

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

Submitted by Placer County Health and Human Services August 2021

Background

The Five-Year Plan for Meeting the Needs of a Growing Senior Population in Placer County was created in 2016 to make the community more “livable” for older adults. As a framework, the Plan used the World Health Organization’s eight domains of livability that influence the quality of life of older adults. The Plan was informed through ongoing collaboration by civic groups, community-based organizations, and local government.

As the voice of Placer County older adults, the Older Adult Advisory Commission (OAAC) took a lead role in developing and supporting the implementation of the County Plan. Over the last five years the OAAC discussed and clarified what was needed in our community and determined action steps. In year three the OAAC determined that four of the eight domains were primary areas of focus in Placer County. These domains were prioritized and assigned to Commission members for further needs assessment and advocacy.

Placer County Health & Human Services (HHS) is a member of the OAAC and supported the County Plan through the course of its work operating several older adult services programs. In addition, HHS supported the Plan through its membership with other community-based organizations such as the Placer County Aging and Disability Resource Connections (ADRC), Placer PROTECT (Providing Resources & Outreach to Elderly Citizens Together) and more recently the Placer County Healthy Brain Initiative Advisory Committee. These integral connections supported a coordinated, collaborative effort to further the Five-Year Plan and make Placer County a more livable and age-friendly community for older adults.

Placer County 5-Year Plan for Meeting the Needs of a Growing Senior Population Recommendations and Implementation Plan – Annual Update

1 Communication and Information

The initial emphasis of the 5-Year Plan was to research and promote a method to centralize senior resource information and long-term services and supports through a single point of entry. For several years, the County relied on a Network of Care webpage that provided general resource information to the community, including hours of operation, eligibility requirements, and contact information. However, the extent to which the community was aware of the webpage or utilized it was dubious. Some seniors indicated that reliance on technology was a barrier to accessing information. Most seniors stated that they use the internet, but it was not helpful for them when gathering information because they struggled to maneuver through various dropdowns, queries, and hyperlinks. Many seniors indicated that they prefer to speak with a person when seeking assistance.

On July 1, 2020 Placer County launched the 211 information and referral system, which replaced the Network of Care. The 211 system is a free, confidential, multilingual resource and information hub that connects people with community programs and services through a 24/7 local call center and a searchable webpage. 211 provides a sustainable, single point of entry for older adults and people with disabilities in need of long-term services and supports in Placer County. When the 211 system was developed, there was partnership with established older adult information and assistance providers in the County to incorporate the comprehensive knowledge of local resources they possess. Since its implementation, the 211 service has raised awareness of, and participation in, the many resources, programs, and services available to Placer County older adults and people with disabilities. In 2020 one third of 211 calls were from people age 60+. The top three resource referrals seniors were seeking was housing, healthcare, and food. The number one food resource referral was to Placer Food Bank. There were 175 resource referrals provided to seniors related to housing expense/rental assistance and 317 referrals provided for utility assistance.

An emerging source of information and assistance for older adults that will complement the 211 system is the Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) of Placer County. The ADRC is a collaboration of partner organizations designed to streamline access to services for people with disabilities, older adults, family members and caregivers. HHS has participated on the ADRC Advisory Committee and supported the designation of an ADRC 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’s application for designation with the California Department on Aging is currently pending. HHS will continue to support the ADRC as it moves from development to implementation.

With respect to communication and information, there is growing concern regarding the “digital divide” older adults face. As the internet becomes more integrated into everyday life, people who do not use it are more likely to become disenfranchised and disadvantaged. Older adults are acutely impacted as they face lower levels of computer literacy, technophobia, lack of perceived usefulness and physical and cognitive deficits. An internet connection has become less of a luxury and more of a necessity for older adults. Online tools such as social media enable older adults to bridge geographic gaps with their families and remain socially connected. Telemedicine improves communications with doctors, which facilitates healthy aging and physical independence. Internet technology is improving older adults’ ability to age-in-place using in-home sensors and remote-monitoring devices. Online grocery shopping and delivery may be a solution for older adults experiencing food insecurity due to lack of transportation.

