



SeniorsPlus

Area Plan on Aging Federal Fiscal Years 2025-2028

Draft

The mission of SeniorsPlus is to enrich the lives of older people and adults with disabilities, their families and communities, and to support them to make informed choices.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Appendix A:

Verification of Intent.....	3
Mission.....	4
Executive Summary.....	5
Context.....	6
Quality Management.....	8

Appendix B:

Key Topic Areas.....	8
----------------------	---

Appendix C:

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Outcomes.....	12
---	----

Appendix D:

Assurance and Required Activities.....	19
--	----

Appendix E:

Public Hearing Process.....	28
Public Hearing Comments and Corrections.....	29
List of Board of Directors Advisory Council.....	30
List of Current Services by County.....	31

Appendix F:

Requests for Direct Service Waivers.....	33
RFP Notice.....	56

AREA PLAN ON AGING 2025-2028

Verification of Intent

The Area Plan on Aging is hereby submitted for the Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford County Planning and Service Area for the period FY2025 through FY2029. The plan includes all assurances and plans to be followed by SeniorsPlus under provisions of the Older Americans Act, during this period. The Area Agency on Aging identified will assume the full authority to develop and administer the Area Plan on Aging in accordance with all requirements of the Older Americans Act and related State policy. In accepting this authority, the Area Agency on Aging assumes major responsibility to develop and administer the Area Plan for a comprehensive and coordinated system of services and to serve as the advocate and focal point for older people in the planning and service area.

The Area Plan on Aging has been developed in accordance with all rules and regulations specified under the Older Americans Act and is hereby submitted to the State Unit on Aging for approval.

Date

Betsy Sawyer-Manter
President and CEO
SeniorsPlus

The Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council has had the opportunity to review and comment on the Area Plan on Aging. Comments are attached.

Date

Arthur Turley
Chairperson
SeniorsPlus Advisory Council

The governing body of the Area Agency has reviewed and approved the Area Plan on Aging.

Date

Holly Zielinski
Chairperson Board of Directors
SeniorsPlus

Mission Statement, Values and Vision

Mission

The mission of SeniorsPlus is to enrich the lives of older people and adults with disabilities, their families and communities, and to support them to make informed choices.

Vision

SeniorsPlus envisions a future where all older adults and individuals with disabilities are engaged and respected while living quality, independent lives in the communities of their choice.

Values

For our clients:

- Be responsive and flexible in-service delivery.
- Ensure access to information and resources are based on individual needs.
- Maintain accessible and welcoming facilities.
- Assure quality services.
- Provide professional, well-trained staff.
- Support client choice.

For our employees:

- Recognize employees for performance and teamwork.
- Provide professional development opportunities.
- Ensure consistent implementation of policies and procedures.
- Provide competitive compensation and benefits.
- Support open two-way communication.
- Encourage safety and wellness.
- Encourage and nurture autonomy and self-directed work.

For our volunteers:

- Treat volunteers with respect.
- Offer meaningful volunteer opportunities and training.
- Support open communication between staff and volunteers.

For our communities:

- Facilitate education and information sharing about older adults and people with disabilities.
- Participate actively in community partnerships.
- Inform communities about our work.

Purpose

The corporation's stated purpose is:

To serve as a private nonprofit organization for the assistance of older people:

- To inform and educate older adults and the public at large of the needs of and benefits available to older adults; and

- To propose, create, develop, and administer programs by and for older people in the counties of Androscoggin, Franklin and Oxford, Maine, and other areas of the state as needed; and
- To apply for, obtain, receive, and administer funds for programs from gifts and private grants and from public grants under State and Federal programs now in effect, or hereafter becoming effective; and
- All purposes incidental to, or necessary, or expedient for the carrying out of the principal purposes above set forth.

Executive Summary

Established in 1972, for over 52 years, SeniorsPlus has been the Area Agency on Aging, and the Aging and Disability Resource Center that serves Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford counties. All three counties are rural except for the urban center of Lewiston/Auburn situated in the center of Androscoggin County. SeniorsPlus has offices in each county with the primary office located in Lewiston, Wilton, and Norway. SeniorsPlus works collaboratively on state-wide issues and projects with the other four Area Agencies on Aging on Aging and the State Office of Aging and Disability Services.

SeniorsPlus serves 67 communities, which are mostly rural. In FY 2023, more than 7,353 people accessed more than 15 programs and services ranging from Meals on Wheels, Information & Assistance, Medicare Counseling, Evidence-Based Classes to Money Minders and Family Care Partner Support and more. Our Information & Assistance program provided resources to 4,758 people. A few examples of the need for services provided by SeniorsPlus are evident when you look at our Nutrition Program serving over 149,555 meals to 1,035 people (unduplicated count) through our Meals on Wheels and congregate dining options, 239 care partners and those needing assistance with respite services; and 1,067 people through our State Health Insurance Program (SHIP) by assisting them with navigating the Medicare programs and options so they could make informed decisions based on their unique needs. This program alone saved people in our geographic area over \$1,354,588 in premiums and prescription drug costs in FY 2023.

The overall population in Maine continues to age with U.S. 2020 Census data showing 22.5% of Maine's population is over 65. Like other Area Agencies on Aging, SeniorsPlus is challenged by the wide geographical locations and the varying needs of the increasingly aging people accessing our services. While the COVID-19 pandemic caused a major change in the way some services could be delivered, lessons were also learned on ways to improve services to reach people regardless of where they lived. Hybrid classes continue to be available for those unable to go to a class in-person, and more older adults have participated in technology training. Still, we know the vital importance of face-to-face social interaction and the need for many older adults to have options available such as Meals on Wheels. A common thread to all groups is the desire to remain as healthy, active, and independent as possible in their communities. This 2025-2028 area plan will focus on connecting with and adapting services to older and disabled adults and their care partners.

As part of our mission, SeniorsPlus will continue to provide the services that are funded through the Older Americans Act. For each of these services, we will look at how we can expand, improve, and change to meet the ever-changing needs of our populations. These services include:

- Nutrition services, including Meals on Wheels, Social Dining Sites, and our Around Town dining program. Each provides an opportunity to focus on increasing awareness of programs that are available for those affected by food insecurity and social isolation.
- Information & Assistance, which includes Options Counseling and Medicare Counseling.
- Care partner support and education.
- Education Centers/Senior Centers, which includes evidence-based prevention, wellness classes, adult enrichment activities, public awareness, health and disease prevention, as well as education on preventing elder abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation.

- In-home Supportive Services.

The three goals this plan addresses are as follows:

1. Support older Mainers and their care partners to remain active and healthy in their communities of choice.

- Disseminate information to increase awareness of Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs), as trusted resources of unbiased information on available aging services and programs.
- Improve relationships with local organizations that provide supportive in-home services and make referrals.
- Continue to provide virtual and in-person options in our Education Center on evidence-based programs that support independence, health and wellness.
- Increase access to healthy home-delivered and congregate meals to reduce food insecurity and malnutrition.
- Provide educational outreach using various methods to inform unpaid care partners about available programs and resources, while improving awareness of the value of care partner support.

2. Ensure Maine’s aging services and programs are accessible to all older Mainers and their care partners with emphasis on older adults with the Greatest Social Need and Greatest Economic Need.

- Continue building and strengthening relationships with ethnic-based community organizations to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate services.
- Explore training opportunities developed by community-based organizations focusing on the needs of older individuals with the Greatest Social and Economic Need.
- Staff will be trained on person-centered, trauma-informed care through Inform USA.
- Continue to monitor and evaluate data for effectiveness of services and programs to meet the unmet needs of those with the Greatest Social and Economic Need.

3. Prevent and improve response to abuse, neglect, and exploitation while preserving the rights and autonomy of older Mainers.

- Provide outreach and public education on the availability of legal assistance programs, and partner with community organizations to increase visibility of legal assistance programs.
- Continue participation on the Elder Abuse Task Force, and membership on the Maine Council for Elder Abuse Prevention.
- Staff will be trained in mandated reporting.
- Volunteers will receive First Contacts training.

The areas of focus in our 2025-2028 Area Plan take all of this into consideration while continuing to provide our core services and expand efforts in the areas identified in the plan.

Context

For years, Maine has held the distinction of being the country’s oldest state. Maine also has the largest proportion of its population in rural areas. SeniorsPlus serves two of the most rural counties in Maine, Franklin, and Oxford counties. SeniorsPlus also serves Androscoggin County which includes one of three urbanized areas in Maine; the Lewiston/Auburn area.

Over the past 20 years, Androscoggin County has become the second largest New Mainer resettlement area in the state. New Mainers are primarily from Africa, but also Eastern Europe, and the Middle East. As a

result, SeniorsPlus is working much more closely with ethnic community-based organizations to develop more culturally appropriate service delivery.

The 2021 American Community Survey reports that counties served by SeniorsPlus the median age in Androscoggin County was 40.7, with an increase for ages 60-69 of 18.8% and, 70 and over increased by 6.36%. Franklin County the median age was 46.3, with an increase for ages 60-69 of 7.63% and, 70 and over increased by 25.6%. Oxford County the median age was 47.6, with an increase for ages 60-69 of 34.5% and, 70 and over increased by 20.3%. 1 in 4 people in the SeniorsPlus catchment area are 65 or older. The 2020 Maine Monitor also estimates that those living below the federal poverty level is 11.3% in Androscoggin County, 12.5% in Franklin County, and 13.4% in Oxford County.

In the final report of the Maine State Plan on Aging Needs Assessment, conducted by the Catherine Cutler Institute, which was issued in January 2024, it was found that access to care was a top priority for older adults. Key concerns of provider shortages and turnover were the most commonly mentioned issues. Twenty-five percent expressed an interest in learning through workshops or classes how to better take care of their health, and 68% reported that telemedicine and virtual activities have helped them access services since the pandemic.

Falls and fear of falling were prevalent in adults ages 65 and older, with 81% reporting they had fallen in the past 6 months, with 26% needing assistance in getting up.

The ability to stay in their homes was both a desire and a fear. Food insecurity was found to be rising among older adults, especially among those who live alone, are unemployed or disabled, low income, and those who live with grandchildren in their homes.

Other areas identified as struggles were finding opportunities for socialization, with 27% of respondents stating they sometimes, often, or always felt lonely and disconnected. Financial safety and security were concerns with 12% of respondents identifying themselves as being afraid that someone will take advantage of them through scams. Transportation, especially in rural areas, was found to be an increasing need. 72% of those 75 years and older relied on a family or friend for transportation needs.

SeniorsPlus hosted “Listening Sessions” conducted online by Catherine Cutler Institute. Additionally, SeniorsPlus held focus group sessions to better understand and learn more about what our community members know about us and the services we offer, where they can turn to when they have questions or concerns, resources available, care partner responsibilities, and what they have for identified needs. Attendees identified needing assistance with things such as handyperson duties, shoveling snow, and other things around the house on an as-needed-basis, as well as the stress of being a care partner. Being able to remain at home as they aged, difficulties with lack of transportation, as well as falls, nutritional needs, and not knowing where to turn to for help were mentioned in both focus groups and the Listening Sessions.

