayview Senior Services’ Intergenerational Program
San Francisco Department of Disability and Aging Services, Office of Community Partnerships

San Francisco Department of Disability and Aging Services, Office of Community Partnerships partnered with Bayview Senior Services to provide culturally relevant creative arts activities for multiple generations of the city’s Black and African American communities. Weekly activities such as painting, beading, dancing and storytelling bring together older adults, people with disabilities and young adults.

Budget:
The annual program budget of approximately $97,000 includes $81,000 for staffing (one full-time and one part-time position) and about $16,000 for operating costs and overhead.

COVID-19 Adaptation:
Intergenerational programming continued online during the pandemic with activities such as painting classes, storytelling and dance-offs taking place on Zoom. A pen pal exchange and an intergenerational blog were also created.

Accomplishments:
In FY 2019–2020, approximately 249 older adults participated in the program. Of participants surveyed, 97 percent reported that program participation helped them develop new relationships and reinforced feelings of being valued community members.

Replicability:
Begin by assessing demand for intergenerational programming and identifying culturally relevant programming. Establish relationships with youth groups.

CONTACT:
Tiffany Kearney, Program Analyst
San Francisco Department of Disability and Aging Services, Office of Community Partnerships
1650 Mission Street, Fifth Floor
San Francisco, CA 94103
415.355.3555
tiffany.kearney@sfgov.org
**NUTRITION**

**ETAAAD Senior Meal Connect**
East Tennessee Area Agency on Aging and Disability

The Senior Meal Connect (SMC) program is a partnership between the East Tennessee Area Agency on Aging and Disability (ETAAAD) and Second Harvest Food Bank of East Tennessee to address food insecurity among low-income, isolated older adults. SMC delivers nutritious, easy-to-prepare foods to the homes of at-risk older adults.

**Budget:**
ETAAAD partners with local Offices on Aging and senior centers to package and deliver food boxes. Volunteers include local law enforcement, fire departments, emergency medical services and private citizens. Food cost ($12 per box) is covered by local donations or Second Harvest. Estimated staff time is less than 50 hours per year. FY 2020 delivery van operating expenses were $1,548.

**COVID-19 Adaptation:**
SMC put safety protocols in place. Volunteers made socially distanced “porch visits.” COVID-19–prevention kits were included with deliveries.

**Accomplishments:**
The program began in 2017 with 20 boxes delivered in one county and has expanded to include 501 boxes per month delivered across 10 counties.

**Replicability:**
AAAs need to form the initial partnership with a food bank or other provider, then engage and coordinate with community providers on distribution.

**CONTACT:**
Denise West, Special Projects Manager
East Tennessee Area Agency on Aging and Disability
9111 Cross Park Drive, Suite D100
Knoxville, TN 37923
865.691.2551
dwest@ethra.org

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**TECHNOLOGY**

**Tablets to Seniors**
AgeGuide Northeastern Illinois

Tablets to Seniors provides customized, internet-connected tablets and a three-session tutorial for older adults through a partnership between AgeGuide Northeastern Illinois and the Morris Public Library. The program helps older adults stay connected to their family, friends and community while also addressing barriers to technology adoption.

**Budget:**
The program costs $27,300 for two years ($228 per person per year), including two years of data and a stipend of $50 for people completing at least two sessions ($22,000), overhead ($4,400), tablet covers ($600) and AgeGuide-branded items ($300).

**COVID-19 Adaptation:**
Zoom was preprogrammed onto tablets. A delivery partner adept at teaching on virtual platforms was hired. Participants familiar with technology receive tablets by mail. Masked AgeGuide staff hand-deliver tablets to those who need help getting started.

**Accomplishments:**
Clients who initially scored six to nine (indicating stronger feelings of social isolation) on the UCLA Three-Item Loneliness Scale demonstrated a 40 percent reduction in their feelings of loneliness six to eight months after receiving tablets.

**Replicability:**
Replication requires purchase of the tablets as well as staff or volunteers to educate clients in use of the technology. The program has been replicated in its virtual format by another Illinois Area Agency on Aging.

**CONTACT:**
Marla Fronczak, CEO
AgeGuide Northeastern Illinois
1910 S. Highland Avenue, Suite 100
Lombard, IL 60148
630.293.5990
mfronczak@ageguide.org
TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY
Innovation in Medical Transportation
Piedmont Senior Resources Area Agency on Aging

Piedmont Senior Resources (PSR) Area Agency on Aging provides door-to-door non-emergency medical transportation to adults age 60 and older across a rural seven-county region using only grant and fundraised dollars, with more volunteers serving in the program than paid staff.

Budget:
Most of the capital costs of more than $120,000 (primarily for accessible vehicles) have been covered by grants. Operating costs of about $180,000 include insurance, personnel, maintenance, marketing, motor-vehicle licensing fees, vouchers and payroll taxes. Total operating cost for the most recent fiscal year is $113,463.

COVID-19 Adaptation:
PSR implemented safety precautions including face masks, disinfecting vehicles, social distancing, temperature checks and limited occupancy. Numerous clients have been transported for COVID-19 tests and vaccinations.

Accomplishments:
Most survey respondents report the service has improved their overall health from “somewhat poor” to “good.” Over the past two years, PSR has completed 979 one-way appointments.

Replicability:
Planning takes about one year. Keys to success include the ability to write successful grant applications and identify potential funders.

CONTACT:
Thomas Jordan Miles III
Director of Nutrition Services, Nutrition Transportation, and Medical Transportation
Piedmont Senior Resources Area Agency on Aging
1413 S. Main Street
Farmville, VA 23901
434.767.5588
jmiles@psraaa.org
Congratulations to the Aging Innovations & Achievement Awards 2021 Winners

iN2L is honored to support the Aging Network in developing and delivering innovative and sustainable solutions to enrich the lives of older adults.
For more information about USAging, our members and the older adults and caregivers they serve, contact us:

**USAging**
1100 New Jersey Avenue, SE, Suite 350
Washington, DC 20003
202.872.0888

[www.usaging.org](http://www.usaging.org)
info@usaging.org

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