

**Bucks County Area Agency on Aging**  
**Final**  
**Four Year Plan**  
**2008-2012**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

During the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration for the Bucks County Area Agency on Aging the slogan, *Aging It's In Your Future* was adopted. This slogan was intended to encourage individual responsibility in acknowledging one's own aging and future; engage local municipalities to plan for the future lived experiences of an increasing number of older persons and enhance awareness of the many services offered by the Bucks County AAA to enhance the quality of life of older residents.

The 2008-2012 Bucks County Plan on Aging highlights the continued growth of the number of older persons in the County with the fourth highest population. This population is comprised of an ever growing number of people over 60, those over 85 and more importantly for the future a very large 'near-elderly' population. These projections are mostly based on the 2000 US Census and do not incorporate growth in the number of age restricted housing developments in Bucks County or increases in population attributed to people continuing to relocate to Bucks County from neighboring states and the City of Philadelphia.

In 2005, Bucks County hosted a Summit on Aging. The agenda was based on information gathered during a community needs assessment. The top three issues expressed by older persons living throughout the County included: availability of information about resources and services, concerns about the availability of transportation services and access to long term care.

This growth impacts the following current and emerging issues:

- 1) Access to information – The residents of Bucks County will continue to have access to a reliable source of information and referral services. The AAA often is a first point of contact for County residents who are experiencing a crisis in care or who are family members caring for a loved one. In addition there is a need to encourage personal responsibility for life planning among the residents of the County.
- 2) Long Term Care Services – The need for long term care services will continue to grow. Current demand will grow in line with the aging of the population and projected demand will be impacted by the preferences of the Baby Boom generation.

The two major programs offered, the PDA Waiver Program and the Options Program, each have challenges. There is a need to increase awareness of the PDA Aging Waiver program throughout Bucks County. A waiting list exists for services provided through the Options program. The waiting list is comprised of Bucks County residents in real need

for services. Without these services the goal of rebalancing long term care in Bucks County is impacted due to the possible premature admission to a long term care facility. Funding from the Lottery must remain dedicated to supporting the Options program. The Pennsylvania Department of Aging is encouraged to advocate for this support on behalf of the growing number of citizens in need.

Increases in funding are needed not only to meet current demand but to support the planning and new program development necessary for the future.

The future of long term care in Bucks County will also call for the AAA to serve as a catalyst for partnerships and initiatives which will enhance long term care in an ever changing marketplace. This will include such efforts as the creation of an Aging In Place model and collaborative efforts with disabilities organizations.

- 3) A Community to Age Well – There is a growing need to offer programs which enhance the health and wellness of older persons but also ensure that our local municipalities become places to age well. A healthier population is one in which incidence rates of illness or injury may decrease, older persons are engaged through volunteerism or employment in enhancing their communities, access to information about nutrition is available but also access to food is addressed, and the mental health and social well being of older persons is a priority.

The plan for the years 2008-2012, adopts the strategic goals of the US Administration on Aging as a framework for its future work. The proposed objectives include:

- ***Older residents of Bucks County will be able to make informed decisions on their health care and long-term living options*** – Objectives will include the continuation of information and referral services, monitoring of the volume of calls/contacts, revision of web page content, community partnerships to enhance outreach, and use of media and press. A transportation study will also be completed with the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission and will include an analysis of demographics, a survey of transportation providers and a survey of Bucks County residents over the age of 55. The impact of these efforts will lead to enhanced access to information and referral services and identify an issue which may impact access to services.
- ***Older residents of Bucks County will be able to remain in the setting of choice, improve their quality of life, and take individual economic responsibility via the development of needed infrastructure and provision of home and community based services, including supports for family caregivers*** – Objectives will include the completion of a Bucks County 2020 plan to assess the impact of aging, the continued provision of home and community based services, collaborative efforts to enhance the availability of accessible and affordable housing, promotion of the formation of Aging in Place models, development of education programs on long term care and insurance, development of a Family Caregiver Companion volunteer program and collaborate with the disabilities community in planning and outreach. These efforts will help the AAA to provide home and community based services, support creative models, collaborate with the disabilities

community and support family caregivers. This will increase the ability of a Bucks County resident to receive care in the setting of their choice and enhance quality of life.

- ***Older residents of Bucks County will be able to stay active and healthy*** – Objectives will include the continuation of Project Healthy Steps, identify and implement evidence based education programs, expand community partnerships, collaborate with the Commissioners’ Senior Task Force and analyze and address issues related to access to food. These efforts will help older Bucks County residents enhance their own health and wellness and help communities become places to age well.
- ***Older residents of Bucks County are free from abuse, neglect, exploitation and abandonment*** – Objectives will include continuing to provide protective services and ombudsman services, collaborating with other agencies to identify and address educational outreach needs, participating in the planning of the annual Neff Symposium on Elder Abuse and collaborating with emergency preparedness efforts in the County. These efforts will build on the existing collaborative strengths found in the Crimes Against Older Adults Task Force and help to prevent exploitation, neglect, abuse and abandonment. Work with emergency preparedness efforts will help protect vulnerable older persons.

These goals and objectives will contribute to the enhancement of the lives of older persons in Bucks County. Through the provision of long term care services, information and referral services, creative health and wellness and engagement opportunities, the AAA will connect with the older persons of Bucks County and their caregivers.

## **AGENCY OVERVIEW**

The Bucks County Area Agency on Aging has its roots at Neshaminy Manor, the almshouse, where it was formerly known as Bucks County Adult Services. Its origin in 1966 and continued development was based on the mission to divert Bucks residents from institutionalization where possible through community services. The mission of the AAA and its work continue since its designation in 1974 as the AAA for Planning and Service Area 29.

As a public agency designated by the Commissioners of Bucks County, the AAA is responsible for the planning and implementation of a variety of services and programs to assist older persons in Bucks County.

The work of the AAA still is dedicated to the provision of services which enhance the quality of life of the older persons of Bucks County. Specifically the AAA works to develop, offer and manage services to help persons 60 years of age and older maintain their independence in their homes and communities.

The AAA offers more than twenty programs to help older adults and their families and serves as an advocate for all older people in Bucks County.

The Agency provides information and referral, outreach, assessment, care management and has a county-wide volunteer program. Services also include the provision of in-home services, adult day services, home and congregate nutritional services, therapeutic counseling, transportation, APPRISE insurance counseling, health and wellness programs, and employment assistance.

To protect vulnerable older persons, the AAA provides adult protective services which investigates and works to ensure the safety of older adults at risk. The ombudsman service helps to resolve complaints about the care of older people receiving long term care. Legal Aid of Southeastern Pennsylvania through a contract with the AAA provides information, advice and counseling to older adults.

Information on the organizational structure of the AAA itself and within the Bucks County Division of Human Services can be found in the section entitled, Organization of Services to Serve Older Persons.

### *Demographics*

According to the *Profile of Older Americans: 2007*, released by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Aging, one in every eight Americans are ages 65 or older. Since 1996 it is noted that the number of persons over 65 increased by 10% and the number of persons aged 45 to 64 who will reach 65 in coming years increased by 39%.<sup>1</sup>

It is estimated that persons age 65 and older will increase from 35 million to 40 million by 2010 and then to 55 million by 2020. The 85+ population is expected to experience a 44% growth rate between 2000 and 2020.<sup>2</sup>

Pennsylvania ranked third in terms of the percentage of older persons over the age of 65. Bucks County has the fourth highest population among the counties of Pennsylvania.