The U.S. population is aging with the older populations growing faster than the younger population. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the number of Americans ages 65 and older will more than double from 2018-2060, reaching 95 million. This shifting demographic change in the population will present new challenges and needs that must be addressed. However, the changing demographics will also present new opportunities and resources. SeniorsPlus values the population it serves and will partner with our community members and clients to meet our established mutual goals.

SeniorsPlus will partner with the other Maine Area Agencies on Aging, the Office of Aging and Disability Services, the Administration of Community Living, and the individuals we serve to build communities that are supportive of all its citizens, regardless of age, diversity, or disability as they seek to stay home living their best lives as they age.

Quality Management

SeniorsPlus utilizes the WellSky Aging and Disability case management software to maintain electronic client records and to collect required data on Title III funded services and assure OAA Title III funded services are focused on at-risk populations including older individuals with the highest social and economic need. The following chart provides evidence of SeniorsPlus commitment to focus the provision of Title III services to those with the highest socioeconomic needs:

<i>Targeting Criteria</i>	<i>Target Population</i>	<i>Total Population</i>		<i>Service Population</i>		<i>Total Served 10.1.2022 – 9.30.2023</i>	
Greatest Social Need	Persons Age 85+	31,927	8.02%	4,258	13.34%	744	17.47%
	Rural	153,422	39.49%	42,085	27.43%	4,218	10.02%
	Lives Alone	79,707	20.03%	10,546	13.23%	1,541	14.61%
	Race/Ethnicity (Non-White)	17,688	5.16%	2,678	15.15%	46	1.71%
Greatest Economic Need							
	At or Below Poverty Level	23,669	5.95%	3,183	13.45%	1,438	45.17%

With the collection of more robust demographics, we are pleased to see we are serving 45.17% of those with the greatest socioeconomic need in our catchment area. We also utilize this data to analyze our impact on rural and ethnic populations.

In addition, SeniorsPlus monitors the quality of our programs as well as client satisfaction through the distribution of quarterly surveys for our OAA programs. We also solicit feedback after each class in our Education Center. Annual Nutrition surveys are sent to home-delivered meal clients and comment cards are available at congregate locations. Drivers are trained to report health and safety concerns and updates on client needs to the Nutrition management team.

Key Topic Areas

A. Older Americans Act (OAA) Core Programs

OAA programs are encompassed in Titles III (Supportive Services, Nutrition, Disease Prevention/Health Promotion, and Care Partner Programs), VI (Native American Programs), and VII (Elder Rights Programs), and serve as the foundation of the national aging services network. Describe plans and include strategies and performance that measure your progress towards:

1. Coordinating Title III programs with Title VI Native American programs;

While SeniorsPlus does not have any tribal communities in our catchment area we are aware there are tribal members living in our communities. Services are available to any qualified individual. Through

SeniorsPlus' membership in statewide initiatives, we will avail ourselves of opportunities to collaborate and coordinate with Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness.

2. Strengthening or expand Title III & VII services;

Supportive Services:

Supportive services are a key component of Title III B, including transportation, chore service, homemaker, legal assistance, outreach, case management, and personal care. Below are examples of supportive service areas that are critical elements to our service delivery system.

Information and Assistance

SeniorsPlus has offices in each of the three counties it serves. Our staff primarily consists of licensed social workers with solid backgrounds in aging services. Our goal is to respond to every call within 24 hours of receiving it. We often find that the presenting issue is only one of several that the client needs assistance with, leading to short-term case management. While most of the work is done over the phone, staff are also available to meet one-on-one with clients and families. This can be done at our offices or, if needed, through a home visit. SeniorsPlus is committed to being a resource for older adults, their families, and care partners to access the necessary resources they need to lead a healthy and fulfilling life. We understand that navigating the complex long-term care system can be challenging, which is why we work hard to simplify the process. One of the ways we do this is by conducting benefit checkups to determine the state, community, and HCBS programs our clients may be eligible for and that meet their unique needs. Our knowledgeable staff does not just help determine eligibility, but also assists in the application process as needed. Our goal is to make it easy for our clients to get the services they need and deserve.

We have an established electronic referral system with many physician practices utilizing a HIPAA compliant software program. This allows the practice to send us a secure referral, which is followed up by staff, and an outcome message is returned to the referring practice. The community services team is also responsible for Money Minders, a program that matches volunteers and clients to ensure that budgets are in place, bills are paid timely, and that any suspicious activity that might be fraud or exploitation is identified and addressed.

SeniorsPlus has partnered with the Veterans' Administration (VA) to offer Care Management services for their Veteran Directed Care Program. This program enables us to accept referrals from the Maine VA office to assist veterans in remaining at home and self-directing their services.

Education Center/Senior Center

SeniorsPlus offers a wide range of classes and workshops in all three county locations. As an outcome of the COVID-19 pandemic we started offering classes via Zoom and continue to offer hybrid classes that allow participants to attend both in-person and online. These classes and workshops aim to promote health, wellness, knowledge, and interests among older adults and adults with disabilities. They also provide a wonderful opportunity to meet new people and reconnect with old friends. We welcome and encourage our participants to suggest topics for the classes, and many of our classes are participant driven. Our classes are evidence-based, and we cover a diverse range of topics, including Total Strength and Balance, chair yoga, care partner support, knitting, technology assistance, and a book club. We have also established partnerships with local agencies, such as Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Services, to provide an advocate who comes to our space monthly for 'walk-in' hours, giving people the opportunity to meet with them, ask questions, and gather resources. Additionally, we have partnered with the National Digital Equity Center to provide technology classes that promote digital equity among our clients. We send out a calendar

every month, which can be received via mail or email, to help our clients stay up to date with our latest offerings.

Elder Rights Programs

In Maine, there is a strong partnership between Legal Services for the Elderly (LSE) and the AAAs. Contractually we are required to provide 10% of our Title III-B funds to LSE to provide legal aid and counsel to clients. In addition to serving clients with legal assistance, they also provide educational sessions for older people at our office locations in the three counties we serve.

Nutrition Services:

Nutrition services are a key entryway in assessing the needs of older people and people with disabilities in Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford counties. Often the service gateway into homes; nutrition services can establish a strong connection and build trust with clients and families. Referrals to other Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) services often result from a Meals on Wheels assessor or deliverer uncovering an unmet need while in the home. Home Delivered and Congregate Meals will continue to be significant services provided to eligible clients. Congregate dining is a proven method to decrease social isolation and increase healthy nutrition opportunities, both challenges in rural areas.

Also “Pet Food on Wheels” is offered to Meals on Wheels clients with dogs or cats. Pets are a vital companion for many clients and help reduce feelings of isolation and loneliness.

Family Care Partner Support and Respite Services:

Family care partners are the backbone of the care system in Maine. We provide extensive support to family care partners through phone support, resources, training, respite coordination, and support groups. At each of our locations, we organize regular support groups to help family care partners. Additionally, we offer Building Better Care Partners training in all three counties. This program is specifically designed for family care partners of individuals with acquired brain injury, post-traumatic stress disorder, dementia, and any other condition that affects memory.

3. Ensuring incorporation of the new purpose of nutrition programming to include addressing malnutrition;

SeniorsPlus will support those with the Greatest Economic and Social Needs by assuring meals can be adjusted for cultural consideration and preferences and provide medically tailored meals to the maximum extent practical. Nutritional risk assessments are conducted annually to determine the need for nutrition counseling.

4. Preventing, detecting, assessing, intervening, and/or investigating elder abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation;

As mandated reporters, our staff receive training upon hire and an annual refresher training thereafter, to ensure that they are equipped with the knowledge and skills required to identify and report any suspected cases of abuse. If abuse is detected, we report it promptly, but we are not investigators. Our Money Minders and Medicare volunteers are trained to be vigilant for any red flags or suspicious behavior in respect to financial abuse and exploitation.

5. Supporting and enhancing multi-disciplinary responses to elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation involving adult protective services, LTC ombudsman programs, legal assistance programs, law enforcement, health care professionals, financial institutions, and other essential partners across the state.

We work closely with Adult Protective Services and the Long-Term Care Ombudsmen Program (LTCOP) to ensure the well-being of older adults. Our staff members are active participants in local Elder Abuse Task Forces and serve on the Maine Council for Elder Abuse Prevention. We raise public awareness about elder abuse through advocacy, organization, and campaigns. We also provide our staff with continued training by sending them to the statewide Elder Abuse conference every year.

6. Age and dementia friendly efforts

SeniorsPlus actively participates in monthly meetings of Age-Friendly Auburn. Our organization strives to contribute to age and dementia-friendly initiatives and has a close relationship with the Maine Council on Aging. We have placed a strong emphasis on eradicating ageism and educating our staff, colleagues, and clients on the negative impact of ageism and how it can be prevented.

Currently, SeniorsPlus is working on a Community Connections Pilot Program with the five AAA's, UMaine's Center on Aging, the Department, and the Cabinet on Aging. The goal of this pilot program is to support people residing in the community and help prevent or delay institutional services' use. We have hired a full-time 'Community Ambassador' dedicated to bridging communications, providing navigation support, sharing resources, and strengthening our relationship with Age-Friendly Communities and Municipalities within our catchment area.

7. Screening for fall related TBI

SeniorsPlus staff have not been trained to do TBI screening. We plan to reach out to the Maine Brain Injury Association for information and assistance in developing our skills in this area. Historically SeniorsPlus staff attend the Brain Injury Annual Conference.

8. Improving coordination between the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) and other OAA programs.

We have an MOU with A4TD, the provider of the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) in our service area. Our main objective is to recruit and refer SCSEP eligible individuals to the program and strengthen our partnership. We will continue to be a host agency, as it has already proven to be beneficial for mature worker training. Our plan is to work with A4TD, SeniorsPlus, employers, and training providers to identify high-growth, in-demand jobs suitable for older workers. We will keep A4TD informed about available job openings and the specific skills and qualifications we seek in candidates here at SeniorsPlus. Additionally, we will consider job applications from SCSEP participants.

B. COVID-19 and Disaster Preparedness

SeniorsPlus will disseminate information through all of our programs on health risks of COVID-19 and emergency preparedness by posting FEMA information on our website and providing written information to our clients. Information on the health risks of COVID-19 and disaster preparedness is routinely shared with clients.

SeniorsPlus has an emergency preparedness plan that includes outreach to clients to inform them of the status of their services and to ensure their wellbeing.

C. Equity

SeniorsPlus is dedicated to promoting equity. As outlined in our Quality Management section, we will use our data to prioritize those who have the Greatest Social and Economic Needs. We aim to establish stronger connections with the New Mainer community in the Lewiston/Auburn region to enhance our service delivery. Our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) committee has been actively working for the past year to create the following DEI statement for the entire agency.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Statement:

SeniorsPlus is committed to creating a respectful, inclusive, and equitable workplace for all individuals, regardless of their diverse backgrounds and life experiences. We value and celebrate differences, recognizing that the unique perspectives of our employees and volunteers empower us to serve our community better. We believe everyone deserves equal opportunity, access, and a sense of belonging in our workplace. Our commitment to diversity is reflected in our values and daily interactions with each other, our clients, providers, and visitors. We strive to fulfill our mission of promoting enriched, fulfilling, and healthy lives for all without discrimination based on age, ability, ethnicity, culture, race, gender identity, or any other personal identity.

