

A Five-Year Plan for Meeting the Needs of a Growing Senior Population in Placer County – Second Annual Update

Submitted by Placer County Health and Human Services January 2019

Background

The Five-Year Plan for Meeting the Needs of a Growing Senior Population in Placer County was received by the Placer County Board of Supervisors on January 10, 2017. The initial emphasis of the Plan was to address the needs of older adults in Placer County by researching and promoting a method to consolidate services and establish a single point of entry for long term services and supports. The Recommendations and Implementation Plan followed the World Health Organization's eight domains of livability that influence the quality of life of older adults and was used as a framework in developing an age-friendly community. It was intended to be a dynamic document that would be updated as actions are completed and/or more information comes forward. Many of the recommendations to move Placer towards an age-friendly county require collaboration and efforts on the part of business and civic groups, community agencies, and city and county government beyond Health and Human Services (HHS).

As stated in the Plan, it is useful to have a committee or commission to oversee the implementation processes. The Older Adult Advisory Commission (OAAC) is the voice of Placer County older adults and in year two the OAAC has taken a lead role in developing and supporting the implementation of the County Plan. The OAAC has engaged in discussions to clarify what is possible in our communities and determine action steps. In year two the OAAC revised its bylaws and aligned its role, structure, membership categories, and relationships with other county entities and departments, to support the County Plan. The OAAC determined that four of the eight domains were significant areas of need in Placer County. These domains were prioritized and assigned to Commission members for further needs assessment and advocacy, and will be a focus of the OAAC's Annual Report.

HHS has continued to support the OAAC and take steps to implement the Plan through the course of its work in the prioritized domains. HHS is a member of the OAAC Executive Committee and actively participates in monthly OAAC meetings and events. In addition, HHS is a member of the Placer County Aging and Disability Resource Connections (ADRC) Steering and Advisory Committees. Further, HHS is a member of Placer PROTECT (Providing Resources & Outreach to Elderly Citizens Together) and participates in monthly PROTECT meetings and events. These integral connections support a coordinated, collaborative effort to identify and address the needs of the older adult population in Placer County.

1 Communication and Information

The County's Five-Year Plan has identified the need for a sustainable, centralized model for information and assistance related to older adults in Placer County. Placer County has offered an online Network of Care service for several years. This model provides referral information to the community via a website including hours of operation, eligibility requirements, and contact information. However, the extent to which the community is aware of this service and utilizes it is questionable. For Network of Care to be a viable source of information, there needs to be increased marketing to the general public. Additionally, some seniors indicate that reliance on technology is a barrier to accessing information. While most seniors stated they use the internet, they also indicated it was not helpful to them in getting actual information and that they often struggled to maneuver through websites.

HHS has continued to investigate and review alternative models for information and assistance such as the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC), 2-1-1, and more recently Seniors First. Seniors First is generally recognized as the primary source of information and assistance regarding senior resources and services in Placer County. Their information and referral specialists, available Monday through Friday, are equipped to respond to individuals, caregivers, family members, or other interested citizens. They provide assistance on a variety of topics including care options, transportation, home-delivered meals, counseling, financial assistance, assistive devices, utility discounts, subsidized housing, and more.

HHS has participated on the ADRC Advisory Committee and supported the establishment of the Resource Center in Placer County since its inception in 2015. The ADRC has created an Enhanced Information and Assistance (I&A) Protocol, which establishes a systematic process for information sharing, referral, and assistance, to meet the needs of individuals looking for Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) options. This system will serve people of all ages, disabilities, and income levels with objective and unbiased information on the full range of LTSS options and when needed, assistance with referral and service connections, coordination, and service delivery. The Enhanced I&A will be provided by four Core Service Providers: Placer Independent Resource Services, Seniors First, Del Oro Caregiver Resource Center, and Agency on Aging-Area 4. The Core Service Providers I & A staff will be trained and certified by the Alliance of Information and Referrals Systems (AIRS) and will utilize a "warm-handoff" technique when referring to extended partners. The ADRC Advisory Committee has submitted an application for designation with the California Department on Aging and approval is pending.

Feasibility for implementing a 211 system in Placer County has been ongoing for several years. 211 could provide a sustainable, centralized point of contact for information and assistance. If a 211 system is adopted, the recommendation is that the information provided be more comprehensive than a phone number and that referrals include information regarding eligibility requirements, any costs involved, or restrictions for services.