In a recent study entitled: *Rating the Region: The State of the Delaware Valley*, the Philadelphia metropolitan region is compared to the nation's nine largest metropolitan regions plus Baltimore and Pittsburgh. It is noted that the Philadelphia metropolitan statistical area is now the 5<sup>th</sup> largest in the country. The Philadelphia metropolitan region covers nine counties including Bucks County. It forecasts a 21% increase in the population of Bucks County.<sup>3</sup>

Of the regions included in the Rating the Region report it should be noted that the Philadelphia area has the third highest median age (37.9). This was higher than Pittsburgh and Miami and contributes to Philadelphia having the third highest percentage of dependent population among the metropolitan regions in the study. DVRPC notes that "the elderly population of the region will increase significantly by 2025, with the greatest percentage increases expected in the

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<sup>1</sup> US Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Aging, Profile of Older Americans: 2007, Washington DC, p. 2

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p.3

<sup>3</sup> Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Rating the Region: The State of the Delaware Valley, Philadelphia, PA, December 2007, p. 4

suburban counties as baby boomers age in place.”<sup>4</sup> The report goes on to note that this growth will continue as a strong trend: “The aging of the region’s population is expected to continue through 2030 and beyond, since the near elderly population (those age 55 to 64 years) is forecast to increase by over 50% in the next two decades.”<sup>5</sup>

Trends for growth in Bucks County can be found in the Delaware Valley Analytical Data Report entitled *The Aging of Baby Boomers: Elderly and Near-Elderly Population Characteristics*. Between 1990 and 2000 Bucks County had an increase of 50% or more in the elderly population. Bucks County will experience the greatest growth in the region. “Elderly residents are expected to account for over 21% of the population by 2025, up from 12% in 2000.”<sup>6</sup>

Bucks County among the 5 counties of southeastern Pennsylvania experienced the highest percentage change (26%) between 1990 and 2000, from 58,912 to 74,094 residents over the age of 64. A regional map in Figure I in the appendix displays a map reflecting this growth in the Delaware Valley region.

In a recent Public Policy and Aging Report the relationship between city and suburban population gains was explored. Four metropolitan areas including New York, Philadelphia, Chicago and Los Angeles were included. The report notes: “In each of the metropolitan areas, the next few decades will bring faster aging of the suburbs than the cities. The share of the population aged 65 and older is today roughly equivalent between the cities and suburbs in Philadelphia. Rapid growth in suburban senior populations as the boomers age, however, indicates that by 2040 each of these suburban areas – once identified as the preserve of young families with children – will be “older” than its respective city. The primary factor driving this senior suburban growth is the aging of today’s pre-senior population.”<sup>7</sup>

Bucks County (See Figure II in Appendix) is projected to have the following growth in the number of older persons: In the year 2000, Bucks County had 74,282 residents over the age of 64. This number is projected to increase to 160,675 by the year 2025.

The growth of the near elderly population identified as those between the ages of 55 and 64 indicates a 72% increase over the period 2000 to 2025, from 89,259 to 94,614 with a peak population in 2020 of 100,808.<sup>8</sup>

The growth of the very old population (age 85 and older) will also continue in Bucks County. This population will have an increased likelihood of needing services extending from transportation to health and long term care. Bucks County will experience a growth of 27% of persons over the age of 85 between 2000 and 2010 from 10,862 to 12,833. An analysis of the municipalities in the eight county regions comprising the Delaware Valley by absolute number of older persons shows that Bucks County has three townships listed in the top 15: Bristol

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid, p. 6

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 6

<sup>6</sup> Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Analytical Data Report *The Aging of the Baby Boomers: Elderly and Near Elderly Population Characteristics*, No. 13, January 2007 p. 1

<sup>7</sup> Frey, William H.; *America’s Regional Demographics in the Early 21<sup>st</sup> Century: The Role of Seniors, Boomers and New Minorities*, Public Policy & Aging Report, Volume 18, Number 1, p. 16

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p. 6

Township, Bensalem Township and Middletown Township. An analysis of older persons as a percentage of total population shows three municipalities in the top 15 including Telford Borough with 25%, Doylestown Township with 25% and West Rockhill Township with 21%.

Bucks County leads the southeastern Pennsylvania region in terms of the number of households headed by an elderly or near elderly person. Almost 44% of Bucks County households are headed by someone age 55 and older.

While Bucks County is often perceived as home to a more wealthy population it should be noted that among the suburban counties of southeastern Pennsylvania Bucks County residents have the lowest median household income for residents over the age of 65. The median income for persons 65 and older was \$17,045.<sup>9</sup>

Legal Aid which works with the Bucks County AAA in providing legal assistance has reported an increase in the number of bankruptcies experienced by older persons seeking help. In 2006 there were 6 bankruptcy cases handled by Legal Aid, in 2007 there were 38 and for the first 4 months of 2008 there are 28. This increase is expected to continue. The number of files opened for debt-related issues for individuals in need of debt counseling has also gone up. Older person in Bucks County as in other parts of the region and nation pay more for housing costs than younger heads of households.

Over 30 percent of persons over the age of 65 in Bucks County live with at least one disability. Almost 15,000 of the County's residents live with two or more disabilities. The Bucks County Area Agency on Aging was instrumental in the founding of the Center for Independent Living of Bucks County. The two organizations collaborate on a day to day basis and it is anticipated that more work will be done together to enhance the lives of older persons living with disabilities and for persons living with disabilities who are aging.

The cultural and ethnic diversity of Bucks County continues to grow. Of significance is the continued growth of the population which has immigrated from Russia and the Ukraine. The population has growing needs related to aging and limited proficiency in English among the older generation. While 4.6% of the residents who are age 65+ are reported as part of minority populations according to the 2000 census, the percent of persons 65 years of age and older is growing within minority populations. For example 5.3% of the African American population, 6.8% of the Asian population and 5.0% of the Hispanic and Latino populations are over the age of 65. The Bucks County AAA has a Diversity Committee which is charged with the education of professionals to enhance outreach and interaction with communities of diversity and building partnerships with ethnic and cultural communities to identify and address issues related to aging.

In 2005, Bucks County Area Agency on Aging and the Bucks County Commissioners' Senior Task Force held a Summit on Aging. Prior to the Summit, a Community Needs Assessment was completed to inform the County of the issues of importance of the residents of Bucks County.

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<sup>9</sup> Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Rating the Region: The State of the Delaware Valley, Philadelphia, PA, December 2007, p. 10

The Community Needs Assessment and the Summit explored how we can continue to make Bucks County an elder friendly community. This by definition helps to create healthier communities, values all elders, encourage intergenerational interaction, celebrates cultural diversity, honors longevity and improves the quality of life of all older persons.

The Community Assessment Tool completed before the Summit was conducted to identify issues of importance to the residents of Bucks County, identify community strengths, areas of improvement, gaps in service and opportunities. Residents of Bucks County were asked to indicate whether they felt that their community needed improvement, was adequate or excellent in response to each of the following statements:

- ◆ As people experience transitions in their lives such as retirement or changes in their career path, our community offers alternate work or volunteer opportunities.
- ◆ As people age, our community offers health and social services which support them in the home.
- ◆ Older persons in our community are aware of services which exist or know where to go to get information they may need.
- ◆ Persons who are aging in our community have adequate housing.
- ◆ Persons are knowledgeable about and have access to information or services related to nutrition, exercise and healthy living.
- ◆ Persons caring for older persons or older persons themselves know where to report crimes like vandalism.
- ◆ Our community provides opportunities for older persons to be connected with social organizations in their communities.
- ◆ Transportation is accessible and helpful for persons who do not drive.

Residents were also asked to identify the strengths of their communities, where they saw opportunities for improvement, where there were gaps in service and what opportunities may exist for new programs.

The top needs identified in the survey included:

- 1) There is a need for information about the services available to residents of Bucks County.
- 2) Transportation is a concern especially among residents who no longer drive or foresee that they will not be driving in the near future.
- 3) Residents desire to know more about long term and home and community based services and want access to these services.

- 4) There is concern about housing issues spanning from the availability of affordable housing to concerns about community planning.

The well documented growth of older persons in Bucks County and the needs identified in the community needs assessment and Summit highlight several priorities for the future:

- 1) Existing means of conveying information to the residents of the County need to be maintained and expanded.
- 2) The demand for home and community based services will continue to grow. Advocacy for increased funding to meet current and projected needs will need to continue. The AAA will also need to become a catalyst for new partnerships to provide care.
- 3) Municipalities must continue to become engaged in making their communities places to age well.
- 4) Attention will need to be spent not only on caring for those in need but enhancing the health and wellness of residents as they age.

***Service Utilization***

The Bucks County Area Agency on Aging for Fiscal Year 2007/2008 has a revised budget of \$10,215,427. Of this amount \$5,205,267 comes from the Department of Aging’s regular Block Grant. Bucks County contributed \$1,190,200 toward this budget. The remainder is from a variety of other sources of funding.