D. Expanding Access to HCBS

SeniorsPlus helps individuals in navigating the long-term care system. We conduct screening to determine eligibility for HCBS programs, and our team is trained to guide clients throughout the process. Our aim is to make it easy for people to access the services they need. Our staff helps those in need understand their options and provide support in completing the necessary paperwork. There are various options available to receive the services needed, but the best one for our clients depends on their specific situation. SeniorsPlus staff have the expertise to guide clients through the most suitable option that will provide you with the best outcome.

E. Caregiving

At SeniorsPlus, we offer various programs and services to support care partners throughout their caregiving journey. For easy access we have support groups in all three of our locations, both in-person and virtual. Our care partner counseling service is available to assist with decision-making, problem-solving, and planning. We provide care partner training to enhance knowledge and skills in areas such as health, nutrition, personal care, financial management, and communication. We have two respite programs currently available that enable care partners to receive funding for a range of services, such as home modifications, respite, assistive technology, self-care, and legal aid. Our new Music and Memory program provides personalized music playlists to individuals with Alzheimer's or a related dementia, which gives their loved ones a unique form of respite by allowing them to be contently engaged in their music. Additionally, our evidence-based program, Opening Minds through Art, has been shown to improve the quality of life for artists living with dementia by giving them the opportunity for creative expression. We have partnered with Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine who utilize our space to offer a Kinship Support Group. They assist and support kinship providers such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, family members, or family friends raising children in navigating an array of systems that can be difficult to manage. At SeniorsPlus, we are committed to providing care partners with the necessary support, resources, and tools they need to provide the best possible care to their loved ones.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Outcomes

Goal 1: Support older Mainers and their care partners to remain active and healthy in their communities of choice.

Title III B: Supportive Services and Community Centers for Older People

Objective 1.1 Increase awareness of Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs), part of Maine's No Wrong Door System, as trusted sources of unbiased information on available aging services and programs.

Strategies

1. Create and distribute marketing material to healthcare practices, municipal offices, and other places that older people and adults with disabilities frequent.

2. Provide community education to providers, community groups, age friendly communities, and the general public on programs and services available to older Mainers and care partners.

Outcomes

1. Short-term: Determine a baseline for the number of locations to distribute materials.
2. Intermediate: Monitor the frequency of materials needing replenishment.
3. Long-term: Increase referrals to agency services.

Objective 1.2 Strengthen person-centered Case Management Services offered by Area Agencies on Aging.

Strategies

1. Staff will participant in statewide trainings on case management services and person-centered best practice.

Outcomes

1. Short-term: Update policies and procedures for providing person centered case management.
2. Intermediate: 100% of ADRC staff will attend OADS provided training on case management and person-centered best practice.
3. Long-term: Provide case management services to address complex client needs.

Objective 1.3 Provide In-Home Services (Homemaker, Personal Care, and Chore Services) that address the unmet needs of older Mainers.

Strategies

1. Increase partnerships with local organizations that provide Supportive Services and make appropriate referrals.
2. Screen clients living in our service area who are 60 or over and not enrolled in LTC programs for eligibility, and if no other funding source is available, provide reimbursement for out-of-pocket direct service expenses using a self-directed model as long as funds are available, and client remains eligible.

Outcomes

1. Short-term: Clients are offered a choice of agency delivered or self-directed services.
2. Long-term: Clients are routinely reimbursed for in-home support services.

Objective 1.4 Provide opportunities in local communities to enhance social engagement.

Strategies

1. Continue to provide virtual and in-person options for Education/Senior Center programs.
2. Strengthen community connections that increase opportunities for socialization such as older adult volunteers, intergenerational engagement, and lifelong learning opportunities.

Outcomes

1. Short-term: Increased type and frequency of Education/Senior Center programs provided based on client surveys and requests.
2. Intermediate: Maintain virtual and in-person options for Education/Senior Center programs.
3. Long-term: Increased awareness and participation in Education/Senior Center Programs.

Title III C: Nutrition Services

Objective 1.5 Improve the nutritional health status of older Mainers.

Strategies

1. Improve screening and referral process utilizing the WellSky Meals on Wheels intake screening and Nutritional Risk Assessment form to identify older individuals at risk for food insecurity and malnutrition and ensure appropriate referrals based on need to nutritional counselor and supplemental nutrition programs (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP), Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) to increase access to healthy food.
2. Increase access to healthy meals in a congregate setting, through opportunities such restaurant voucher or foodservice partnerships in our catchment area.
3. Strengthen client choice by increasing number of partnerships that provide congregate dining programs.
4. Improve screening and access to culturally appropriate and medically tailored meal considerations to the maximum extent practical.

Outcomes

1. Short-term: 100% of Nutrition and Community Services staff are trained to identify supplemental nutritional needs.
2. Short-term: Improved access to healthy food for clients at risk.
3. Intermediate: Increased in the number of referrals made to supplemental food programs.
4. Intermediate: Increased number of meal options available to clients.
5. Intermediate: Clients that request and receive medically tailored meals increases 10% compared to FY 22.
6. Long-term: Number of social dining/congregate locations increased by 60% compared to FY22.
7. Long-term: Number of individuals who receive congregate meals increased by 10% compared to FY22.

Title III D: Evidence Based Programs

Objective 1.6 Promote and maintain participation in Evidence Based Programs.

Strategies

1. Promote evidence-based health and wellness programs through a variety of outreach methods.
2. Improve partnerships for increased access to evidence-based programs in underserved areas.
3. Provide agency wide staff training on the availability of evidenced based programs.
4. Continue to train and utilize volunteers to facilitate Opening Minds through Art (OMA) classes and host Art Shows in our offices in all three counties.

Outcomes

1. Short-term: Improved awareness of available evidence-based programs.
2. Short-term: Increase volunteer participation in leadership/facilitation of evidenced-based programs.
3. Intermediate: Greater access to evidence-based programs.
4. Long-term: Increase participation in the OMA program by 10% compared to FY22.
5. Long-term: Increased individual completion rates of evidenced-based programs by 10% compared to FY22.

Title III E: Care Partner Services

Objective 1.7 Improve awareness and access to available services for unpaid family care partners through outreach, education, and promotion of programs.

Strategies

1. Provide educational outreach using various methods to inform unpaid care partners about available programs and services.
2. Increase partnerships with organizations for improved public awareness of available programs and services for unpaid family care partners.
3. Partner with Adoptive Foster Families of Maine to increase support and resource sharing.

Outcomes

1. Short-term: Improved awareness among unpaid family care partners about available programs and services.
2. Long-term: Increase referrals for kinship care partner support.
3. Long-term: Increased number of care partners enrolled in and utilizing care partner programs and services as resources are available.

Objective 1.8 Include and engage unpaid family care partners in the planning and provision of aging services and programs.

Strategies

1. Use standardized care partner assessments (TCARE) in the development and implementation of person-centered care plans.

Outcomes

1. Long-term: Number of assessments completed.

Objective 1.9 Expand access to programs, services, and supports to unpaid family partners.

Strategies

1. Improve the programming for unpaid family care partners who are culturally, regionally, and/or socially underserved.

Outcomes

1. Long-term: Support New Mainer care partners through culturally appropriate service delivery.
2. Long-term: Increase the number of kinship care partner supports.

Assistive Technology

Objective 1.10 In partnership with Maine CITE, improve awareness of available public and privately funded Assistive Technology programs and resources.

Strategies

1. Implement an OADS approved screening tool to assess the client's need for assistive technology services.
2. Provide training through the Education Center with both in-person and virtual options.
3. Conduct annual staff training utilizing MaineCITE staff.

Outcomes

1. Short-term: Improved screenings to address assistive technology needs.
2. Long-term: Increased number of referrals to AT service providers by 10% compared to FY22.

Advocacy

Objective 1.11 Support statewide and local advocacy about the needs of older Mainers and family care partners.

Strategies

1. Train staff to identify ageism and address it at the individual, interpersonal, institutional, and systemic levels.
2. Identify opportunities to ensure initiatives and policies at all staff levels are age-informed and consider the needs of older adults and family care partners.
3. Partner with communities across service area to strengthen age and dementia friendly efforts.
4. Assure that family care partners are aware of the advocacy services provided by the Maine Long Term Care Ombudsman Program.

Outcomes

1. Short-term: Staff are trained to identify and address ageism.
2. Intermediate: Strengthened community partnerships across the SeniorsPlus service area that engage in age and dementia friendly strategies.
3. Long-term: Policies and procedures reflect age-positive language and values.

Integration

Objective 1.12 Work towards the integration of public health, health care, legal assistance programs, and social services systems.

Strategies

1. Disseminate information and activities regarding public health and disease prevention.
2. Identify opportunities to increase promotion of public benefits, such as the Medicare Savings Program, to reduce poverty among older adults.
3. Promote benefits of age-positivity.

Outcomes

1. Long-term: Enhanced collaboration across service areas to improve the well-being of older individuals.

Title III & Title V Coordination

Objective 1.13 Maintain collaboration between Maine's Aging Network and Title V Senior Community Service Employment Programs to improve the financial wellbeing of unemployed, low-income older adults seeking employment.

Strategies:

1. Strengthen partnership with A4TD, the provider of the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) to recruit and refer SCSEP eligible individuals to the program.
2. Continue to be a host agency for training for mature workers.
3. Keep A4TD informed about available job openings and the specific skills and qualifications we seek in candidates here at SeniorsPlus.

Outcomes:

1. Short-term: Eligible SCSEP participants are recruited and enter training program.
2. Long-term: When possible, SCSEP participants are hired into SeniorsPlus workforce.

Title III & Title VI Coordination

Objective 1.14 Enhance collaboration between Maine's Aging Network and Title VI Programs to better facilitate Title III and VI Coordination and expand services and access to Maine's Native American elders and family care partners.

Strategies

1. We will collaborate with the Maine Council on Aging and its tribal members to expand and coordinate services on a statewide level.

Outcomes

2. Long-term: There will be statewide collaboration.
- 3.

Emergency Preparedness

Objective 1.15 Enhance access to emergency preparedness information and resources for older Mainers.

Strategies

1. Leverage partnerships with local and state organizations involved in emergency preparedness to provide accessible information to older Mainers and family care partners.
2. Continually update emergency preparedness information for emerging issues.

Outcomes

1. Long-term: Increased awareness of emergency preparedness information among older Mainers.

Objective 1.16 Maintain and regularly update emergency preparedness plans at all levels of Maine's Aging Network.

Strategies

1. SeniorsPlus leadership will review and update the agency emergency preparedness plan annually, or as needed.
2. Train staff in emergency preparedness and disasters, using staff and management meetings to disseminate information.

Outcomes

1. Short-term: SeniorsPlus is better prepared for emergencies and disasters.
2. Long-term: SeniorsPlus is recognized as a valued partner in emergency and disaster responses.

Goal 2: Ensure Maine's aging services and programs are accessible to all older Mainers and their care partners with emphasis on older adults with the Greatest Social Need and Greatest Economic Need.

Partnerships

Objective 2.1 Strengthen partnerships with community-based organizations (CBO) to increase access for individuals with the Greatest Social Need and Greatest Economic Need.

Strategies

1. Continue building and strengthening partnerships with CBOs/Ethnic CBOs.
2. Reciprocate training opportunities between SeniorsPlus and CBOs.