Policy makers have begun to recognize the impacts of the digital divide and the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need to narrow it. The Federal Communication Commission (FCC) recently launched an Emergency Broadband Benefit Program that provides a temporary discount on monthly broadband bills for low-income households, including a one-time discount of up to \$100 for a computer or tablet. The 2021-22 California State Budget included a \$6 billion broadband infrastructure investment to create a statewide open-access middle-mile network that will increase access and affordability, as well as last-mile infrastructure funding for remote, underserved areas. The State Budget also included \$50 million one-time funding to establish a grant-based program to connect older adults with technology and provide education and digital literacy training as needed. The State’s Master Plan on Aging includes a one-time \$106 million Older Adult Recovery and Resilience investment that includes \$17 million for Digital Connections through the network of aging and disability services provided by local Area Agencies on Aging. Further, the State’s Home and Community-Based Services Spending Plan (HCBS) leverages enhanced federal Medicaid funding as authorized by the American Rescue Plan Act that includes \$9.5 million to address the digital divide for adults. More specifically, HCBS will provide older adults eligible for Medi-Cal tele-health services with tablets or other devices necessary for telehealth, along with broadband and tech support. Locally, the Agency on Aging – Area 4 has been giving away free Google Home Speakers to adults 60 years of age or older or their informal caregivers. The speakers include wireless internet connectivity, voice recognition and home automation to better connect older adults to the internet. As the technology revolution continues, it is hoped that policy makers, internet services providers, and technology companies will work together to provide older adults with internet access, technology, and digital literacy training, and take an inclusive approach to technology design.

2 Transportation

For older adults, the ability to drive is synonymous with independence and quality of life. Affordable transportation options for older adults who no longer drive is imperative. Placer County’s public transportation options are growing and evolving to meet the needs of older adults in a dynamic, cost effective manner.

The Western Placer Consolidated Transportation Services Agency (WPCTSA) Board of Directors voted to terminate the two non-emergency medical transportation programs called Health Express and My Rides. The Board reallocated funding to a new Placer Rides Transportation Assistance Program that replaces Health Express and My Rides effective July 1, 2021. The change was recommended due to the escalating cost of Health Express and the challenges the program faced with lengthy trips in a large service area. Additionally, the My Rides program had long struggled to find volunteers in the same areas where there were passengers. Too often passengers registered but were never able to get a ride as they expected.

The Placer Rides program is jointly administered by WPCTSA and Seniors First and provides an innovative, cost effective solution to the problems the Health Express and My Rides programs faced. Placer Rides reimburses eligible Placer County Residents on a per-mile basis for eligible trips. Placer Rides is rider-centric rather than volunteer centric. Riders are responsible for securing volunteers within their own network, such as friends, neighbors, and acquaintances, rather than being matched

to a volunteer by program staff. The volunteer drivers use their personal vehicles to provide trips to the rider. This makes trips possible for residents who live in remote areas where there were no registered volunteers available previously. Placer Rides also funds “last resort” transportation for urgent trips where no volunteer or other transportation means can be provided, via network companies (Uber/Lyft), taxi, and ADA transportation services.

Placer Rides expands rider eligibility to include low-income individuals, as well as older adults aged 60 and over and individuals with disabilities. Riders must have difficulty utilizing other forms of public transit due to lack of service at home or destination, inability to pay fare, or difficulty using fixed route transit. All non-emergency medical trips are eligible, such as clinical, dental, vision, preventative screenings, mental health addiction treatment, dialysis, chemotherapy, radiation, and physical therapy. In addition, Placer Rides expands eligible trips to include essential errands, such as food and basic goods shopping, pharmacy trips, correctional and rehabilitation appointments, and government assistance appointments. Other unique trips may be determined eligible on a case-by-case basis by WPCTSA and Seniors First staff.

Placer Rides will serve more Placer County residents for less. The Health Express and My Rides programs covered 100,000 miles annually with 100 unduplicated riders at a cost of \$1.3 million. The new Placer Rides program is expected to cover 800,000 miles annually with more than 300 unduplicated riders at a cost of \$500,000. WPCTSA plans to grow ridership through public outreach in 2021 and pursue funding to expand the service area of the program in 2022.