Of crucial importance is the funding of home and community based services. These essential services will enable Bucks County residents to continue to be part of their communities and maintain their health and defer or prevent premature admission to a nursing facility.

A review of our programs indicates the following levels of services:

Service	Unit	Units of Service	Unduplicated Persons
Home Delivered Meals	Meals	89,290	600
Congregate Meals	Meals	89,159	3,600
Soc/Rec/Education	Registrants	109,350	
Transportation	Trips	79,241	1,450
Legal Services	Hours	1,092	370
Ombudsman	Cases Closed/Visit/Consult	210	
Information and Referral	Contacts	33,600	
Home Health	Hours	218	5
Personal Care	Hours	57,997	500
Personal Assistance Services	Hours	2,555	18
Attendant Care	Hours	16,952	10
Environmental			

Modifications	Modifications	2	2
Med Equip and Supplies			170
Home Support	Hours	6,968	115
Adult Day Services	Days	7,350	98
Counseling	Hours	234	20
Assessment	Assessments	2,800	2,550
Care Management			1,390
Protective Services	Investigations	125	125
Domiciliary Care			20
Consumer Reimbursement			126
Total			10,500

According to the American Community Survey data for 2006 and projections using the 2000 US Census approximately 13% of Bucks County residents are over the age of 65. It is noted that between 2000 and 2006 there was a 28% increase in the number of County residents over the age of 85. Longevity contributes to possible increased frailty among our older residents and a likely need for services.

These needs exist in an environment which faces challenges to care delivery. The preference of older persons is to remain in their own homes as long as possible. This is more than a preference -- it is a proven effective approach to support a person in need and is preferred to admission to an institution.

The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is recognized as a forward-thinking state when it comes to the support of older persons in their homes. It has, over its history, developed programs intended to support a person in his or her home and delay or prevent institutionalization.

Pennsylvania has a variety of programs to support the provision of home and community based services to the citizens of Bucks County and all older Pennsylvanians in need. This includes the Pennsylvania Department of Aging (PDA) Waiver and Options Programs.

The PDA Waiver serves those adults age 60 and up who are clinically and financially eligible for Medicaid-paid nursing home care. The Aging Waiver is funded at adequate levels by the Department of Public Welfare.

Options offers a plan of managed care that directs people with service needs toward the most appropriate and least restrictive level of care. It provides services that help maintain independence and meet chronic needs of individuals. Options assesses the long term care needs of people and tailors a service response to meet those needs. Services include Assessment, Community Based Services and Care Management.

Demand for the Options program exceeds funding and these services are essential to the well-being of older persons in Bucks County and to efforts to rebalance long term care toward more effective and efficient means of care management and service delivery.

It is evident that a continued growth in the number of older persons in Bucks County will continue to increase demand for services. Current budgeted dollars do not adequately cover the amount of care required. In particular there is concern over the following priority services to meet the needs of the citizens of Bucks County:

### *Information and Referral Services*

Information and Referral Services – The Information and Referral (I & R) Department of the Bucks County Area Agency on Aging is handling approximately 2,800 calls per month. This number represents a 30% increase in calls handled as compared to 2006. This number does not include calls handled directly by the long term care staff, such as calls made directly to the protective services supervisor, Ombudsman or calls received during evening and weekend hours. The I & R Supervisor received approximately 20-25 emails each day from consumers accessing the AAA through the internet.

The APPRISE Health Insurance Counseling Program in the last year has eight active volunteers and two alternate volunteers. These volunteers have provided counseling to more than 1,000 residents of Bucks County. In addition they have made 15 public presentations reaching over 750 people. Over 3,600 people received information at 27 health and information fairs.

The APPRISE program reached 30,000 residents through the use of media and the press.

The growth in the demand for information will continue and an increase in staff and resources will be required.

### *Long Term Care Services*

Options Program - A priority concern is found with the Options program which is inadequately funded by the Lottery. Options serves those ineligible for the Waiver Program. Both programs provide Community-Based care including In-Home Services (assistance with bathing/dressing/toileting/obtaining groceries/personal laundry, etc.), Home Delivered Meals, Adult Day Services (day care), Medical Equipment and Supplies, and Care Management to assess, plan, and implement care, and conduct ongoing monitoring to coordinate these services.

The BCAA's Options program currently provides approximately:

- 67,738 hours of In Home Services annually to 520 UPS (Unduplicated Persons Served) at a cost of \$1.6 million
- 89,290 home delivered meals annually to 600 UPS at a cost of \$570,700
- 7,350 days of Adult Day Care Services annually to 98 UPS at a cost of \$404,275
- In addition, 170 UPS receive medical equipment/supplies at a cost of \$47,100

These contracted services help individuals to continue to age in place in their own homes for a fraction of the cost of institutional care.

In Bucks County, the average cost for an Options care plan per consumer is \$512 per month or \$6140 annually. By contrast, the average cost for Bucks County MA nursing home care is \$4718 per month or \$56,618 annually. Therefore, Options serves consumers, some of which are already nursing home eligible, in their own homes for 10.8% of the cost of nursing home care.

The January 2008 waiting list for the Options program in Bucks County consisted of 150 residents not receiving any service and an additional 86 receiving some services and in need of additional service. These numbers continue to increase monthly. We believe that people who are waiting for Options services will experience a decline in health and wellness and become candidates for admission to nursing homes much sooner than if they receive the needed services.

Bucks County residents on the waiting list who are not receiving any services are in need of the following services: Personal Care (66%), Home Support (16%), Adult Day Care (11%), Personal Assistance Services (6%), and Emergency Response System/Medical Equipment Supplies (1%). Sixty percent of this waiting list has a functional needs measurement score of 50 or higher.

Bucks County residents in need of additional services are waiting for the following services: Personal Care (76%), Home Support (16%) and Adult Day Care (8%). Sixty-two percent of this waiting list has a functional needs measurement score of 50 or higher.

There is a need for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to increase allocations from the Lottery Fund to support these much needed services. As stated, support of home and community based services such as Options, will fulfill goals established by the US Administration on Aging to rebalance the long term care system, but more importantly it will provide care for Pennsylvanians in their setting of choice.

Aging Waiver Program – While the number of persons receiving home and community based services through the Aging Waiver program is less than the Options program the program is still an important means of access to necessary services for persons with care needs. In the coming year the Bucks County AAA will continue efforts to bolster awareness of the Aging Waiver program. The AAA will also collaborate with the new LIFE (Living Independently for Elders) program beginning at Saint Mary Medical Center. Many persons eligible for the LIFE program are also eligible for the Aging Waiver program. Through collaboration we hope to extend outreach and engage persons who are not receiving services. It is believed that recent challenges to personal incomes such as increased costs of living including utility costs and food will lead to an increase in the number of older persons living in poverty or close to poverty. Increases in the number of persons seeking assistance with bankruptcy proceedings through Legal Aid indicate a growing dilemma.

Nursing Home Transition – The Nursing Home Transition initiative in Pennsylvania had two goals at its inception: 1) to assist people with transition from nursing homes to the community

and 2) to continue to learn about the perceived or real barriers that nursing home residents face when considering community-based alternatives.<sup>10</sup>

One of the key issues impacting the success of the Nursing Home Transition program in Bucks County is the availability of accessible and affordable housing. The AAA care management team does an outstanding job of trying to find housing to facilitate the desired transition to the community and looks forward to collaborating with other organizations to identify housing issues/solutions for older persons in Bucks County.

### *Community*

Senior Centers – The 13 Senior Centers throughout Bucks County continue to provide places for education, socialization, creativity and nutrition. The importance of reducing potential isolation and engaging older persons in meaningful ways can not be underestimated.

Centers are in need of funding both to enhance physical plants and develop creative programming which retains current participants and attracts potential members from the growing Boomer or near elderly population.

There is a need for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to add the direct support of Senior Centers to its budget. The Centers provide a venue to deliver evidence-based educational programs which will enhance the health and wellness of Bucks Countians.

RSVP – The importance of keeping older persons throughout the County engaged in their local communities cannot be underestimated. Volunteer and employment opportunities offer both older persons and members of the Baby Boom generation the opportunity to make a difference in their lives and in their communities. In 2007, 737 older persons provided 116,000 hours of volunteer service at 130 volunteer stations.