Outcomes

1. Short-term: Strengthened relationships between community-based organizations serving individuals with Greatest Social and Economic Need.
2. Intermediate: Services and programs are more culturally responsive.
3. Long-term: SeniorsPlus will prioritize by using Greatest Social and Economic Need to expend limited resources.

Trauma-Informed Services

Objective 2.2 Develop and implement a person-centered, trauma-informed care approach to the delivery of aging services and programs in Maine.

Strategies

1. Provide OADS approved training for SeniorsPlus staff on person-centered, trauma-informed care.

Outcomes

1. Short-term: SeniorsPlus staff are trained and thus more knowledgeable about person-centered trauma-informed approaches to service delivery.
2. Intermediate: Incorporate trauma screening as part of our assessment.
3. Long-term: Services are delivered in a way that promotes safety and prevents re-traumatization.

Screening for Brain Injury

Objective 2.3 Enhance access to Brain Injury information and resources for older Mainers and their care partners.

Strategies

1. Provide outreach to family care partners, including kinship care partners and New Mainer care partners about brain injury information and resources.

Outcomes

1. Long-term: Brain injury screening will be offered, and appropriate referrals made.

Program Monitoring

Objective 2.4 Evaluate the effectiveness of Maine's aging services and programs in offering choice and meeting the unmet needs of older adults with the Greatest Social Need and Greatest Economic Need.

Strategies

1. Train staff to capture accurate demographic data.
2. Agency staff will monitor service utilization.

Outcomes

1. Short-term: Accurate data is captured.
2. Intermediate: A monitoring tool is created to better track service utilization and missing data.
3. Long-term: Accurate data is reported through WellSky.

Goal 3: Prevent and improve response to abuse, neglect, and exploitation while preserving the rights and autonomy of older Mainers.

Legal Assistance Program

Objective 3.1 Provide elder abuse victims who would otherwise go without legal representation with ready access to free legal assistance.

Strategies

1. Provide outreach and public education on the availability of legal assistance programs.

Outcomes

1. Long-term: Increased public awareness of and access to free legal assistance for qualifying older adults.

Elder Justice Coordinating Partnership (EJCP) and Elder Justice Roadmap

Objective 3.2 Maintain ongoing and consistent public and private leadership participation in the Elder Justice Coordinating Partnership (EJCP) meetings and activities.

Comment

This is a statewide activity lead by the state plan and is not relevant to the area plan.

Objective 3.3 Improve the response to elder abuse in Maine by advocating for and supporting the implementation of recommendations under the Elder Justice Roadmap.

Strategies

1. SeniorsPlus is represented on the Elder Abuse Task Forces across our region.
2. Participate as an active member on the Maine Council for Elder Abuse Prevention.

Outcomes

1. Long-term: As informed advocates, SeniorsPlus staff make referrals to Adult Protective Services (APS) and Legal Services for Maine Elders (LSE)

Objective 3.4 Collaborate to raise awareness of elder abuse among professionals who come into contact with older victims and improve the response to elder abuse.

Strategies

1. Educate professionals through outreach/public speaking opportunities.

Outcomes

1. Short-term: Encourage professionals to identify and report elder abuse.
2. Long-term: Increased awareness of elder abuse.

Objective 3.5 Collaborate to promote awareness of and compliance with mandatory reporter training requirements.

Strategies

1. Require all staff to participate in mandated reporter training.
2. Provide First Contact training to our volunteer teams.

Outcomes

1. Short term: Staff are trained.
2. Long-term: Mandated reporting is accurate and timely.

State Long Term Care Ombudsman Program

Objective 3.6 Enhance awareness of and access to Ombudsman Program services and advocacy for residents in nursing homes, assisted housing including residential care, adult family care homes, and assisted living as well as clients of adult day services and home care. N/A

AREA PLAN ASSURANCES AND REQUIRED ACTIVITIES

SeniorsPlus (the “agency”) has described in this plan all the agency’s activities. The agency assures that these activities conform to the responsibilities of the area agency, laws, regulations, and State policy. The agency also agrees to administer its programs in accordance with the Act, the area plan, and all applicable regulations, policies, and procedures. The agency assures that it has written policies and procedures for carrying out all its functions and that such procedures are available for review by the Office of Aging and Disability Services.

Older Americans Act Assurances, Sec. 306, Area Plans

(a) Each area agency on aging...Each such plan shall --

(1) provide, through a comprehensive and coordinated system, for supportive services, nutrition services, and, where appropriate, for the establishment, maintenance, modernization, or construction of multipurpose senior centers (including a plan to use the skills and services of older individuals in paid and unpaid work,

including multigenerational and older individual to older individual work), within the planning and service area covered by the plan, including determining the extent of need for supportive services, nutrition services, and multipurpose senior centers in such area (taking into consideration, among other things, the number of older individuals with low incomes residing in such area, the number of older individuals who have greatest economic need (with particular attention to low-income older individuals, including low-income minority older individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas) residing in such area, the number of older individuals who have greatest social need (with particular attention to low-income older individuals, including low-income minority older individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas) residing in such area, the number of older individuals at risk for institutional placement residing in such area, and the number of older individuals who are Indians residing in such area, and the efforts of voluntary organizations in the community), evaluating the effectiveness of the use of resources in meeting such need, and entering into agreements with providers of supportive services, nutrition services, or multipurpose senior centers in such area, for the provision of such services or centers to meet such need;

(2) provide assurances that an adequate proportion, as required under section 307(a)(2), of the amount allotted for part B to the planning and service area will be expended for the delivery of each of the following categories of services-

(A) services associated with access to services (transportation, health services (including mental and behavioral health services), outreach, information and assistance (which may include information and assistance to consumers on availability of services under part B and how to receive benefits under and participate in publicly supported programs for which the consumer may be eligible) and case management services);

(B) in-home services, including supportive services for families of older individuals who are victims of Alzheimer's disease and related disorders with neurological and organic brain dysfunction; and

(C) legal assistance;

and assurances that the area agency on aging will report annually to the State agency in detail the amount of funds expended for each such category during the fiscal year most recently concluded;

(3) (A) designate, where feasible, a focal point for comprehensive service delivery in each community, giving special consideration to designating multipurpose senior centers (including multipurpose senior centers operated by organizations referred to in paragraph (6)(C)) as such focal point; and

(B) specify, in grants, contracts, and agreements implementing the plan, the identity of each focal point so designated;

(4)(A)(i)(I) provide assurances that the area agency on aging will—

(aa) set specific objectives, consistent with State policy, for providing services to older individuals with greatest economic need, older individuals with greatest social need, and older individuals at risk for institutional placement;

(bb) include specific objectives for providing services to low-income minority older individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas; and

(II) include proposed methods to achieve the objectives described in items (aa) and (bb) of sub-clause (I);

- (ii) provide assurances that the area agency on aging will include in each agreement made with a provider of any service under this title, a requirement that such provider will—
 - (I) specify how the provider intends to satisfy the service needs of low-income minority individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas in the area served by the provider;
 - (II) to the maximum extent feasible, provide services to low-income minority individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas in accordance with their need for such services; and
 - (III) meet specific objectives established by the area agency on aging, for providing services to low-income minority individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas within the planning and service area; and
 - (iii) with respect to the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which such plan is prepared –
 - (I) identify the number of low-income minority older individuals in the planning and service area;
 - (II) describe the methods used to satisfy the service needs of such minority older individuals; and
 - (III) provide information on the extent to which the area agency on aging met the objectives described in clause (i).
 - (B) provide assurances that the area agency on aging will use outreach efforts that will—
 - (i) identify individuals eligible for assistance under this Act, with special emphasis on --
 - (I) older individuals residing in rural areas;
 - (II) older individuals with greatest economic need (with particular attention to low-income minority individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas);
 - (III) older individuals with greatest social need (with particular attention to low-income minority individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas);
 - (IV) older individuals with severe disabilities;
 - (V) older individuals with limited English proficiency;
 - (VI) older individuals with Alzheimer’s disease and related disorders with neurological and organic brain dysfunction (and the caretakers of such individuals); and
 - (VII) older individuals at risk for institutional placement; and
 - (ii) inform the older individuals referred to in sub-clauses (I) through (VII) of clause (i), and the caretakers of such individuals, of the availability of such assistance; and
 - (C) contain an assurance that the area agency on aging will ensure that each activity undertaken by the agency, including planning, advocacy, and systems development, will include a focus on the needs of low-income minority older individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas.
- (5) provide assurances that the area agency on aging will coordinate planning, identification, assessment of needs, and provision of services for older individuals with disabilities, with particular attention to

individuals with severe disabilities, and individuals at risk for institutional placement, with agencies that develop or provide services for individuals with disabilities;

(6) provide that the area agency on aging will—

(A) take into account in connection with matters of general policy arising in the development and administration of the area plan, the views of recipients of services under such plan;

(B) serve as the advocate and focal point for older individuals within the community by (in cooperation with agencies, organizations, and individuals participating in activities under the plan) monitoring, evaluating, and commenting upon all policies, programs, hearings, levies, and community actions which will affect older individuals;

(C) (i) where possible, enter into arrangements with organizations providing day care services for children, assistance to older individuals caring for relatives who are children, and respite for families, so as to provide opportunities for older individuals to aid or assist on a voluntary basis in the delivery of such services to children, adults, and families;

(ii) if possible regarding the provision of services under this title, enter into arrangements and coordinate with organizations that have a proven record of providing services to older individuals, that—

(I) were officially designated as community action agencies or community action programs under section 210 of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 (42U.S.C. 2790) for fiscal year 1981, and did not lose the designation as a result of failure to comply with such Act; or

(II) came into existence during fiscal year 1982 as direct successors in interest to such community action agencies or community action programs;

and that meet the requirements under section 676B of the Community Services Block Grant Act; and

(iii) make use of trained volunteers in providing direct services delivered to older individuals and individuals with disabilities needing such services and, if possible, work in coordination with organizations that have experience in providing training, placement, and stipends for volunteers or participants (such as organizations carrying out Federal service programs administered by the Corporation for National and Community Service), in community service settings;

(D) establish an advisory council consisting of older individuals (including minority individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas) who are participants or who are eligible to participate in programs assisted under this Act, family caregivers of such individuals, representatives of older individuals, service providers, representatives of the business community, local elected officials, providers of veterans' health care (if appropriate), and the general public, to advise continuously the area agency on aging on all matters relating to the development of the area plan, the administration of the plan and operations conducted under the plan;

(E) establish effective and efficient procedures for coordination of—

(i) entities conducting programs that receive assistance under this Act within the planning and service area served by the agency; and

(ii) entities conducting other Federal programs for older individuals at the local level, with particular emphasis on entities conducting programs described in section 203(b), within the area;

(F) in coordination with the State agency and with the State agency responsible for mental and behavioral health services, increase public awareness of mental health disorders, remove barriers to diagnosis and treatment, and coordinate mental and behavioral health services (including mental health screenings) provided with funds expended by the area agency on aging with mental and behavioral health services provided by community health centers and by other public agencies and nonprofit private organizations;