In an effort to support a 'No Wrong Door' service delivery system, HHS will continue to assess the aforementioned models to determine whether they would provide an effective, sustainable source of information and assistance for older adults in Placer County.

2 Transportation

HHS continues to assess transportation needs for older adults in Placer County. There is a significant foundation of options for transportation available to older adults, however increased awareness through a sustainable, centralized information and assistance model may be needed. Older Adults tend to become more dependent on public transit as they lose the ability to drive. Approximately 18 percent of Placer County residents are age 65 and older and that number is expected to rise to 27 percent by 2040.

HHS participated in the Western Placer Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (WPCTSA) Project Update and Alternatives Discussion in April, 2018. The WPCTSA provides specialized transportation programs for residents who are not able to use conventional public transit services within western Placer County. Each program responds to a unique transportation need not otherwise currently met or met well within a prescribed service area. The WPCTSA operates the regional Transit Ambassador Program to educate new passengers in becoming familiar with transit services and provide assistance to passengers at transit transfer points. It also operates the Retired Dial-a-Ride Vehicle Program, which purchases retired (surplus) dial-a-ride vehicles from Placer transit operators and sells the vehicles to local social service non-profit organizations for a nominal amount for use to transport elderly and/or disabled clients.

The WPCTSA currently collaborates with the local non-profit organization Seniors First to provide two additional programs: Health Express Non-Emergency Medical Transportation and My Rides Program. My Rides provides free transportation services to non-emergency medical appointments and other essential services for Placer County seniors and people with disabilities. Eligible services include grocery shopping, banking, dentist appointments, lab and pharmacy visits, and hair appointments. Transportation is provided by volunteer drivers who are approved and scheduled by Seniors First. My Rides currently services all communities in Placer County based on volunteer availability.

The Health Express program provides non-emergency medical transportation outside the service areas of the public dial-a-rides and to Sacramento area hospitals on an advance-reservation, shared-ride basis. Health Express serves Placer County residents over the age of 60 or disabled residing just east of Colfax to the Sacramento County line and includes the cities of Colfax, Sheridan, Forest Hill, Auburn, Lincoln, Loomis, Rocklin, and Roseville.

The Placer County Transportation Planning Agency (PCTPA) determined that there were no new unmet transit needs reasonable to meet implementation in FY 2017/18. However, the WPCTSA Short Range Transit Plan for 2018-2025 identified several strategies for consideration/further study to improve mobility for the elderly, low income, disabled and otherwise transportation disadvantaged Placer County residents who are unable to use the traditional fixed route services. One strategy is to

increase My Rides volunteers by reaching out to community groups such as the Lions Club, Resource Fairs, and the Placer Collaborative Network (an organization of over 40 non-profit agencies in Placer County). Another strategy is to contract with Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) or “microtransit” companies. TNCs may supplement Dial-A-Rides when there is a lack of volunteer drivers or for trips to/from rural areas not serviced by fixed routes. TNCs could also offer medical transportation outside hours of operation of the public transit service. WPCTSA and local hospitals could potentially pool funding sources to partner with a TNC such as Lyft or Uber to provide transportation to discharged patients and patients needing transportation to/from outpatient clinic appointments. Another strategy for consideration is to increase Health Express Service capacity with additional vehicle service hours to meet an increasing demand. Additionally, Health Express could be “rebranded” to allow trip purposes outside medical appointments to qualified residents who are just outside the boundaries of the local Dial-A-Ride services.

The Tahoe Transportation District serves the South Lake Tahoe region and offers a complementary South Shore Area ADA Paratransit Service for persons 65 years of age and older and individuals with disabilities who meet eligibility criteria. Paratransit service hours are the same as the local fixed operating hours and the service area extends to origins and destinations one mile on each side of the fixed routes.

The Tahoe Truckee Area Regional Transit (TART) provides public transportation for the Truckee-North Lake Tahoe region and offers a complimentary ADA taxi service called Placer TART Paratransit Service. This service is comparable to the level of fixed route bus service, operating 6:00 am to 6:00 pm 7 days per week within ¼ mile of the TART fixed route buses. TART also offers a Dial-A-Ride service year round with priority service for seniors and people with disabilities. Trips are available within the town limits 7 days per week. Additionally, the City of South Lake Tahoe Senior Center offers free transportation on Thursdays and Fridays within South Lake Tahoe for seniors on a reservation basis only.