In addition to the innovative WPCTSA Placer Rides Transportation Assistance Program, Tahoe Truckee Area Regional Transit (TART) is piloting an exciting new microtransit rideshare service for North Lake Tahoe residents called TART Connect. The pilot offers summer service June 2021 to September 2021 and winter service December 2021 to April 2022 from 8:00 am to Midnight, daily. TART Connect offers free, on-demand, curb-to-curb shared-shuttle service using small transit vehicles covering all Placer communities along Lake Tahoe. Passengers can request service through a mobile application that operates like Uber/Lyft or by calling a local telephone number. TART will operate eight small transit vehicles that can complete an estimated 350 trips per day. Trips can include going to and from restaurants, shopping, bus connections, work, beaches and anywhere else within the services areas. This pilot is expected to reduce traffic congestion and will certainly benefit older adults in the area with transportation needs.

TART continues to offer 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 seven days per week in the same areas served by the TART fixed route buses. TART also offers the Truckee Dial-A-Ride service seven days per week with priority service for older adults and people with disabilities. Trips are door-to-door within the town limits and ADA passengers are free to ride.

For those living in the South Lake Tahoe region, the Tahoe Transportation District (TDD) continues to administer paratransit transportation service for individuals who cannot otherwise use the fixed route system due to specific disabilities or medical conditions. Paratransit operates daily the same hours as the local fixed-route bus service with service to the South Lake Tahoe and Stateline communities. To

assist the community during COVID-19, TDD began offering zero-fare services on all transit routes. The transition to a zero-fare program was intended to increase safety for passengers and operators, enhance efficiency and boost on-time performance. The zero-fare program will be available April 12, 2020 through May 31, 2022. Continuation of fare-free services after that time will be contingent on the availability of additional funding sources.

For older adults who are new to public transit in South Placer County, the WPCTSA offers a Transit Ambassador Program through the City of Roseville. A Transit Ambassador is a volunteer who has been trained to explain the local fixed-route transit systems to passengers, regardless of their experience. They offer friendly, patient and encouraging support to new passengers planning their travels through the South Placer County transit systems.

3 Housing

California has the second highest life expectancy in the nation and the population aged 60 years and older is expected to grow more than three times as fast as the total population. In Placer County the elderly population aged 60 years and older is expected to grow 190% between 2010-2060. For that same period, the population aged 85 years and older is expected to grow 447%. The impacts of the “silver tsunami” are happening now and housing security for low-income older adults has become a significant area of concern.

Rising housing costs compounded by insufficient retirement income, illness, or job loss can quickly result in homelessness for low-income seniors. The Placer County 2020 Homelessness Point-in-Time Count found that 114 individuals experiencing homelessness were aged 60 years and older. This represented 17% of the 744 total persons counted. In May of this year there were 107 individuals aged 65 years and older who were active in the Homeless Management Information System and waiting for more permanent housing.

Placer County has been proactive in its efforts to address the issues of housing insecurity and homelessness. Since 2014 Placer County has been a member of the Homeless Resource Council of the Sierras (HRCS). HRCS is a broad-based 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. In 2019 Placer County HRCS created a comprehensive homeless strategic plan that identified key strategies to address homelessness. This year Placer County established the Rent Help Placer program through the Placer County Housing Authority and the City of Roseville. This program offered emergency rent and utility assistance to those experiencing financial hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic. More recently, Placer County hired an expert firm in the field of homelessness and cross-sector planning to assist with developing best practices for working with the homeless population in the county. The consultant will review data from existing programs and services that currently assist people experiencing homelessness and compare that data to several peer communities and overall best practices to determine the best path forward. Placer County’s ongoing dedication to reducing housing insecurity has resulted in one of the lowest rates of homelessness per 10,000 people compared to neighboring jurisdictions.

Placer County HHS has strived to support the county’s efforts to reduce homelessness, specifically for older adults in the community. The HHS award winning Whole Person Care (WPC) program

coordinates physical health, behavioral health, and social services for at-risk individuals, including older adults, who are high users of multiple services, including hospital emergency departments, probation, mental health and substance use programs, and social services. In coordination with the Placer County Continuum of Care (CoC), 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, which increases their stability in their new living situation. A review of WPC data from 2020 revealed that 27 participants were aged 65 years and older and 5 were aged 75 years and older.

The HHS Full-Service Partnership (FSP) program provides intensive services to individuals with a serious mental illness, including older adults, by employing a “whatever it takes” approach to help them on their path to wellness, recovery, and resilience. Services include crisis residential, rent subsidies, and supporting new services and funding to augment the CoC for individuals at risk of, or experiencing, homelessness. A review of FSP data from 2020 revealed that 42 FSP participants were aged 60 years or older, one of whom was homeless, and one was homeless but sheltered.