(G) if there is a significant population of older individuals who are Indians in the planning and service area of the area agency on aging, the area agency on aging shall conduct outreach activities to identify such individuals in such area and shall inform such individuals of the availability of assistance under this Act;

(H) in coordination with the State agency and with the State agency responsible for elder abuse prevention services, increase public awareness of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and remove barriers to education, prevention, investigation, and treatment of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation, as appropriate; and

(I) to the extent feasible, coordinate with the State agency to disseminate information about the State assistive technology entity and access to assistive technology options for serving older individuals;

(7) provide that the area agency on aging shall, consistent with this section, facilitate the areawide development and implementation of a comprehensive, coordinated system for providing long-term care in home and community-based settings, in a manner responsive to the needs and preferences of older individuals and their family caregivers, by—

(A) collaborating, coordinating activities, and consulting with other local public and private agencies and organizations responsible for administering programs, benefits, and services related to providing long-term care;

(B) conducting analyses and making recommendations with respect to strategies for modifying the local system of long-term care to better—

(i) respond to the needs and preferences of older individuals and family caregivers;

(ii) facilitate the provision, by service providers, of long-term care in home and community-based settings; and

(iii) target services to older individuals at risk for institutional placement, to permit such individuals to remain in home and community-based settings;

(C) implementing, through the agency or service providers, evidence-based programs to assist older individuals and their family caregivers in learning about and making behavioral changes intended to reduce the risk of injury, disease, and disability among older individuals; and

(D) providing for the availability and distribution (through public education campaigns, Aging and Disability Resource Centers, the area agency on aging itself, and other appropriate means) of information relating to—

(i) the need to plan in advance for long-term care; and

- (ii) the full range of available public and private long-term care (including integrated long-term care) programs, options, service providers, and resources;
- (8) provide that case management services provided under this title through the area agency on aging will—
 - (A) not duplicate case management services provided through other Federal and State programs;
 - (B) be coordinated with services described in subparagraph (A); and
 - (C) be provided by a public agency or a nonprofit private agency that—
 - (i) gives each older individual seeking services under this title a list of agencies that provide similar services within the jurisdiction of the area agency on aging;
 - (ii) gives each individual described in clause (i) a statement specifying that the individual has a right to make an independent choice of service providers and documents receipt by such individual of such statement;
 - (iii) has case managers acting as agents for the individuals receiving the services and not as promoters for the agency providing such services; or (iv) is located in a rural area and obtains a waiver of the requirements described in clauses (i) through (iii);
- (9) (A) provide assurances that the area agency on aging, in carrying out the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman program under section 307(a)(9), will expend not less than the total amount of funds appropriated under this Act and expended by the agency in fiscal year 2019 in carrying out such a program under this title;
 - (B) funds made available to the area agency on aging pursuant to section 712 shall be used to supplement and not supplant other Federal, State, and local funds expended to support activities described in section 712;
- (10) provide a grievance procedure for older individuals who are dissatisfied with or denied services under this title;
- (11) provide information and assurances concerning services to older individuals who are Native Americans (referred to in this paragraph as "older Native Americans"), including-
 - (A) information concerning whether there is a significant population of older Native Americans in the planning and service area and if so, an assurance that the area agency on aging will pursue activities, including outreach, to increase access of those older Native Americans to programs and benefits provided under this title;
 - (B) an assurance that the area agency on aging will, to the maximum extent practicable, coordinate the services the agency provides under this title with services provided under title VI; and
 - (C) an assurance that the area agency on aging will make services under the area plan available, to the same extent as such services are available to older individuals within the planning and service area, to older Native Americans;
- (12) provide that the area agency on aging will establish procedures for coordination of services with entities conducting other Federal or federally assisted programs for older individuals at the local level, with particular emphasis on entities conducting programs described in section 203(b) within the planning and service area.
- (13) provide assurances that the area agency on aging will—

- (A) maintain the integrity and public purpose of services provided, and service providers, under this title in all contractual and commercial relationships;
 - (B) disclose to the Assistant Secretary and the State agency--
 - (i) the identity of each nongovernmental entity with which such agency has a contract or commercial relationship relating to providing any service to older individuals; and
 - (ii) the nature of such contract or such relationship;
 - (C) demonstrate that a loss or diminution in the quantity or quality of the services provided, or to be provided, under this title by such agency has not resulted and will not result from such contract or such relationship;
 - (D) demonstrate that the quantity or quality of the services to be provided under this title by such agency will be enhanced as a result of such contract or such relationship;
 - (E) on the request of the Assistant Secretary or the State, for the purpose of monitoring compliance with this Act (including conducting an audit), disclose all sources and expenditures of funds such agency receives or expends to provide services to older individuals;
- (14) provide assurances that preference in receiving services under this title will not be given by the area agency on aging to particular older individuals as a result of a contract or commercial relationship that is not carried out to implement this title;
- (15) provide assurances that funds received under this title will be used--
- (A) to provide benefits and services to older individuals, giving priority to older individuals identified in paragraph (4)(A)(i); and
 - (B) in compliance with the assurances specified in paragraph (13) and the limitations specified in section 212;
- (16) provide, to the extent feasible, for the furnishing of services under this Act, consistent with self-directed care;
- (17) include information detailing how the area agency on aging will coordinate activities, and develop long-range emergency preparedness plans, with local and State emergency response agencies, relief organizations, local and State governments, and any other institutions that have responsibility for disaster relief service delivery;
- (18) provide assurances that the area agency on aging will collect data to determine—
- (A) the services that are needed by older individuals whose needs were the focus of all centers funded under title IV in fiscal year 2019; and
 - (B) the effectiveness of the programs, policies, and services provided by such area agency on aging in assisting such individuals; and
- (19) provide assurances that the area agency on aging will use outreach efforts that will identify individuals eligible for assistance under this Act, with special emphasis on those individuals whose needs were the focus of all centers funded under title IV in fiscal year 2019.
- (b)(1) An area agency on aging may include in the area plan an assessment of how prepared the area agency on aging and service providers in the planning and service area are for any anticipated change in the number of older individuals during the 10-year period following the fiscal year for which the plan is submitted.

(2) Such assessment may include—

(A) the projected change in the number of older individuals in the planning and service area;

(B) an analysis of how such change may affect such individuals, including individuals with low incomes, individuals with greatest economic need, minority older individuals, older individuals residing in rural areas, and older individuals with limited English proficiency;

(C) an analysis of how the programs, policies, and services provided by such area agency can be improved, and how resource levels can be adjusted to meet the needs of the changing population of older individuals in the planning and service area; and

(D) an analysis of how the change in the number of individuals age 85 and older in the planning and service area is expected to affect the need for supportive services.

(3) An area agency on aging, in cooperation with government officials, State agencies, tribal organizations, or local entities, may make recommendations to government officials in the planning and service area and the State, on actions determined by the area agency to build the capacity in the planning and service area to meet the needs of older individuals for—

(A) health and human services;

(B) land use;

(C) housing;

(D) transportation;

(E) public safety;

(F) workforce and economic development;

(G) recreation;

(H) education;

(I) civic engagement;

(J) emergency preparedness;

(K) protection from elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation;

(L) assistive technology devices and services; and

(M) any other service as determined by such agency.

(c) Each State, in approving area agency on aging plans under this section, shall waive the requirement described in paragraph (2) of subsection (a) for any category of services described in such paragraph if the area agency on aging demonstrates to the State agency that services being furnished for such category in the area are sufficient to meet the need for such services in such area and had conducted a timely public hearing upon request.

(d)(1) Subject to regulations prescribed by the Assistant Secretary, an area agency on aging designated under section 305(a)(2)(A) or, in areas of a State where no such agency has been designated, the State agency, may enter into agreement with agencies administering programs under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and titles XIX and XX of the Social Security Act for the purpose of developing and implementing plans for meeting the common need for transportation services of individuals receiving benefits under such Acts and older individuals participating in programs authorized by this title.

(2) In accordance with an agreement entered into under paragraph (1), funds appropriated under this title may be used to purchase transportation services for older individuals and may be pooled with funds made available for the provision of transportation services under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and titles XIX and XX of the Social Security Act.

(e) An area agency on aging may not require any provider of legal assistance under this title to reveal any information that is protected by the attorney-client privilege.

(f)(1) If the head of a State agency finds that an area agency on aging has failed to comply with Federal or State laws, including the area plan requirements of this section, regulations, or policies, the State may withhold a portion of the funds to the area agency on aging available under this title.

(2) (A) The head of a State agency shall not make a final determination withholding funds under paragraph (1) without first affording the area agency on aging due process in accordance with procedures established by the State agency.

(B) At a minimum, such procedures shall include procedures for—

- (i) providing notice of an action to withhold funds;
- (ii) providing documentation of the need for such action; and
- (iii) at the request of the area agency on aging, conducting a public hearing concerning the action.

(3) (A) If a State agency withholds the funds, the State agency may use the funds withheld to directly administer programs under this title in the planning and service area served by the area agency on aging for a period not to exceed 180 days, except as provided in subparagraph (B).

(B) If the State agency determines that the area agency on aging has not taken corrective action, or if the State agency does not approve the corrective action, during the 180-day period described in subparagraph (A), the State agency may extend the period for not more than 90 days.

(g) Nothing in this Act shall restrict an area agency on aging from providing services not provided or authorized by this Act, including through—

- (1) contracts with health care payers;
- (2) consumer private pay programs; or
- (3) other arrangements with entities or individuals that increase the availability of home and community-based services and supports.

Date _____ Betsy Sawyer-Manter
President and CEO
SeniorsPlus

Date _____ Holly Zielinski
Chairperson Board of Directors
SeniorsPlus

Public Hearing Process

June 5, 2024:

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Laure Johnson (ljohnson@seniorsplus.org) or at 207-795-4010

SeniorsPlus Announces Public Hearings

(Lewiston, ME) – - SeniorsPlus, the designated Area Agency on Aging for Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford counties, is holding two public hearings on its 2025-2028 Area Plan that outlines the organization’s vision to serve the older and disabled adults populations over the next four years.

The public is invited to participate. Comments also are welcome via email or US Mail. Written comments must be received on or before June 28, 2024, via mail to SeniorsPlus, 8 Falcon Road, Lewiston ME, 04240 or via email to ljohnson@seniorsplus.org. For more information, visit www.seniorsplus.org or call 1-800-427-1241.

Area Plan on Aging Public Hearing Date

Thursday, June 20, 2024
1:00 -2:00 PM in-person at 8 Falcon Rd. Lewiston, ME
2:00 – 3:00 PM via Zoom

To register for either option please call 795-4010 or 1-800-427-1241

An advanced draft plan can be reviewed at www.seniorsplus.org between June 6 and June 20, 2024, or interested parties may request a copy by calling the office of SeniorsPlus at 795-4010 or 1-800-427-1241.

Established in 1972, SeniorsPlus is the Western Maine designated Agency on Aging covering Franklin, Oxford, and Androscoggin counties. The overall program goal of SeniorsPlus, which is headquartered in Lewiston, is to assist older adults and adults with disabilities in Franklin, Oxford, and Androscoggin counties to remain safely at home for as long as possible. Our mission is to enrich the lives of older people and adults with disabilities, their families and communities, and to support them to make informed choices.