HHS will continue to research the various public transportation options being planned and assess whether they will meet the growing needs of older adults in Placer County.

3 Housing

As Placer County’s older adult population continues to grow, the need for affordable housing and the likelihood of homelessness grows for this vulnerable population. The 2018 Placer County Homeless Point in Time Count found that 16 percent of those counted were adults 60 years or older. Moreover, there were 51 clients who are over the age of 65 on the County’s Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) who are experiencing homelessness and awaiting more permanent housing.

HHS is working to extend housing options to all residents and grow housing and supportive services for older adults living with complex needs who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. HHS is a key partner in the Homeless Resource Council of the Sierras (HRCS) Continuum of Care, which is a broad-based Roseville/Rocklin/Placer-Nevada Counties coalition of homeless housing and shelter providers,

consumers, advocates and government representatives, working together to shape planning and decision-making around the issue of homelessness.

As a leader in homeless outreach, intake, and assessment, HHS participated in the launch of the coordinated entry system, which provides a Homeless Resource telephone hotline to both Placer and Nevada Counties. The hotline serves as a centralized, streamlined gateway, available in English and Spanish, for people who are homeless and in need of services. Callers are asked several questions to determine their eligibility for various housing programs. Their needs are shared with participating Placer County Homeless service providers offering emergency, rapid re-housing, and permanent supportive housing in Placer County. This system helps service providers better coordinate services and prioritize needs. The confidential data is placed into the centralized HMIS database and used to better inform community planning and public policy.

HHS manages several programs that serve older adults who are homeless or at risk of homelessness. Whole Person Care (WPC) is a five-year pilot program that coordinates physical health, behavioral health, and social services for at-risk individuals who are high users of multiple services, including hospital emergency departments, probation, mental health and substance use programs, and social services. The WPC team actively engages individuals to build trust and motivate their enrollment into the program. A comprehensive health assessment is used to identify participants with the most critical need to expedite services. WPC offers medical respite beds to individuals who are homeless, in an unstable living situation, and/or too ill or frail to recover from physical illness/injury in their usual living environment (but not in need of treatment from a hospital or skilled nursing facility). Additionally, WPC offers comprehensive housing services to participants who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. Housing transition services assist the individual to obtain housing and develop daily living skills to support them to remain stable in their new living situation. A recent review of WPC data from 2017 revealed that 27 WPC participants were age 65 or older. WPC was one of nine Placer County programs recognized with an Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties in 2018.

Full Service Partnership (FSP) is also managed by HHS and provides intensive services to individuals with a serious mental illness, including older adults. Services include crisis residential services, rent subsidies, and supporting new services and funding to augment the Continuum of Care provided to individuals at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness. For instance, the Adult System of Care is working with Turning Point Community Programs on an FSP to reduce the need for hospitalization, interactions with the criminal justice system, and to reduce homelessness. Specific activities include a 24-hour phone response to crisis issues that arise in the home related to our consumers' mental health needs. Assistance is also available to coordinate access to any community-based services that are not otherwise provided by the County and which are essential for achieving and maintaining independent living. A recent review of 2017 data revealed that 38 FSP participants were age 65 or older. FSP Outreach was one of five HHS programs recognized with an Achievement Award from the National Association of Counties in 2016.

In addition to the aforementioned programs, the HHS Adult Protective Services (APS) program recently applied for the state's homelessness prevention demonstration grant program Home Safe. The California State Budget for Fiscal Year 2018-19 appropriated \$15 million to fund Home Safe over a three-year period, beginning July 1, 2018 and ending June 30, 2021. Across California, APS social workers are finding that seniors and adults with disabilities who are the victims of financial

exploitation, physical abuse, or caregiver neglect are at risk of losing their housing and becoming homeless. The goal of the Home Safe program is to support the safety and housing stability of individuals involved in APS by providing short-term housing-related assistance using evidence-based practices for homeless assistance and prevention. In Placer County, it is estimated that anywhere from 62 to 121 APS clients stand to benefit from Home Safe programming annually. HHS is hopeful to implement a Home Safe program to further optimize and increase access to services and expand available housing for Placer County older adults at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness.