In 2019 the HHS Adult Protective Services (APS) program was among 25 county APS programs selected by the California Department of Social Services to implement the State’s homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing demonstration grant program titled Home Safe. The Home Safe program enabled trained APS staff to provide short-term housing crisis intervention to help APS clients stabilize and recover while maintaining or securing housing. Staff worked with landlords, utility companies, legal services, and other community resources to develop solutions. Home Safe interventions included short-term rental and utility assistance, hoarding interventions/cleaning services, arranging moves, mental health treatment, intensive case management, and more. The Home Safe program was unique in that it focused on homeless prevention and early intervention for vulnerable older adults and people with disabilities, which enhanced Placer County’s CoC. The program concluded in June of this year and served a total of 93 older adults and people with disabilities. Of those served, Home Safe found homes for 20 homeless clients, including 4 veterans. Home Safe intervened to preserve current housing for 36 clients and moved 20 clients into a more stable housing arrangement, thus preventing homelessness for 56 clients. Over \$165,000 was spent on direct client intervention. Home Safe has been included in the 2021-22 California State Budget, with \$92.5 million funding in 2021-22 and \$92.5 million 2022-23, allowing for both appropriations to be spent through June 30, 2024. HHS looks forward to renewing its APS Home Safe program in the coming months and preventing homelessness for many more vulnerable clients.

Early in the COVID-19 pandemic Placer County HHS acted quickly to protect the homeless population from COVID-19 and slow the spread of the disease by establishing a Project Roomkey program. Project Roomkey is a state-directed, coordinated effort to secure hotel and motel rooms in Placer County to be used as temporary residences for quarantining and treating individuals experiencing homelessness who have tested positive for or have a high-risk exposure to COVID-19. High-risk includes older adults aged 65 years and older and/or those suffering from chronic illness. The county currently operates one hotel shelter that provides supportive services, on-site supervision, and meals to residents. In 2020 Project Roomkey completed 414 unique assessments and served 203 homeless individuals in Placer County, 47 of which were aged 65 years and older.

The need for affordable housing in California has become increasingly urgent. Subsidized and affordable housing is offered at the county, state, and federal levels, but the waitlist to get into such a home can be five years or longer. Concurrently, older adults are living longer and their ability to age

in place is becoming tenuous due to financial constraints, loss of independence and isolation. Older adults living on a fixed income are more likely to have severe housing cost burden, spending 50% or more of household income on housing costs. Severe housing cost burden is a risk factor for homelessness. Individual vulnerabilities such as a physical disability or a health condition increase this risk.

An innovative home sharing program, designed to alleviate the affordable housing problem by capitalizing on the numerous unoccupied bedrooms in homes throughout Placer County, was launched in June of this year. The program is called HomeShare American River, which is a project of the non-profit organization Placer People of Faith Together and funded through the Agency on Aging-Area 4. HomeShare American River matches individuals seeking a roommate with individuals seeking housing. The goal is to pair a homeowner who has some needs (e.g., extra income to meeting monthly expenses, light housekeeping, occasional transportation/shopping, computer tutoring) with a home seeker willing to meet those needs, usually in exchange for reduced rent and/or utility costs. Either the home provider or the home seeker would be an older adult, or both parties may be older adults. The program provides end-to-end support for potential home providers and home seekers, including screening, interviewing, advising, matchmaking, trial-matching, customizing agreements (e.g., exchanges of partial rent for household services), and regular check-ins. Services are provided by a mix of paid staff and highly trained, long-term volunteer Matchmakers. The service is cost-free to participants and welcomes applications from people of all ages and nearby areas.

The mutual benefits of home sharing for older adults are many. It saves money for those living on Social Security who could benefit from the additional income and for those in need of housing. It offers companionship for those who are socially isolated, which for many seniors may be more valuable than the financial benefit. It supports independence for homeowners who find the tasks required to maintain their home are more than they can do alone. It offers peace of mind to the family of an older adult knowing their loved one is not alone. It also offers safety should there be a medical emergency or a fall, in which case a housemate will be aware and can seek help. HHS has long supported the creation of a home share program in Placer County and will make every effort to support the program and improve access to affordable housing for older adults.