Public Hearing Comments and Corrections

DRAFT

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List of Current Services by County

SeniorsPlus is the Aging and Disability Resource Center for Androscoggin, Franklin, and Oxford counties. Our mission is to provide assistance to older adults and adults with disabilities wishing to remain in their homes, independentl, as long as possible.

Nutrition Services:

- **Meals on Wheels** - Home Delivered Meals are served to individuals age 60 and older and people with disabilities who are homebound and unable to regularly prepare meals for themselves. Meals on Wheels is a three-part service. First, we provide a tasty, well-balanced meal which meet a minimum of 1/3 of the current recommended nutritional daily allowance. Secondly, is a wellness check. Our drivers get to know each client individually and are able to tell if anything is out of the ordinary. And lastly, we provide socialization for our clients as the driver may be the only person the client sees all day or even all week.
- **Social Dining Sites** - offer a midday meal to older adults and adults with disabilities. The meals offer an opportunity to socialize and meet new friends. Meals are low in salt, fat, and sugar, but high in nutrition and flavor, and provide a minimum of one-third of the current of the minimum daily requirements.
- **Around Town** - a restaurant voucher program that allows clients to use a voucher to “buy” a meal at a local restaurant, using a special SeniorsPlus menu. These meals provide a minimum of one-third of the current daily requirements, and offer a chance for socialization with friends and family at a favorite restaurant.
- **Meals on Wheels for Pets** - another wrap-around service for homebound older adults which provides petfood to Meals on Wheels clients. This helps maintain the companionship and meaning in life that pets provide.

Community Services:

- **Information and Assistance:** Provides telephonic and in-person assistance at no cost. Our Aging and Disability Resource Specialists, which are primarily licensed social workers, assist clients by:
 - assessing their needs,
 - informing them of available resources and services,
 - assisting and advocating for them in gaining access to needed services,
 - assisting any adult in identifying options and planning for their future as they age,
 - referring them to other agencies as appropriate.
- **Medicare Counseling:** This program offers personalized counseling and community education to help individuals navigate Medicare, supplemental plans, and Part D prescription plans. It also provides assistance with applications for Medicare savings programs, understanding complicated Medicare communications, and reporting fraud. Additionally, the program advocates for corrections to clients' policies and claims.
- **Family Caregiver Support Programs:** Families caring for an older adult or grandparents caring for grandchildren receive education on caregiving skills (including the evidence-based program Building Better Caregivers), support groups, one-on-one support, counseling, and information on resources in the community. Those caring for someone with dementia may be eligible for reimbursement for respite and other covered services.
- **Senior Center/Community Education:** SeniorsPlus offers classes and workshops in our accessible locations in all three counties that contribute to the health, wellness, knowledge, and interests of older adults and adults with disabilities. Most of our offerings are free of charge. Many classes have both an in-person and virtual option enabling more opportunities for clients to participate. Our monthly calendar of offerings is available on our website.

The schedule for our educational opportunities is disseminated via our monthly newsletter reaching households in our tri-county area via mail or email and is posted on our website. Education and wellness expos are held annually in each of the three counties. This provides a daylong conference of education and experiential learning for all clients. These events also include tabling by select vendors providing information on resources of interest to older adults and adults with disabilities and their care partners.

SeniorsPlus offers evidence-based workshops such as Living Well for Better Health, which helps participants self-manage chronic diseases, and Tai Chi for Better Health and A Matter of Balance, which are evidence-based falls prevention workshops.

- **Case Management:** Case management is a service provided to an older individual at the direction of the individual or a family member. This service must be delivered by a trained or experienced individual who possesses the necessary case management skills. The primary purpose of this service is to assess the needs of the older individual, and to arrange, coordinate, and monitor an optimal package of services to meet these needs.
- **Supportive Services:** Services like transportation, personal care assistance, chore services, home modifications and repairs, provide support for individuals with disabilities and older adults. These services help people live in their preferred housing environments and participate in their communities, allowing them to thrive.
- **Money Minders:** Money Minders matches well-trained volunteers with clients who need help balancing their checkbook and getting their monthly bills paid in a timely and accurate manner. Money Minders can reduce the number of overdrafts and late fees incurred and bring peace of mind to the program participant. Money Minders is a free service for people 60 and older.

AREA AGENCY ON AGING
DIRECT SERVICE WAIVER REQUEST FOR 2025-2028
(as required by OADS policy 10-149, Ch. 5, Section 30.09)

SECTION I. SeniorsPlus

3/28/2024

A. AGENCY NAME: SeniorsPlus

B. DIRECT SERVICE DESCRIPTION: Nutrition - Congregate Dining

C. SPECIFIC SERVICE NEED:

- i. Identify and fully describe the specific problem, requirement, or need that the service(s) is intended to address and makes the services necessary.
- ii. Explain how the Agency determined that the services are critical or essential to agency responsibilities or operations and/or whether the services are mandated.

The Older Americans Act designated part of the funding to be spent to provide opportunities for older adults and adults with disabilities, to gather and receive a nutritious meal and an opportunity to socialize with others in the community. This opportunity works to alleviate two risks that develop as a normal part of aging— inability or loss of desire to prepare nutritious meals, and isolation, both of which research shows, have adverse health outcomes. SeniorsPlus finds communities where there is a willing partner to provide space for these meals (i.e., town hall, church, seniors housing, and community center).

SeniorsPlus helps communities set up these community dining sites by providing delivered hot meals and staff/volunteers to manage the service of the meal, the nutrition activities and all safety requirements set by the state, or in some instances we partially reimburse the community dining site for the meals served when they prepare their own meals and manage their site under the guidelines set forth by the state and SeniorsPlus (for example homeless shelters serving older homeless people). A Registered Dietician approves all meals/menus to meet one-third of the daily recommended intake for older adults. The nutrition activities include frequent nutrition education and nutrition counseling to those who may need it. As the Baby Boomers generation aged into our services, it was clear that this new generation of older adults did not enjoy getting together in a community site as much, so we added an alternative with our Around Town program. We partner with local restaurants that older adults frequent, and interested persons can obtain a voucher from SeniorsPlus and go to a restaurant from our available list and use the SeniorsPlus menu to order. A Registered Dietician monitors this to provide the same nutritional value.

Our tri-county areas are very rural, making it difficult for older adults to get the socialization they need. Since Maine is the oldest state in the nation, SeniorsPlus is obligated to provide these services to the many older adults in our service area.

D. AVAILABILITY OF OTHER RESOURCES TO DELIVER GOODS OR SERVICE:

Please explain why:

- i. there is insufficient staffing, experience, expertise and/or resources available within the SERVICE AREA and/or;

ii. there are no other resources (local, state, or federal agencies) external to the Agency who can perform the service more efficiently, more cost effectively or with comparable quality.

A waiver is necessary to ensure an adequate supply of service. SeniorsPlus is the only program in the tri-county areas that has the staffing and infrastructure to reach out to all the communities that we serve. We are already in these communities with our Meals on Wheels program. SeniorsPlus has over 100 MOW volunteers to help us throughout our tri-county area.

When there is already an existing community dining service, we work to support the existing service and do not duplicate that service. We have experienced difficulty with our partners being able to meet the stringent requirements of the nutrition program. With our existing infrastructure we are most efficient and cost effective because of the economy of scale of our program.

SeniorsPlus posted legal ads in newspapers reaching all three counties we serve seeking Letters of Intent from qualified, established service providers to act as subcontractors to deliver Older Americans Act services. The ads directed interested parties to our website for more details about these services, including Older Americans Act service definitions, and the reporting requirements. Contact information for a qualified staff person was also included should interested parties have additional questions. We received no inquiries or Letters of Intent.

Betsy Sawyer-Manter
President and CEO
SeniorsPlus

Date

SECTION II. (Office of Aging and Disability Services Response)

Click here to enter a date.

A. COMMENT (s): Click here to enter text.

B. REQUEST STATUS:

Approved:

Rejected:

Pending:

Additional Comment(s): Click here to enter text.

Paul Saucier
Director, Office of Aging and Disability Services
Maine Department of Health and Human Services

Date

AREA AGENCY ON AGING
DIRECT SERVICE WAIVER REQUEST FOR 2025-2028
(as required by OADS policy 10-149, Ch. 5, Section 30.09)

SECTION I. SeniorsPlus

3/28/2024

A. AGENCY NAME: SeniorsPlus

B. DIRECT SERVICE DESCRIPTION: Home Delivered Meals

C. SPECIFIC SERVICE NEED:

- i. Identify and fully describe the specific problem, requirement, or need that the service(s) is intended to address and makes the services necessary.
- ii. Explain how the Agency determined that the services are critical or essential to agency responsibilities or operations and/or whether the services are mandated.

Our overall program goal is to assist older adults and adults with disabilities in our tri-county area to remain at home safely for as long as possible. The overwhelming majority of older adults (greater than 95% according to an AARP survey) wish to remain at home until they die. The SeniorsPlus nutrition program is designed to increase the probability that older adults will remain independently in their home through the aging process. Nutrition is one of the most basic building blocks of health for people of any age, and the critical piece that supports this is the provision of a single meal once a day. Maine has one of the highest incidences of food insecurity in New England. According to the Meals on Wheels America Maine Fact Sheet, Maine is ranked 10th highest in the United States for older adults threatened by or experiencing hunger.

People unable to cook for themselves (for example, unsteady standing long enough to prepare a meal, have a high fall risk and cannot be near the stove, eating only unhealthy packaged food because they lost their spouse and never learned to cook), their lack of food, and more importantly, nutritious food, increases their risk of disease, depression and mortality. Lastly, because they are most often living alone, they may have no one checking on their safety on a regular basis. The Meals on Wheels driver may be the only person they see all week. The provision of a meal addresses all these needs – a nutritious meal, a safety check, and social interaction. We know that if older adults have good nutrition and socialization, they have overall good health.

SeniorsPlus works diligently at fundraising efforts to alleviate the need for a waitlist whenever possible. However, the increasing demand and uncertainty of funding sources keep a need for a waitlist an ever-present possibility.

D. AVAILABILITY OF OTHER RESOURCES TO DELIVER GOODS OR SERVICE:

Please explain why:

- i. there is insufficient staffing, experience, expertise and/or resources available within the SERVICE AREA and/or;
- ii. there are no other resources (local, state, or federal agencies) external to the Agency who can perform the service more efficiently, more cost effectively or with comparable quality.

SeniorsPlus has the capacity to deliver over 130,000 meals throughout the entire tri-county area. We have the infrastructure to purchase, prepare, and distribute meals through our Meals on Wheels program or at congregate dining sites, resulting in well managed food costs because of the economy of scale of our program.

SeniorsPlus has an extensive volunteer network and infrastructure in place resulting in a successful nutrition program.

SeniorsPlus contracts with the Southern Maine Agency of Aging (SMAA) for the western section of Oxford County. SMAA's service area is contiguous to the western region, and they can deliver meals more effectively and efficiently than SeniorsPlus to the client in this area.

SeniorsPlus posted legal ads in newspapers reaching all three counties we serve seeking Letters of Intent from qualified, established service providers to act as subcontractors to deliver Older Americans Act services. The ads directed interested parties to our website for more details about these services, including Older Americans Act service definitions, and the reporting requirements. Contact information for a qualified staff person was also included should interested parties have additional questions. We received no inquiries or Letters of Intent.