4 Community and Health Services

Placer County has strong foundational resources to address community and health services for older adults. However, many residents are not aware of these resources. A sustainable, centralized information and assistance model may improve awareness.

HHS manages the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program, which helps pay for care services provided to older adults and people with disabilities, so that they can remain safely in their own home. IHSS is considered an alternative to out-of-home care, such as nursing homes or board and care facilities. The types of services which can be authorized through IHSS are housecleaning, meal preparation, laundry, grocery shopping, personal care services (such as bowel and bladder care, bathing, grooming, and paramedical services), accompaniment to medical appointments, and protective supervision for the mentally impaired. HHS currently serves approximately 3,320 IHSS consumers residing in Placer County.

HHS also manages the IHSS Public Authority (PA) program. The PA acts as the employer of record for approximately 3,087 IHSS home care providers in Placer County. The PA also provides information and assistance to IHSS consumers who need help selecting a care provider. The PA maintains a care provider Registry and matches consumers to care providers who meet the consumers' service needs. The PA supports a positive, productive relationship between consumers and providers.

There are approximately 545 active IHSS consumers on the PA Registry in need of a care provider, while there are only 397 active care providers. Thus, there is a shortage of care providers for IHSS consumers who do not have family members providing for their care. To increase availability of in-home care providers for these vulnerable consumers, the PA is exploring innovative, social media recruitment methods. The PA collaborated with the County's Public Information Specialist to launch care provider recruitment on the Nextdoor app. This method identifies care providers living locally to IHSS consumers thereby increasing potential matches. The PA has also started utilizing the Placer County Facebook page to recruit care providers. The PA is researching the use of employment websites such as Betterteam and Indeed. HHS continues to distribute a quarterly PA newsletter called the Gazette, to all IHSS Registry care providers and consumers that features current, impactful, relevant information regarding the IHSS and PA programs. The newsletter highlights different care providers and shares their comments about being an IHSS Registry care provider and the work they do. It also provides general PA and IHSS program and contact information.

HHS had the unique opportunity to partner with Each Mind Matters, an organization working to advance mental health in California, to expand its statewide "Know the Signs" campaign. Aging may mean physical challenges, reduced income, and a shrinking social circle. These factors, plus

unrecognized depression, place some older adults (especially older men) at risk for suicide. To increase suicide prevention awareness for older adults, HHS led an Older Adult Suicide Prevention campaign in Placer County. This was a collaborative effort between Each Mind Matters representatives and the HHS Public Information Specialist, Older Adult Services and Behavioral Health programs. Dedicated HHS staff were trained/educated to speak to Older Adult Suicide Prevention and provided informative presentations across the County:

- Woodside Village Senior Mobile Home Park
- May Mental Health Awareness Month - Older Adults Event at Seavey Center
- Auburn Senior Center
- The Auburn Chamber Forum (Meddlers)
- Senior Peer Counseling Team Mtg.
- Older Adult Advisory Commission

In addition to the presentations, the following outreach was accomplished:

- A “drop-in article” was submitted to the Gold Country Media paper for Mental Health Awareness Month.
- A billboard advertisement was displayed in Auburn on I-80
- 5,000 brochures were created and are being disseminated to community partners and the public throughout Placer County.

HHS Adult Protective Services (APS), in collaboration with the County’s elder abuse task force team, Placer PROTECT (Providing Resources & Outreach to Elderly Citizens Together), continued to raise awareness regarding elder abuse and the resources available to assist older adults in Placer County. HHS worked with the Placer County District Attorney’s Office to promote the “Preparing is Caring” Resource Fair in June 2018 at the Westfield Galleria Mall. This community event focused on answering common questions related to aging and brought together 27 local service providers who offered information and resources to older adults, their family, caregivers, and other interested citizens. Participants included: IHSS, Placer Independent Resource Services, BrightStar Care, Sheriff’s Dept., Legal Services of Nor. CA, CA DMV, Alzheimer’s Assoc., Roseville Police Dept., Seniors First, Social Security, CA Dept. of Justice, Cal Fresh, Placer Food Bank, CA Community Care Licensing, and Placer County Veterans Services. To support the event, the PROTECT team launched a media campaign including the distribution of brochures and staged photographic images on display at various public locations frequented by older adults.

While strong foundational resources exist, HHS will continue to assess community and health services for older adults in Placer County to meet the growing needs of this population.