4 Community and Health Services

With the surge in California's aging population, community-based supports and health services play a central role in enabling older adults to remain safely in their homes and delay or prevent institutionalization. Placer County is home to many nonprofit organizations and local government programs designed to enrich the lives of older adults through a multitude of supports and services. Most services are delivered through the Agency on Aging—Area 4 (AAA4) with Older Americans Act funding. AAA4 funded services are free of charge to eligible clients, typically aged 60 years or older. Services include caregiver support/respice, employment service, health insurance counseling, information and assistance, legal services, nutrition/home delivered meals, peer counseling, elder abuse prevention, long-term care Ombudsman services, residential repairs/modifications and more.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic AAA4 and its funded partners ensured services and supports continued for older adults in need. The closure of senior centers displaced those who had been attending senior lunch sites throughout the county. Both Seniors First and Sierra Senior Services transitioned to home delivery and together they provided 34,003 meals to 1,555 older adults. Thanks largely to federal COVID relief funds, these nutrition providers were also able to at least double their

regular Meals on Wheels volume, serving an additional 105,241 meals to 1,103 individuals. The pandemic impacted transportation for older adults as well. To the benefit of 566 Placer County residents, Seniors First continued to provide essential trips (e.g., medical appointments) on 1,407 occasions while also helping others to remain self-quarantined by delivering supplies (e.g., toilet paper) to their homes on 3,648 occasions.

By helping pay for in-home care services, the HHS In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program enables almost 4,000 older adults and people with disabilities in Placer County to remain safely in their own home. IHSS is considered an alternative to institutionalized 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. In June of this year, the IHSS program utilized the latest technology to pioneer an automated scheduling application that better supports both IHSS program staff and clients. IHSS launched the Q-Flow software solution that seamlessly integrates with Microsoft Outlook to improve the flow of client appointment scheduling by sending automated text and email reminders to the client. Q-Flow improves IHSS service to the community and streamlines business processes with a greater focus on client support, while reducing staff administrative tasks.

The IHSS Public Authority (PA) program acts as the employer of record for approximately 3,800 IHSS home care providers in Placer County and aids IHSS consumers in finding and hiring a care provider. The PA maintains a provider Registry and matches consumers to providers who meet the consumers' service needs. While the great majority of IHSS consumers have family members providing for their care, there are approximately 706 active consumers who rely on PA Registry services to locate and hire a provider. Of these active Registry consumers, 345 are currently not matched to a provider. There are only 193 active Registry providers available for matching to a Registry consumer, thus there continues to be a shortage of providers. The PA works continuously to identify and recruit new providers in an innovative manner. These efforts are especially critical as the 2021-22 California State Budget included the establishment of a permanent back-up provider system to serve IHSS consumers when their regular provider is unavailable, and the consumer has an immediate need for service. The Back-up provider system will not be implemented until the State Department of Social Services, in consultation with stakeholders, creates a framework to provide to the Legislature and statutes are enacted to define the parameters of the service.

The HSS APS program helps older adults and people with disabilities when they are unable to meet their own needs, or are victims of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. The APS program investigates reports of abuse for those who live in private homes, apartments, hotels, or hospitals. In 2020 the APS program received an average of 175 new cases each month. There was a total of 2,716 allegations of abuse by other, representing 79% of total allegations, and 707 allegations of self-neglect, representing 21% of total allegations. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Federal Department of Health and Human Services Administration of Community Living appropriated funds to county APS programs statewide to enhance and improve protective services through September 30, 2022. Placer County APS is planning to use the funds to assist APS clients whose health has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. APS plans to hire a Registered Nurse or Licensed Vocational Nurse who will visit APS clients in the home and provide services and support. Services will include assessing for immediate/emergency medical needs, reviewing medications and medical records,

engaging other needed health professionals, placement coordination, assessing client decision-making capacity to direct their own care, assisting client navigation of health care system and health insurance benefits, and assessing health and safety hazards. The nurse will also make needed health-related purchases for items such as a blood pressure monitor, nutritional supplements, incontinence supplies, durable medical equipment for toileting and bathing, diabetic supplies, medication management devices and more.