Betsy Sawyer-Manter
President and CEO
SeniorsPlus

Date

SECTION II. (Office of Aging and Disability Services Response)

Click here to enter a date.

A. COMMENT (s): Click here to enter text.

B. REQUEST STATUS:

Approved:

Rejected:

Pending:

Additional Comment(s): Click here to enter text.

Paul Saucier
Director, Office of Aging and Disability Services
Maine Department of Health and Human Services

Date

AREA AGENCY ON AGING
DIRECT SERVICE WAIVER REQUEST FOR 2025-2028
(as required by OADS policy 10-149, Ch. 5, Section 30.09)

SECTION I. SeniorsPlus

5/17/2024

A. AGENCY NAME: SeniorsPlus

B. DIRECT SERVICE DESCRIPTION: Nutrition Counseling

C. SPECIFIC SERVICE NEED:

- i. Identify and fully describe the specific problem, requirement, or need that the service(s) is intended to address and makes the services necessary.
- ii. Explain how the Agency determined that the services are critical or essential to agency responsibilities or operations and/or whether the services are mandated.

The Meals on Wheels program mandates that nutritional counseling is offered to individuals that are identified as at risk for food insecurity and malnutrition. Our primary goal is to assist individuals identified as at risk for food insecurity and malnutrition by providing personalized nutrition counseling administered by a Registered Dietician. This helps clients understand and make better nutritional choices to optimize their health. Our nutrition staff utilize the Meals on Wheels initial assessment and Nutritional Risk screening form to identify older individuals at risk for food insecurity and malnutrition. All clients identified as at risk are offered an appointment with our Registered Dietician.

D. AVAILABILITY OF OTHER RESOURCES TO DELIVER GOODS OR SERVICE:

Please explain why:

- i. there is insufficient staffing, experience, expertise and/or resources available within the SERVICE AREA and/or;
- ii. there are no other resources (local, state, or federal agencies) external to the Agency who can perform the service more efficiently, more cost effectively or with comparable quality.

SeniorsPlus has a long-standing partnership with a Registered Dietitian who works closely with staff and referred clients. SeniorsPlus posted legal ads in newspapers reaching all three counties we serve seeking Letters of Intent from qualified, established service providers to act as subcontractors to deliver Older Americans Act services. The ads directed interested parties to our website for more details about these services, including Older Americans Act service definitions, and the reporting requirements. Contact information for a qualified staff person was also included should interested parties have additional questions. We received no inquiries or Letters of Intent.

Betsy Sawyer-Manter
President and CEO
SeniorsPlus

Date

SECTION II. (Office of Aging and Disability Services Response)

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A. COMMENT (s): Click here to enter text.

B. REQUEST STATUS:

Approved:

Rejected:

Pending:

Additional Comment(s): Click here to enter text.

Paul Saucier

Date

Director, Office of Aging and Disability Services
Maine Department of Health and Human Services

AREA AGENCY ON AGING
DIRECT SERVICE WAIVER REQUEST FOR 2025-2028

(as required by OADS policy 10-149, Ch. 5, Section 30.09)

SECTION I. SeniorsPlus

5/17/2024

A. AGENCY NAME: SeniorsPlus

B. DIRECT SERVICE DESCRIPTION: Nutrition Education

C. SPECIFIC SERVICE NEED:

- i. Identify and fully describe the specific problem, requirement, or need that the service(s) is intended to address and makes the services necessary.
- ii. Explain how the Agency determined that the services are critical or essential to agency responsibilities or operations and/or whether the services are mandated.

The Meals on Wheels and congregate/social dining site programs contain a required educational component. Our primary goal is to provide Meals on Wheels (MOW) and congregate/social dining site participants with ongoing health and nutrition education to enable them to understand and make better nutritional choices to optimize their health. Education to MOW clients is provided through printed materials including a newsletter. Congregate/social dining sites receive both in-person presentations and written materials.

D. AVAILABILITY OF OTHER RESOURCES TO DELIVER GOODS OR SERVICE:

Please explain why:

- i. there is insufficient staffing, experience, expertise and/or resources available within the SERVICE AREA and/or;
- ii. there are no other resources (local, state, or federal agencies) external to the Agency who can perform the service more efficiently, more cost effectively or with comparable quality.

SeniorsPlus has established in-person connections with Meals on Wheels and congregate participants and are seen as a trusted resource for nutrition information.

SeniorsPlus posted legal ads in newspapers reaching all three counties we serve seeking Letters of Intent from qualified, established service providers to act as subcontractors to deliver Older Americans Act services. The ads directed interested parties to our website for more details about these services, including Older Americans Act service definitions, and the reporting requirements. Contact information for a qualified staff person was also included should interested parties have additional questions. We received no inquiries or Letters of Intent.

Betsy Sawyer-Manter
President and CEO
SeniorsPlus

Date

SECTION II. (Office of Aging and Disability Services Response)

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A. COMMENT (s): Click here to enter text.

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Rejected:

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Additional Comment(s): Click here to enter text.

Paul Saucier
Director, Office of Aging and Disability Services
Maine Department of Health and Human Services

Date

AREA AGENCY ON AGING
DIRECT SERVICE WAIVER REQUEST FOR 2025-2028
(as required by OADS policy 10-149, Ch. 5, Section 30.09)

SECTION I. SeniorsPlus

5/17/2024

A. AGENCY NAME: SeniorsPlus

B. DIRECT SERVICE DESCRIPTION: Care Partner Counseling

C. SPECIFIC SERVICE NEED:

- i. Identify and fully describe the specific problem, requirement, or need that the service(s) is intended to address and makes the services necessary.
- ii. Explain how the Agency determined that the services are critical or essential to agency responsibilities or operations and/or whether the services are mandated.

Our primary goal is to assist and empower care partners by providing them with the necessary support and guidance to make informed decisions and overcome challenges. Our team of counselors are trained and qualified and are skilled in working with older adults and their families. Our counselors provide both one-on-one and group counseling sessions. Care partners that receive counseling from SeniorsPlus will access resources and assistance in navigating the complexities of caregiving.

D. AVAILABILITY OF OTHER RESOURCES TO DELIVER GOODS OR SERVICE:

Please explain why:

- i. there is insufficient staffing, experience, expertise and/or resources available within the SERVICE AREA and/or;
- ii. there are no other resources (local, state, or federal agencies) external to the Agency who can perform the service more efficiently, more cost effectively or with comparable quality.

SeniorsPlus is a trusted resource for Care Partner Counseling.

SeniorsPlus posted legal ads in newspapers reaching all three counties we serve seeking Letters of Intent from qualified, established service providers to act as subcontractors to deliver Older Americans Act services. The ads directed interested parties to our website for more details about these services, including Older Americans Act service definitions, and the reporting requirements. Contact information for a qualified staff person was also included should interested parties have additional questions. We received no inquiries or Letters of Intent.

Betsy Sawyer-Manter
President and CEO
SeniorsPlus

Date

SECTION II. (Office of Aging and Disability Services Response)

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A. COMMENT (s): Click here to enter text.

B. REQUEST STATUS:

Approved:

Rejected:

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Paul Saucier
Director, Office of Aging and Disability Services
Maine Department of Health and Human Services

Date

AREA AGENCY ON AGING
DIRECT SERVICE WAIVER REQUEST FOR 2025-2028
(as required by OADS policy 10-149, Ch. 5, Section 30.09)

SECTION I. SeniorsPlus

5/17/2024

A. AGENCY NAME: SeniorsPlus

B. DIRECT SERVICE DESCRIPTION: Care Partner Support Groups

C. SPECIFIC SERVICE NEED:

- i. Identify and fully describe the specific problem, requirement, or need that the service(s) is intended to address and makes the services necessary.
- ii. Explain how the Agency determined that the services are critical or essential to agency responsibilities or operations and/or whether the services are mandated.

Our Care Partner Support Groups provide a safe and supportive environment for care partners to connect and share their experiences. These monthly sessions offer a valuable opportunity for care partners to learn new skills, build confidence, and receive help and support from others who understand the challenges they face. We currently offer four support groups, two of which take place in-person and virtually. Whether the care partner prefers to attend in-person or virtually, they can expect a warm and welcoming atmosphere where they can connect with others and receive valuable support and guidance.

D. AVAILABILITY OF OTHER RESOURCES TO DELIVER GOODS OR SERVICE:

Please explain why:

- i. there is insufficient staffing, experience, expertise and/or resources available within the SERVICE AREA and/or;
- ii. there are no other resources (local, state, or federal agencies) external to the Agency who can perform the service more efficiently, more cost effectively or with comparable quality.

SeniorsPlus is a trusted resource for Care Partner Support.

SeniorsPlus has a non-financial partnership with the Adoptive and Foster Families of Maine to utilize Wilton office space to provide a Kinship care support group as well as childcare.

SeniorsPlus posted legal ads in newspapers reaching all three counties we serve seeking Letters of Intent from qualified, established service providers to act as subcontractors to deliver Older Americans Act services. The ads directed interested parties to our website for more details about these services, including Older Americans Act service definitions, and the reporting requirements. Contact information for a qualified staff person was also included should interested parties have additional questions. We received no inquiries or Letters of Intent.

Betsy Sawyer-Manter
President and CEO
SeniorsPlus

Date

SECTION II. (Office of Aging and Disability Services Response)

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A. COMMENT (s): Click here to enter text.

B. REQUEST STATUS:

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Rejected:

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Paul Saucier
Director, Office of Aging and Disability Services
Maine Department of Health and Human Services

Date

AREA AGENCY ON AGING
DIRECT SERVICE WAIVER REQUEST FOR 2025-2028
(as required by OADS policy 10-149, Ch. 5, Section 30.09)

SECTION I. SeniorsPlus

5/17/2024

A. AGENCY NAME: SeniorsPlus

B. DIRECT SERVICE DESCRIPTION: Care Partner Training

C. SPECIFIC SERVICE NEED:

- i. Identify and fully describe the specific problem, requirement, or need that the service(s) is intended to address and makes the services necessary.
- ii. Explain how the Agency determined that the services are critical or essential to agency responsibilities or operations and/or whether the services are mandated.

Our program aims to assist family care partners by providing them with evidence-based training and workshops on specific topics. These workshops aim to improve caregivers' knowledge and performance in tasks related to their caregiving roles. The skills taught may include health and nutrition management, financial management, personal care, and communication with healthcare professionals and family members. The training may be conducted online or in-person, in individual or group settings, and may utilize evidence-based programs.

We offer an evidence-based program called Building Better Caregivers specifically designed for family care partners of people with Acquired Brain Injury (ABI), Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), dementia, and other conditions that affect memory. The program covers topics such as care partner stress, dealing with difficult care partner behavior, finding help, making decisions about treatment, housing, communicating effectively with family, friends, and healthcare professionals, dealing with care partner difficult emotions, planning for future needs, and legal issues related to caregiving. Program participants are encouraged to make weekly action plans, share experiences, and help each other solve problems they encounter in creating and carrying out their self-management program.

We also offer an evidence-based program called 'Managing Money' created by the Alzheimer's Association. This program helps care partners learn about the costs of caregiving, the benefits of early planning, and how to avoid financial abuse and fraud. It teaches care partners how to start a conversation about finances, assess financial and legal needs, and find support.