The immediate and long term future of RSVP here at the Bucks County AAA will rely on increased resources and new partnerships to enable older persons and Baby Boomers to live well and make a difference through increased volunteerism and possible new careers.

Health Promotion - Through its health promotion programs the Bucks County AAA has reached out to residents of Bucks County.

Last year 361 older persons participated in the annual Senior Games and 450 people attended the Senior Expo.

Project MEDS (Medication Education Designed For Seniors) is a volunteer peer education program focusing on the use/misuse of drugs and alcohol by older adults. Project MEDS educates over 500 people each year. Over 3,000 pieces of information have been distributed during Project MEDS presentations, health fairs and community events. Project MEDS is a

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<sup>10</sup> Governors Office of Health Care Reform, Overview of Nursing Home Transition in Pennsylvania, <http://www.aging.state.pa.us/aging/lib/aging/NHTOverview.pdf>

collaboration of the Bucks County Area Agency on Aging, Bucks County Drug and Alcohol Commission, the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program and Today, Inc.

A survey completed by the LaSalle School of Nursing asked residents of Bucks County to self report on their own general health rating. There were over 1,000 respondents. Nine percent of the respondents with an average age of 71 from the Upper and Central regions of Bucks County indicated their health was fair or poor, while in the Lower region of Bucks County 36% of those with an average age of 76 reported fair or poor health. Further analysis indicated that overall health scores diminished with increasing age, that age/health measures differ for different regions of the County and the need for services increases with age.

The Bucks County Area Agency on Aging will continue to offer outreach to enhance health and wellness through evidenced based programs offered by the Pennsylvania Department of Aging's PrimeTime Health Program and partnerships with senior centers and community organizations. Community-based partnership will become essential in extending the content of evidence based programs and other health and wellness promotion initiatives to older persons throughout Bucks County. These partnerships will also aid in the accurate definition of need and actions necessary to improve health in areas where residents have self reported fair or poor health.

In addition to enhancing access to health and wellness programming, the AAA through its efforts will also study nutrition and access to food as a major contributing factor to health and well being.

### ***Organization of Agency to Support Older Persons***

The Bucks County Area Agency on Aging (AAA) is a part of the Bucks County Division of Human Services. It is designated by the Bucks County Board of Commissioners to be the entity responsible for satisfying all the requirements mandated by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, through the Pennsylvania Department of Aging, and the Federal government, through the Administration on Aging, a branch of the US Department of Health and Human Services, for services to senior citizens, to the extent that funding from those entities is made available.

The broad goal of the agency is to develop comprehensive services to assist older people to remain independent and prevent premature institutionalization. Through its collaboration with an extensive network of providers, and public and private community agencies, the Bucks AAA is able to offer more than twenty programs to help older adults and their families. Multi-year contracts with providers of services are negotiated, such as, in-home care, adult day services, nutrition services, senior community centers, legal aid, counseling services, etc. Multiple service providers in all service areas assure adequate consumer choice. Detailed monitoring of each contract and provider assures compliance with negotiated contractual terms. Contractors are required to have quality assurance and improvement policies in place. Consumer satisfaction issues are continually addressed, including both solicited and unsolicited responses.

The Bucks County Area Agency on Aging is organized into three major sections, or departments. The leadership of the AAA is provided by a Director and three deputy-level directors. Areas of specific focus, or departments, include: Long Term Care Client Services, Fiscal and

Administrative Services, and Public Affairs and Community Awareness. These are discussed in detail below. An organizational chart is provided in Figure III.

### *Long Term Care Client Services*

Long Term Care Client (LTC) Services is responsible for all aspects of client intake, assessment and service planning and coordination. Seven (one vacancy) supervisors assist the deputy administrator in coordinating the work of some twenty-nine (29) care managers. Supervisors are clinically and administratively responsible for clients and programs within LTC such as Options, Adult Protective Services, the Family Caregiver Support Program, PDA Waiver, Pre-Admission Assessment, Domiciliary Care and shared housing. The AAA uses a system of 'integrated' care management. That is, each care manager is cross-trained and qualified in all aspects of service. This system allows for a more seamless approach to coordinating the services of each client. Instead, for example, of having to hand a client over to another specialist, say in adult protective services, the integrated care manager can address client needs as they arise. Our agency has invested much in the training and professional development of its staff. Such continued education will continue to be a priority. Long Term Care staff members serve as liaisons to each senior community center. A contract for Ombudsman services is maintained to address the complaints of older persons in LTC settings including nursing facilities, assisted living/personal care homes and the community. LTC also manages all contracts for Home and Community Based Services provided to consumers.

### *Fiscal and Administrative Services*

Fiscal and Administrative Services is responsible for completion of annual budgets and for the extensive monitoring of same. Routine and detailed reporting is required to both the Department of Aging and to the County Controller's Office, as well as to other grantee agencies and to county fiscal services staff, such as the County Finance Department. The Deputy Director for Fiscal and Administrative Services has also been delegated the responsibility to supervise the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) and the agency's contract with Legal Aid of S.E. PA. Additionally, this deputy director assists the agency director with a variety of special projects, planning, reports and functions, as well as with the work of integrating management information and computer systems.

### *Public Affairs and Community Awareness*

Public Affairs and Community Awareness is under the direction of an Administrative Officer. This department oversees the staff of information and referral, receptionists, and the APPRISE insurance counseling. This department also coordinates activities and services of the network of senior community centers, congregate and home delivered meals, shared ride transportation, and health promotion. All public awareness and outreach campaigns, the agency's quarterly newsletter, and promotional and informational materials are directed through Public Affairs and Community Awareness. Special projects, such as the Senior Games, Health Expo, and Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, the senior spelling bee and client voter registration are also performed by Public Affairs and Community Awareness. Additionally, Public Affairs and Community Awareness is involved with issues of senior advocacy, including, but not limited to,

SAGE (Senior Action Group Endeavor), a grass-roots senior advocacy group affiliated with the AAA.

### *The Advisory Council*

The Advisory Council members perform several important roles. One of the primary duties is to approve the annual plan and budget and the Agency's Four-Year Plan. The Advisory Council is comprised of a cross-section of the Bucks County community. The Board of County Commissioners appoints fifteen (15) members, choosing older consumers, advocates for the elderly and public officials in a balanced representation of the geographical areas of the County. The members of the Advisory Council have a key opportunity to represent the Area Agency on Aging to constituents in their local communities, and conversely, they can represent the interests of their constituents at the monthly council meetings. Of crucial importance, the members of the Advisory Council act as strong advocates for the elderly. They willingly write letters, make phone calls and visit local legislators to explain issues and advocate for important changes that will benefit the senior community.

### *Senior Community Centers*

Senior Community Centers, although independently governed and operated, are perhaps among the most crucial of our contracted services. It is through this network of senior centers that the elderly most often receive and/or learn of services available through the Area Agency on Aging. The senior centers will become increasingly more important as the members of our community age. They are the focal points of services to seniors in each local community. Activities and outings, congregate meals, health promotion information, exercise groups, insurance information and counseling, and flu shots, are among the services commonly available. Increasingly we are seeing services expanded to include social service intervention, diagnostic testing, educational programs and technology programs. It is imperative that these centers receive the full support of local municipal leaders to meet the needs of an aging society.

### *Service Areas, Collaborative Efforts and the Senior Task Force*

The AAA has divided the County into five (5) Service Areas in order to assist in planning for the older population's service needs, the necessary human and financial resources, and other community programs. These areas have distinct differences and require some customization in the planning and delivery of services. As mentioned above, through our contracts with numerous providers of services to the elderly, the AAA seeks to meet the needs of our targeted population.

In addition, the Bucks County Commissioners have established a Senior Task Force comprised of members of the provider and consumer community. The role of the task force is to focus on issues of importance to seniors and to consider ways to meet their needs. This task force provides yet another key opportunity for the AAA to receive input on a continual basis from the community.