The number of Americans living with Alzheimer's Disease is growing fast. This year in California approximately 690,000 people aged 65 years and older are living with Alzheimer's dementia. By 2025, that number is expected to grow to 840,000, an increase of 21.7%. HHS Public Health is taking the lead to create a dementia-friendly community in Placer County and was one of six local health jurisdictions in the State to be awarded funding through the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Healthy Brain Initiative. Public Health has brought key stakeholders together to form a diverse, community-wide Healthy Brains Initiative Advisory Committee, which enables information sharing, planning and collaboration. It has also established a roadmap by identifying four objectives to ensure that all residents with dementia, related cognitive impairments, and their caregivers have access to the necessary supports and resources so they may remain independent and fulfilled in their community. The four objectives are: 1) Create a widespread public awareness campaign to reduce the stigma associated with Alzheimer's disease and promote community services in Placer County, 2) Increase the number of individuals who are aware of and/or seek out regular cognitive assessments by providing strategic education on the warning signs of Alzheimer's Disease and the importance of early detection, 3) In partnership with local law enforcement agencies within Placer County, implement Project Lifesaver to protect and support individuals living with Alzheimer's disease who are most likely to wander, and 4) Implement and/or expand at least one dementia-friendly micro-transit program. The Public Health Healthy Brains Initiative will continue its work optimizing the health, wellbeing, and functioning of people living with Alzheimer's and other dementias in Placer County through June 30, 2022.

The Placer County Senior Peer Counseling (SPC) program has been operated by the HHS Adult System of care for over 25 years. SPC provides confidential, short-term, in-home, or virtual peer counseling and is free to Placer County residents who are age 55 years and older. Older adult volunteers are trained to become Peer Counselors who are matched with older adult clients in the community. For some people it is helpful to talk to someone removed from the situation and near their own age. The Peer Counselors are in a unique position to help because they bring their own life experience and are trained to listen, support, and gently coach the client towards their stated goals. Peer Counselors help clients work through issues such as family conflict, adjustment to health or living situation, loss of independence (e.g., loss of driver's license), caregiver stress, isolation/loneliness, depression, and other age-related transitional concerns. This year HHS took the opportunity to request proposals from community-based organizations to operate the SPC program. The local non-profit organization Beautiful Minds Wellness was selected and the SPC program has merged well with the organization's mission to inspire and connect individuals from every walk of life with compassionate, whole-person mental health services, enabling healthy, life-long transformation. SPC currently has seven active Peer Counselors and in 2020 they spent an average of 94 voluntary hours with clients each month. In 2020, 52 clients were screened for SPC services and 42 were connected to a Peer Counselor. Through

the new HHS partnership with Beautiful Minds, the SPC program will continue its work to assist older adults in Placer County find a sense of autonomy, purpose, and improved mental health.

Conclusion

Over the last five years significant efforts have been made to meet the needs of a growing senior population in Placer County. There has been much progress in the areas of transportation, housing, community and health services, and communication and information. And yet there is more work to be done. With the Placer County Five-Year Plan concluding, it is the perfect time to pivot to the State's first-ever Master Plan on Aging (MPA).

The MPA serves as a 10-year blueprint that can be used by state government, local communities, private organizations, and philanthropy to build environments that promote an age-friendly California. The MPA outlines five goals with twenty-three action areas and over 100 specific initiatives for implementation. The goals are: 1) building housing for all ages, 2) improving access to health services, 3) providing inclusive opportunities for older adults to live and work without fear of abuse and neglect, 4) bolstering the caregiving workforce, and 5) increasing economic security for aging Californians. The MPA also provides a Local Playbook with tools and resources communities can use to create their own tailor-made strategies on aging, disability, and dementia.

Whereas the Five-Year Plan for Meeting the Needs of a Growing Senior Population in Placer County was driven by HHS and the OAAC, the MPA requires a much larger coalition to be successful. The MPA involves collaborative and cross-sector partnerships including Area Agencies on Aging, Aging and Adult Service providers, Public Health, independent living centers, Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) programs, non-profit community-based organizations, civic groups, philanthropy organizations, the private sector and more. The OAAC in collaboration with the Placer County ADRC is taking the first steps from the MPA Local Playbook and seeks to hire a consultant to explore local data and conduct a baseline assessment of Placer County's age friendliness. Future MPA steps will involve engaging local leaders, determining local needs and areas of opportunity, selecting MPA initiatives for implementation, and building an action plan. The MPA will build on the accomplishments of the Five-Year Plan and chart a course locally over the next ten years to make Placer County even more age friendly.