The Alzheimer's Association provided our staff with train-the-trainer training for Care Partner Education Programs. The training includes Person-centered Dementia Care: Habilitation Training, Know the 10 Signs: Early Detection Matters, Understanding Alzheimer's and Dementia, Effective Communication Strategies, and Understanding and Responding to Dementia-Related Behavior.

D. AVAILABILTY OF OTHER RESOURCES TO DELIVER GOODS OR SERVICE:

Please explain why:

- i. there is insufficient staffing, experience, expertise and/or resources available within the SERVICE AREA and/or;
- ii. there are no other resources (local, state, or federal agencies) external to the Agency who can perform the service more efficiently, more cost effectively or with comparable quality.

SeniorsPlus is a trusted resource for Care Partner Training.

SeniorsPlus posted legal ads in newspapers reaching all three counties we serve seeking Letters of Intent from qualified, established service providers to act as subcontractors to deliver Older Americans Act services. The ads directed interested parties to our website for more details about these services, including Older Americans Act service definitions, and the reporting requirements. Contact information for a qualified staff person was also included should interested parties have additional questions. We received no inquiries or Letters of Intent.

Betsy Sawyer-Manter
President and CEO
SeniorsPlus

Date

SECTION II. (Office of Aging and Disability Services Response)

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A. COMMENT (s): Click here to enter text.

B. REQUEST STATUS:

Approved:

Rejected:

Pending:

Additional Comment(s): Click here to enter text.

Paul Saucier
Director, Office of Aging and Disability Services
Maine Department of Health and Human Services

Date

AREA AGENCY ON AGING
DIRECT SERVICE WAIVER REQUEST FOR 2025-2028
(as required by OADS policy 10-149, Ch. 5, Section 30.09)

SECTION I. SeniorsPlus

5/17/2024

A. AGENCY NAME: SeniorsPlus

B. DIRECT SERVICE DESCRIPTION: Friendly Caller Program

C. SPECIFIC SERVICE NEED:

- i. Identify and fully describe the specific problem, requirement, or need that the service(s) is intended to address and makes the services necessary.
- ii. Explain how the Agency determined that the services are critical or essential to agency responsibilities or operations and/or whether the services are mandated.

Our program aims to provide a friendly conversation, socialization, and connection with others, giving older adults and adults with disabilities an opportunity to meet new people. As we age, we often find ourselves alone, leaving us vulnerable to social isolation and loneliness. These feelings can contribute to health problems such as cognitive decline, depression, and heart disease. However, there are ways to counteract these negative effects and assist older adults and adults with disabilities in our tri-county area. Our program connects them with trained volunteers who make weekly social telephone calls to help them stay connected with others.

D. AVAILABILTY OF OTHER RESOURCES TO DELIVER GOODS OR SERVICE:

Please explain why:

- i. there is insufficient staffing, experience, expertise and/or resources available within the SERVICE AREA and/or;
- ii. there are no other resources (local, state, or federal agencies) external to the Agency who can perform the service more efficiently, more cost effectively or with comparable quality.

SeniorsPlus is a trusted resource in addressing loneliness and social isolation. Our trained Friendly Caller volunteers help people stay connected.

SeniorsPlus posted legal ads in newspapers reaching all three counties we serve seeking Letters of Intent from qualified, established service providers to act as subcontractors to deliver Older Americans Act services. The ads directed interested parties to our website for more details about these services, including Older Americans Act service definitions, and the reporting requirements. Contact information for a qualified staff person was also included should interested parties have additional questions. We received no inquiries or Letters of Intent.

Betsy Sawyer-Manter
President and CEO
SeniorsPlus

Date

SECTION II. (Office of Aging and Disability Services Response)

Click here to enter a date.

A. COMMENT (s): Click here to enter text.

B. REQUEST STATUS:

Approved:

Rejected:

Pending:

Additional Comment(s): Click here to enter text.

Paul Saucier
Director, Office of Aging and Disability Services
Maine Department of Health and Human Services

Date

AREA AGENCY ON AGING
DIRECT SERVICE WAIVER REQUEST FOR 2025-2028
(as required by OADS policy 10-149, Ch. 5, Section 30.09)

SECTION I. SeniorsPlus

3/28/2024

A. AGENCY NAME: SeniorsPlus

B. DIRECT SERVICE DESCRIPTION: Education/Senior Center Activities

C. SPECIFIC SERVICE NEED:

- i. Identify and fully describe the specific problem, requirement, or need that the service(s) is intended to address and makes the services necessary.
- ii. Explain how the Agency determined that the services are critical or essential to agency responsibilities or operations and/or whether the services are mandated.

Our Education/Senior Center offers a wide variety of interest-based workshops and classes to cater to everyone.

Our classes are designed to be engaging and enjoyable, ensuring that learning is a continuous experience. Participants are given the opportunity to learn about health-related topics such as nutrition and fitness, as well as participate in interactive activities like game day and knitting. We believe that learning should be accessible and enjoyable for everyone, which is why we offer these activities free of charge and within all three of our offices.

Our goal is to equip our participants with knowledge, help them meet new acquaintances, and expand their social network.

D. AVAILABILITY OF OTHER RESOURCES TO DELIVER GOODS OR SERVICE:

Please explain why:

- i. there is insufficient staffing, experience, expertise and/or resources available within the SERVICE AREA and/or;
- ii. there are no other resources (local, state, or federal agencies) external to the Agency who can perform the service more efficiently, more cost effectively or with comparable quality.

SeniorsPlus is a trusted resource for education, information, and lifelong learning opportunities. We offer both in-person and virtual options for most programs in our Education/Senior Center.

Utilizing SeniorsPlus locations, we often partner with local, topical experts to deliver fact-based information.

SeniorsPlus posted legal ads in newspapers reaching all three counties we serve seeking Letters of Intent from qualified, established service providers to act as subcontractors to deliver Older Americans Act services. The ads directed interested parties to our website for more details about these services, including Older Americans Act service definitions, and the reporting requirements. Contact information for a qualified staff person was also included should interested parties have additional questions. We received no inquiries or Letters of Intent.

Betsy Sawyer-Manter
President and CEO
SeniorsPlus

Date

SECTION II. (Office of Aging and Disability Services Response)

Click here to enter a date.

A. COMMENT (s): Click here to enter text.

B. REQUEST STATUS:

Approved:

Rejected:

Pending:

Additional Comment(s): Click here to enter text.

Paul Saucier
Director, Office of Aging and Disability Services
Maine Department of Health and Human Services

Date

AREA AGENCY ON AGING
DIRECT SERVICE WAIVER REQUEST FOR 2025-2028

(as required by OADS policy 10-149, Ch. 5, Section 30.09)

SECTION I. SeniorsPlus

3/28/2024

A. AGENCY NAME: SeniorsPlus

B. DIRECT SERVICE DESCRIPTION: Money Minders

C. SPECIFIC SERVICE NEED:

- i. Identify and fully describe the specific problem, requirement, or need that the service(s) is intended to address and makes the services necessary.
- ii. Explain how the Agency determined that the services are critical or essential to agency responsibilities or operations and/or whether the services are mandated.

Money Minders is a program designed to assist adults who are 60 years or older and are experiencing challenges in managing their finances. This program offers free assistance by well-trained SeniorsPlus volunteers on a monthly basis. The monetary management provided includes timely bill paying, budgeting, and checkbook balancing. To perform these tasks, the client must allow the volunteer access to the necessary bank information. Money Minders can help reduce the number of overdrafts and late fees incurred, bringing peace of mind to the program participants. Additionally, the program serves as an opportunity to uncover potential exploitation or abuse by identifying suspicious transactions. Volunteers are trained to report any suspicious activity to our staff. Our trained social workers may then reach out to the client for further information and provide additional supportive services if needed.

D. AVAILABILITY OF OTHER RESOURCES TO DELIVER GOODS OR SERVICE:

Please explain why:

- i. there is insufficient staffing, experience, expertise and/or resources available within the SERVICE AREA and/or;
- ii. there are no other resources (local, state, or federal agencies) external to the Agency who can perform the service more efficiently, more cost effectively or with comparable quality.

SeniorsPlus has a volunteer network to provide the Money Minders service in all three counties we serve. Our volunteers are trained to identify potential fraud and exploitation, and they will immediately report any suspicious activity to the SeniorsPlus staff for further investigation. Additional volunteers are always needed particularly in more rural areas to minimize wait lists. SeniorsPlus is always recruiting volunteers.

SeniorsPlus posted legal ads in newspapers reaching all three counties we serve seeking Letters of Intent from qualified, established service providers to act as subcontractors to deliver Older Americans Act services. The ads directed interested parties to our website for more details about these services, including Older Americans Act service definitions, and the reporting requirements. Contact information for a qualified staff person was also included should interested parties have additional questions. We received no inquiries or Letters of Intent.

Betsy Sawyer-Manter
President and CEO
SeniorsPlus

Date

SECTION II. (Office of Aging and Disability Services Response)

Click here to enter a date.

A. COMMENT (s): Click here to enter text.

B. REQUEST STATUS:

Approved:

Rejected:

Pending:

Additional Comment(s): Click here to enter text.

Paul Saucier
Director, Office of Aging and Disability Services
Maine Department of Health and Human Services

Date

Legal Ad

SeniorsPlus is an Area Agency on Aging that was established in 1972 and is funded through the Federal Older Americans Act. It is mandated to provide a comprehensive and coordinated system of services for individuals aged 60 and above in its planning and service area, which includes Androscoggin, Oxford, and Franklin Counties. The primary goal of the Older Americans Act is to help older adults remain in their homes and communities and avoid being institutionalized prematurely or unnecessarily by providing high-quality, cost-effective services.

SeniorsPlus is seeking Letters of Intent from qualified, established service providers to act as subcontractors to deliver the following Older Americans Act services:

- Evidence-Based Health Promotion Programs
- Senior Center Activities
- Nutrition Counseling and Education
- Congregate Meals - Funded through Title III-C Federal funds
- Home Delivered Meals - Funded through Title III-C Federal funds
- Caregiver Support Groups
- Caregiver Counseling
- Caregiver Training
- Friendly Caller
- In-home Supportive Services (Chore, Homemaker, Personal Care)

Additional information is located at www.SeniorsPlus.org

Interested organizations are required to submit a Letter of Intent by May 3, 2024, and be no longer than two pages. Ensure that the following data is included your Letter of Intent:

- Agency name, address, and contact person.
- Within Project Activity, include the Geographic service area(s) of interest and service(s) you will provide.
- Within Credentials, include:
 - Information on the type(s) of experience your organization has in provision of service(s) to older adults, as well as the length of time (in years) it has worked to meet the needs of older adults in Maine.
 - Quality Assurance Statement_
 - Your organization's technical and resource capacity for meeting reporting requirements.

Letters of Intent will be accepted starting the date of this posting (April 19, 2024) and will close on **May 3rd, 2024**. Submissions will not be accepted after the close date.

Submissions should be emailed to Laure Johnson at ljohnson@seniorsplus.org no later than **May 3rd, 2024**.

**SENIORSPLUS
PUBLIC NOTICE**

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