### *Emerging Issues*

The AAA as it reviews the demographic projections for Bucks County and its experience in delivering service has identified the following emerging issues:

- 1) The demand for information and referral services continues to grow. The Bucks County Area Agency on Aging seeks to reach out to all individuals and communities within the County including communities of ethnic and cultural diversity and those with limited English language ability.
- 2) Waiting lists exist for the provision of services through the Options program and the Federal Family Caregiver Support Program. Advocacy activities will continue to be directed to allocation of sufficient funds to provide the care needed by the older citizens of Bucks County. Adequate funding for care management and delivery of home and community based services is a high priority.
- 3) There is a need to complete a planning process for Bucks County which would determine long term needs and preferences of the older persons in Bucks County and identify current services available in the community and any gaps in service which may grow. This project could look at what Bucks County will be like in 2020 and analyze what is needed throughout the County and in local communities.
- 4) As the Baby Boom population grows there is a need to engage them about the next phase of life through meaningful civic engagement. The Bucks County AAA with partners should develop a way to communicate information which inspires the growing 'near-elderly' population of Bucks County to plan for their own future and enhance their communities and County through volunteerism and employment.
- 5) Increases in longevity and in the number of older persons throughout Bucks County will also lead to an increase in the incidence rates of chronic illness. The Bucks County AAA will continue to offer evidence based health and wellness education programs and its innovative Project Meds program. Educational outreach activities will need to expand to enhance the health and wellness of older persons and to make communities throughout the County places to age well.
- 6) Senior Centers throughout Bucks County will continue to evolve as places for education, social interaction and activity for older persons throughout Bucks County. Over the next four years Senior Centers will need to continue to develop creative programs and offer opportunities of interest to the Baby Boom population.
- 7) Family caregivers are the largest source of care delivery for long term care. The Bucks County AAA will continue to offer resources and support to family caregivers through state and federal programs. The AAA as a first point of contact for many residents of Bucks County will need to continue to provide information and find ways to support family caregivers.

- 8) The local municipalities of Bucks County are places where the lived experiences of older persons define needs and preferences for care. The Bucks County AAA will continue its role in serving as a catalyst to help local communities become more knowledgeable about issues faced by older persons and ideas for meeting needs.
- 9) The Commissioners of Bucks County convened a Senior Task Force as an advisory group comprised of older residents of Bucks County and representatives from social and health service provider organizations. The Bucks County AAA will continue to convene the Senior Task Force and explore the issues of importance identified as part of the 2005 Summit on Aging and through its deliberations. The Bucks County AAA and Task Force is in the process of completing a transportation study in partnership with the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission. Transportation has been identified as an area of high concern by the residents of Bucks County which is comprised of urban, suburban and rural regions and has varying levels of public and private transportation services.
- 10) 'Aging in place or community' initiatives are growing from grassroots efforts. Residents of communities across the country are gathering in groups to identify their preferences and needs; develop models of living which enable them to stay in their homes for a longer period of time; engage the participation of citizens, in terms of both financial support and volunteerism; and promote choice in the selection of alternatives for care. The Bucks County AAA is currently working with a group of citizens in Lower Bucks County to develop an Aging in Place model. The efforts to pursue models such as this will be a creative option to enhance personal planning and choice and engage the volunteer, public and private sectors of the County.
- 11) As persons with disabilities grow older and those who are aging experience disabilities, there is a need to develop collaborative efforts and programs between the aging and disabilities sectors of the service delivery system. The Bucks County AAA helped to establish the Center for Independent Living of Bucks County and will continue this collaboration to identify ways to enhance services for older persons living with disabilities.
- 12) The diversity of Bucks County continues to grow in terms of residents from different cultural and ethnic communities and those with limited proficiency in the English language. The Bucks County AAA has a Diversity Committee which seeks to enhance the cultural sensitivity of the staff, partner with cultural organizations and pursue ways to enhance educational outreach.

## **GOALS/OBJECTIVES/STRATEGIES/OUTCOMES/PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

Goals and objectives for the four year plan align with the strategic goals of the US Administration on Aging and Pennsylvania Department of Aging including:

- I. Empower older Pennsylvanians and their families, including those from diverse communities, to make informed decisions on their health care and long-term living options.

- II. Enable older Pennsylvanians, including those from diverse communities, to remain in the setting of choice, improve their quality of life, and to take individual economic responsibility via the development of needed infrastructure and provision of home and community based services, including supports for family caregivers.
- III. Empower older Pennsylvanians, including those from diverse communities, to stay active and healthy.
- IV. Ensure older Pennsylvanians, including those from diverse communities, are free from abuse, neglect, exploitation and abandonment.

The following tables summarize the goals, objectives, strategies, outcomes and performance measures:

### Goals/Objectives/Strategies/Outcomes/Performance Measures

*Empower older Pennsylvanians and their families, including those from diverse communities, to make informed decisions on their health care and long-term living options.*

Goal	Objectives	Strategies	Outcomes	Performance Measures
Residents of Bucks County will have access to information and referral resources.	Monitor and support the growth of the information and referral services of the Bucks County Area Agency on Aging	Monitor and report volume of calls, information provided and referrals made	Increased awareness and access to information and referral services by Bucks County citizens	Volume of calls
		Review systems and staffing of information and referral services unit		Type of requests for information Type of referrals
	Enhance the information which is accessible via the Bucks County website	Review website and develop plan to update information and links to help older persons and their caregivers		Number of webpage visits Type of information sought Source of inquiry
	Continue to partner with senior centers, community organizations, legislators, faith communities and other organizations to conduct outreach events in local communities.	Partner with organizations in the community to provide outreach  Identify new partners and opportunities to enhance awareness of AAA services		Number of outreach events Number of new partners Impact measures of educational programs
	Partner with the press and media to extend outreach about issues of	Identify opportunities to engage the media and press to help inform		Number of articles in press or stories in media

	importance regarding aging in Bucks County	residents of Bucks County about issues of importance in aging, engage communities and older persons		
	Partner with health and social service agencies and other organizations to provide information regarding the APPRISE insurance counseling program	Continue to provide information regarding Medicare and health insurance programs  Develop new ways of extending information to the community regarding long term care insurance		Number of educational outreach events  Number of calls and cases re APPRISE and insurance information
	Partner with the Pennsylvania Department of Aging on initiatives to help promote planning regarding health care and long term care	Develop programs to promote healthy living, proactive life planning and knowledge of health and long term care		Number of requests regarding life planning
	Complete a transportation study to assess any problems with access to care, convene a conference to identify issues and solutions, pilot demonstration projects.	Complete transportation study in partnership with the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission  Convene a conference to review recommendations and develop ideas to enhance transportation		Completed study  Conference held  Next steps identified and demonstration programs established.

*Enable older Pennsylvanians, including those from diverse communities, to remain in the setting of choice, improve their quality of life, and to take individual economic responsibility via the development of needed infrastructure and provision of home and community based services, including supports for family caregivers.*

Goal	Objective	Strategies	Outcomes	Performance Measures
Residents of Bucks County will have access to home and community based services to age well in their communities	Advocate for funding from the Lottery to eliminate the waiting list for Options services and provide services to an increasing number of residents in need.	Communicate funding needs with the Pennsylvania Department of Aging and state legislators	Bucks County residents have the information needed to plan for their own future and access to services at home and in the community which support the desire to remain at home.	Advocacy letters , calls and meetings  Amount of additional funding received
	Continue to provide home and community based services through the PDA Waiver and Options programs	Enhance awareness of all home and community based services  Continue to provide assessments and care management which helps Bucks County residents with access and coordination of services.  Advocate for funding and changes to meet the service needs of older persons in Bucks County.		Volume of persons served and units of service for the PDA Waiver and Options programs
	Collaborate with state and county organizations to enhance the	Identify the status of accessible and affordable housing in		Report on accessible and affordable housing

	availability of accessible and affordable housing	Bucks County for older adults including potential Nursing Home Transition clients  Collaborate with agencies to address housing needs		Statistics showing impact on Nursing Home Transition program  Reduction in homeless older adults and less than appropriate placements
	Serve as a catalyst to promote the development of an Aging in Place model in Bucks County	Continue attending meeting of citizen group which has gathered to create an Aging in Place community  Collaborate with Aging in Place model to assist with planning and monitoring of progress  Collaborate with Aging in Place initiative to develop a model which may be replicable in other areas of Bucks County		Completion of business planning for an Aging in Place model in Lower Bucks County
	Develop and promote educational programs on personal long term care planning and long term care insurance	See also Goal 1		Number of educational programs held regarding long term care planning
	Complete a <i>Bucks County 2020</i> plan to work with the county	Determine cost and method for a planning process which will help		Completion of strategy for a planning process

	<p>and local governments to assess the impact of an increased number of older persons.</p>	<p>the AAA learn more about the older persons of Bucks County, their lived experiences and needs</p> <p>Initiate planning process with local community, municipal and county government partners.</p> <p>Incorporate the following in to the planning process: the capacity of in-home service providers to meet demand, impact of population growth on the information and referral and care management capacities of the AAA, projected impact of the Baby Boom population on the long term care system.</p> <p>Host Summit to review findings and determine next steps at local and County level</p>		<p>which will analyze the impact of aging in Bucks County</p> <p>Completion of plan</p> <p>Dissemination of results with public and private partners throughout the County</p> <p>Summit held</p>
	<p>Develop and implement a volunteer Family Caregiver Companion Program. RSVP</p>	<p>Identify funding for an initiative to develop and implement volunteer Family Caregiver</p>		<p>Plan for Family caregiver Companion Program</p>

	volunteers will work under the supervision of the AAA FCSP Care Manager to provide caregiver respite &/or negotiated home support tasks as per care receiver's care plan.	Companion Program  Develop implementation plan, implement and monitor success		Funding for Program  Number of volunteers recruited and caregivers served and satisfaction measures by caregivers and volunteers
	Collaborate with The Center for Independent Living of Bucks County to enhance outreach and services to persons who are aging and living with disabilities	Integrate a study of the needs of older persons living with a disability into the Bucks County 2020 study or conduct a separate study.  Continue cross organization education programs for professionals on issues and resources re: aging and disabilities  Develop outreach programs for the general public  Review the feasibility of volunteer programs to provide peer mentoring, translation and reading services.		
	Participate in the Money Follow the Person Targeted Care			Number of participants in the program and experience with care

	Management Program for older County residents including those who are patients of Norristown State Hospital			
--	--	--	--	--

*Empower older Pennsylvanians, including those from diverse communities, to stay active and healthy.*

Goal	Objectives	Strategies	Outcomes	Performance Measures
Older person in Bucks County will enhance their health and wellness and communities will become places to age well	Coordinate and implement health promotion and wellness programs developed by the Pennsylvania Department of Aging in conjunction with the PrimeTime Health Program that promote healthy behaviors for older adults.	<p>Continue to provide Project Healthy Steps</p> <p>Identify evidence based health promotion and education programs and determine ways to offer to community</p> <p>Develop new community partnerships to expand outreach with health promotion and wellness programs</p>	Enhanced health and wellness of older Bucks County residents	<p>Number of Healthy Steps programs</p> <p>Number of evidence based health and wellness education programs offered.</p> <p>Number of community partnerships to extend outreach for health and wellness</p> <p>Number of attendees at programs</p>
	Coordinate the development and implementation of evidence-based and innovative programs directed to PrimeTime Health priorities through collaboration and partnerships that will improve the quality of life of older adults in Bucks County.	<p>Identify health and wellness education needs of older persons throughout Bucks County</p> <p>Coordinate and implement education programs</p> <p>Monitor and report progress</p>		Partnership with La Salle School of Nursing and completion of health and wellness study of older Bucks County residents.
	Maintain a	Establish and maintain		Meetings of committees

	communications network for providers of health promotion and wellness for older adults in Bucks County.	network for communication and collaboration among health, wellness and health care providers		and work groups to encourage and continue collaboration
	Implement the PrimeTime Health Expo and health and wellness events associated with the Bucks County Senior Games	Continue to host Bucks County Senior Games in coordination with the Bucks County Department of Parks and Recreation		Senior Games held
	Consult with the Commissioners' Senior Task Force as it researches and addresses health and wellness.	Collaborate with Commissioners' Senior Task Force as it researches health and wellness education and program needs		Goals to enhance health and wellness  Plan for enhancing awareness of programs which promote health and wellness among older Bucks County residents
	Partner with the United Way of Bucks County to enhance volunteer participation throughout the County, for people of all ages.	Research programs to enhance volunteer participation  Collaborate with United Way Bucks County 's initiative to establish a volunteer resource service		Partnership to enhance volunteer recruitment and retention
	Replicate the <i>Coming of Age</i> program in Bucks County. <i>Coming of Age</i> is an initiative to promote 50+ civic	Collaborate with the Temple University Center for Intergenerational Learning and other		Number of <i>Coming of Age</i> programs offered  Satisfaction and educational impact

	engagement, lifelong learning and community leadership to help people 50+ plan for the future, promote 50+ volunteering and learning, work with non-profits to recruit, train and retain 50+ volunteers.	Coming of Age partners to replicate Coming of Age programs in Bucks County.		measures
	Continue to provide funding and technical assistance to the Senior Centers throughout Bucks County	Provide consultation on administration and management.  Offer educational programs and technical assistance to help Senior Centers plan and provide services.  Collaborate with community organizations to sustain growth of Senior Centers and develop innovative responses to changing demographics and preferences of older persons in Bucks County		
	Collaborate with Bucks County Library system and other organizations to engage older persons and enhance awareness	Partner with organizations to host annual Senior Arts Exhibit		Annual Art Exhibit is held  Bucks County organizations partner

	of active living in the county.	Link with community organizations to enhance personal planning for the future and civic engagement		with the AAA to enhance awareness/involvement in life planning and civic engagement.
	Continue to work with RSVP volunteer stations on the different expectations and interests of a new generation of volunteers.	Identify needs of volunteer stations  Develop education and/or incentive programs		Number of educational programs
	Partner with CareerLink and the WorkForce Investment Board to develop employment opportunities for older persons and promote careers which help older persons.	Review statistics regarding older persons in the workforce.  Identify actions to promote employment among older people in need of work.		Statistical report on employment and older persons in Bucks County  Action plan to enhance employment of older persons and increased interest by younger workers in helping older persons.
	Partner with the Bucks County Hunger Coalition and other appropriate agencies to study access to food among older persons in Bucks County.	Review participation in home delivered and congregate meal programs Review possible gaps in access to nutrition and food programs  Explore the creation of community-based partnerships which could		Statistics on hunger and access to nutrition programs or sources of food

		enhance the delivery of food to older persons in need.		
	Collaborate with MH/MR and other agencies to enhance the mental health and well being of older persons in Bucks County.	Continue SeniorReach program (which is a co-funded program by MH/MR and the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) to provide outreach to isolated older adults) in need of Mental Health services  Conduct cross system trainings between behavioral health agencies and the AAA.		Senior Reach clients served and those able to be connected to the Behavioral Health System.  Number of cross system events held and number of participants

*Ensure older Pennsylvanians, including those from diverse communities, are free from abuse, neglect, exploitation, abuse and abandonment.*






Goal	Objectives	Strategies	Outcomes	Performance Measures
Ensure that older person in Bucks County can live safely in their homes, communities and facilities.	Continue to provide Protective Services intervention and Ombudsman services by reviewing and investigating reports of need.	Provide Protective Services and Ombudsman Services	Older citizens of Bucks County are aware of services available to protect them from abuse neglect, exploitation and abandonment.	Number of cases, investigations and interventions
	Continue collaboration via membership and work on the Bucks County Crimes Against Older Adults Committee which has been recognized as a replicable model.	Monitor protective service cases and requests for ombudsman services for trends.		Number of protective services cases.
	Promote growth of educational outreach	Collaborate with organizations and agencies to identify educational needs for residents of Bucks County, first responders and professionals to enhance the prevention of abuse, neglect, exploitation and abandonment and provide training to same.		Number of educational programs and impact of programs
	Participate in annual William Neff	Participate in the planning and		Participation in Neff Symposium

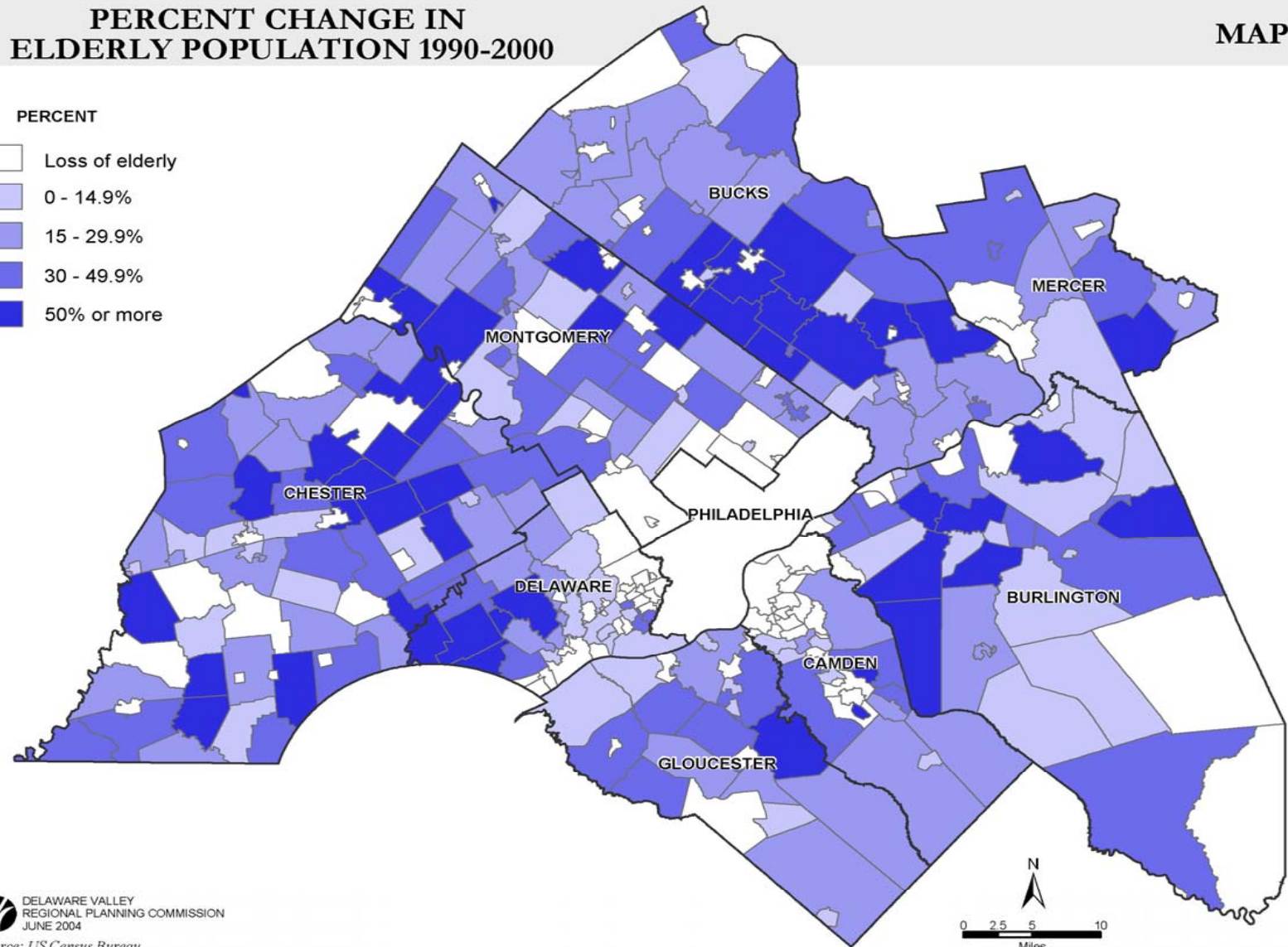
	Symposium on the Prevention of Crimes Against Older Adults	presentation of annual symposium to train professionals about abuse, neglect, exploitation and abandonment and effective ways to prevent same.		
	Ensure safety of vulnerable or at-risk older persons living in the community	Collaborate with Emergency Preparedness Agencies to register at-risk or vulnerable County residents  Review Bucks County Emergency Preparedness Plans for inclusion of older populations		Number of persons registering in municipalities  Results of plan review

Figure I

# PERCENT CHANGE IN ELDERLY POPULATION 1990-2000

MAP 1

- PERCENT
-  Loss of elderly
  -  0 - 14.9%
  -  15 - 29.9%
  -  30 - 49.9%
  -  50% or more




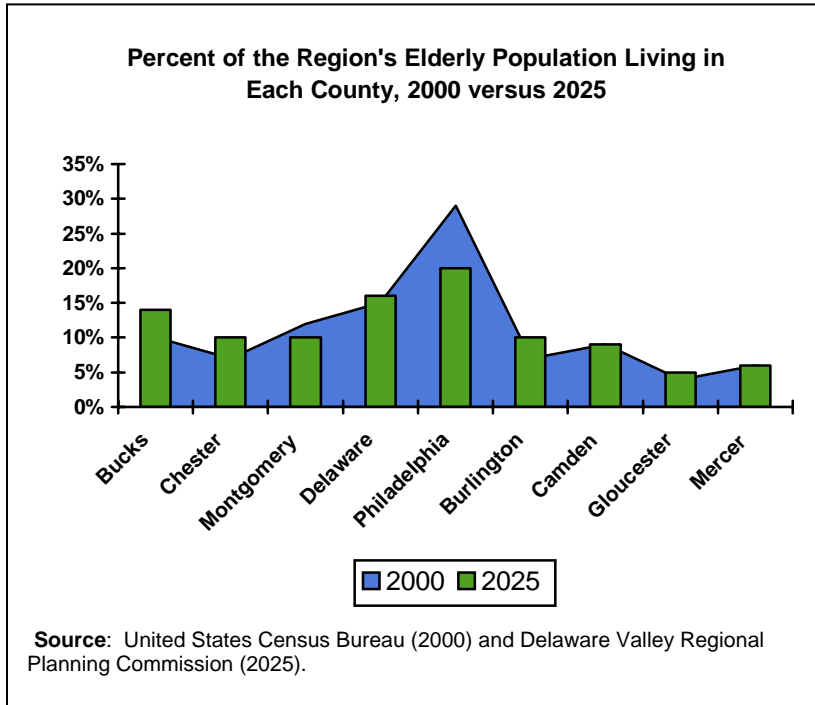
 DELAWARE VALLEY  
REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION  
JUNE 2004  
*Source: US Census Bureau*



Figure II

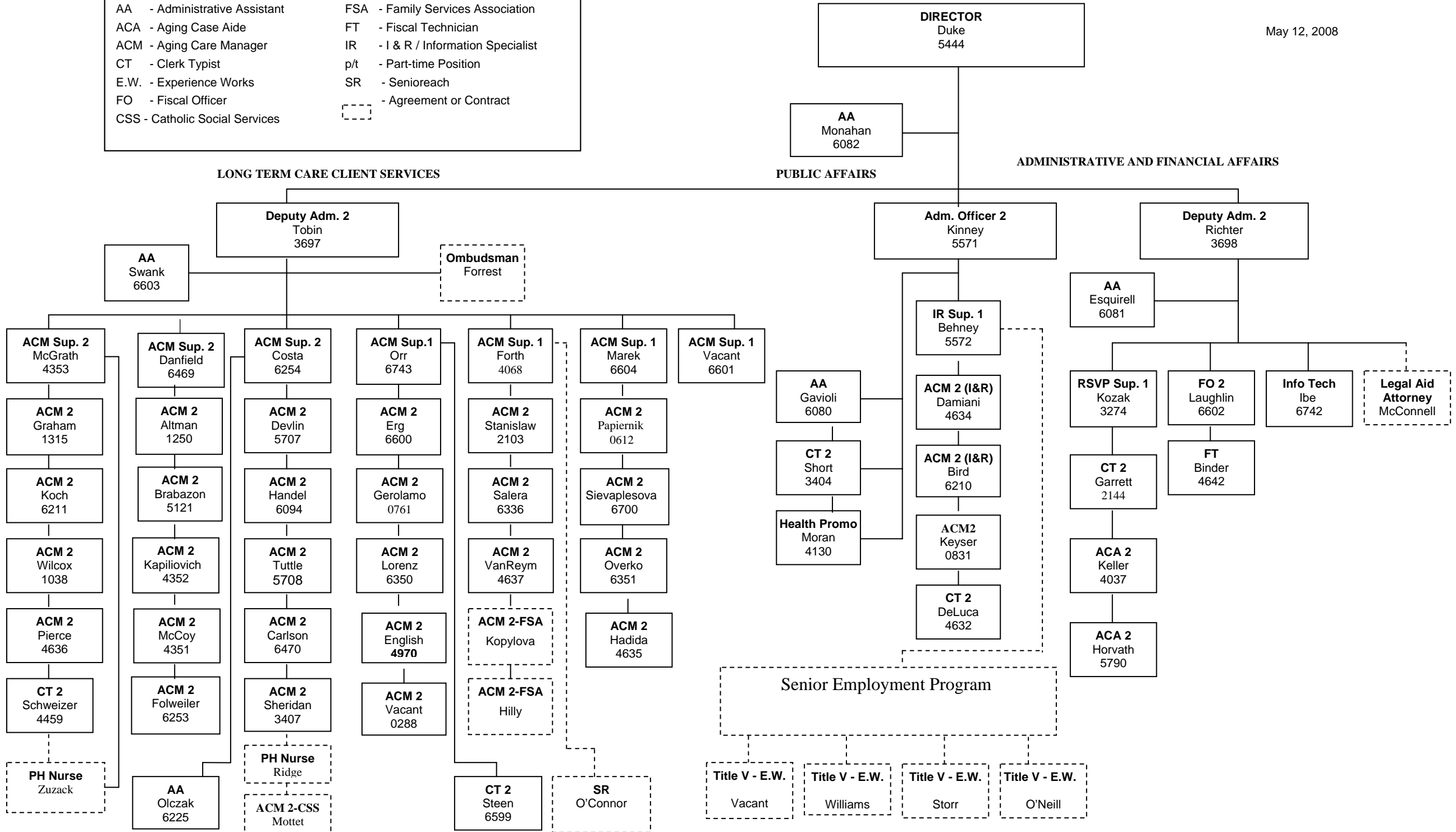


# BUCKS COUNTY AREA AGENCY ON AGING

May 12, 2008

## KEY

- |                                |                                     |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| AA - Administrative Assistant  | FSA - Family Services Association   |
| ACA - Aging Case Aide          | FT - Fiscal Technician              |
| ACM - Aging Care Manager       | IR - I & R / Information Specialist |
| CT - Clerk Typist              | p/t - Part-time Position            |
| E.W. - Experience Works        | SR - Senioreach                     |
| FO - Fiscal Officer            | - Agreement or Contract             |
| CSS - Catholic Social Services |                                     |





memo to  
AAA

**AREA PLAN PART B**

**Signature Page/Standard Assurances Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Department of Aging**

**FY 2008-12 Area Agency on Aging**

**Four-Year Area Plan on Aging**

**Part B. Section I. Signature Page  
Area Agency on Aging Name and Address:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bucks County Area Agency on Aging  
\_\_\_\_\_  
30 East Oakland Avenue  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Doylestown, PA 18901  
\_\_\_\_\_

I/we certify that I/we are authorized to submit this plan on behalf of the designated Area Agency on Aging and agree to abide by regulations issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Aging, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the U.S. Department of Labor. I/we further certify that the general public has had the opportunity to review and comment on this plan through the public hearing process and that written policies, procedures or agreements, as appropriate, have been developed in accordance with Part B, Section 4, and are on file for review and approval, as appropriate, by Department of Aging officials.

Signature(s) of Governing Authority  
Official(s), e.g., Chairman of County  
Commissioners or President, Board  
of Directors.)

James F. Cawley  
Chairman Board of Commissioners

Title Date  
James F. Cawley, Esq.  
Chairman Board of Commissioners \_\_\_\_\_

Charles H. Martin  
Vice Chairman Board of Commissioners

Charles H. Martin  
Vice Chairman Board of Commissioners \_\_\_\_\_

Diane M. Ellis-Marseglia  
Commissioner

Diane M. Ellis-Marseglia, LCSW  
Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_

David M. Sanko  
Chief Operating Office and Chief Clerk

David M. Sanko  
Chief Operating Office and Chief Clerk 5/27/08

Brian M. Duke  
Director

Brian M. Duke MHA MBE  
Director 5/12/08

(Signature of the Area Agency on  
Aging Director)

(Title) (Date)

Name of Person to Contact Regarding the Contents of This Plan:

Brian M. Duke  
(Name)

215-348-0510 ext 1202  
(Area Code and Telephone)

**Part B. Section 2**

**STANDARD ASSURANCES OF COMPLIANCE**

I/we assure that services and programs of the Area Agency on Aging will be managed and delivered in accordance with the plan submitted herewith. Any substantial changes to the plan will be submitted to the Department of Aging for prior approval.

I/we hereby expressly, as a condition precedent to the receipt of State and Federal funds, assure:

That in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973; the Age Discrimination Act of 1975; The Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990; The Pennsylvania Human Relations Act of 1955, as amended; and 16 PA Code, Chapter 49 (Contract Compliance regulations):

- 1) I/we do not and will not discriminate against any person because of race, color, religious creed, ancestry, national origin, age, sex, or handicap;
  - a) In providing services or employment, or in its relationship with other providers;
  - b) In providing access to services and employment for handicapped individuals.
- 2) I/we will comply with all regulations promulgated to enforce the statutory provisions against discrimination.

I/we further hereby agree that all contracts for the provision of services addressed herein will require contractors to comply with these same provisions.


I/we certify that the advisory council of the Area Agency on Aging has participated in the development of this plan and has reviewed the plan as herewith submitted.

Signature(s):

(Name)

(Title)

(Date)

  
\_\_\_\_\_


James F. Cawley, Esq.  
Chairman, Bucks County Commissioners \_\_\_\_\_

Charles H. Martin  
Vice Chairman, Bucks County Commissioners \_\_\_\_\_

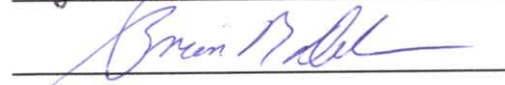
Diane Ellis-Marseglia, LCSW  
Bucks County Commissioner \_\_\_\_\_

David M. Sanko  
Chief Operating Officer and Chief Clerk \_\_\_\_\_

Brian M. Duke MHA, MBE  
Director, Bucks County Area Agency on Aging \_\_\_\_\_

 5/27/08

5/27/08



5/12/08

**Part B. Section 3**

**DOCUMENTATION OF PARTICIPATION BY THE AREA  
AGENCY ON AGING ADVISORY COUNCIL**

PSA NO. 29

NAME OF AAA: Bucks County Area Agency on Aging

PLAN PERIOD FROM 7/1/2008 TO 6/30/2012

In accordance with 6 PA Code, Section 35.23, a.(1) and (2) and the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended, I certify that the Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council has had the opportunity to assist in the development of this Plan. I further certify that the Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council has participated in at least one Public Hearing held on this Plan.

The Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council X does \_\_\_\_\_ does not recommend approval of this Plan.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Chief Officer of the Area  
Agency on Aging Advisory Council

Nancy Keenan, Chairperson , Advisory Council  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Typed Name and Title

May 12, 2008  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Part B. Section 4

### Listing of Plan Assurances and Required Activities

#### Older Americans Act, As Amended in 2006

#### ASSURANCES

The Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended, requires each Area Agency on Aging to provide assurances that it will develop a plan and carry out a program in accordance with the plan. Each Area Agency on Aging must comply with the following provisions of the Act and written policies, procedures or agreements, as appropriate, must be on file in the Area Agency on Aging office and available for review and approval by Department of Aging officials.

#### **Sec. 306(a), AREA PLANS**

- (2) Each area agency on aging shall 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 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.
- (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 subclause (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
- (4)(A)(iii) With respect to the fiscal year proceeding the fiscal year for which such plan is prepared, each area agency on aging shall:
  - (I) identify the number of low-income minority older individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas 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 (a)(4)(A)(i).
- (4)(B)(i) Each area agency on aging shall 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:
  - (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
- (4)(C) Each area agency on agency shall provide 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) Each area agency on aging shall 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)(F) Each area agency will: in coordination with the State agency and with the State agency responsible for mental health services, increase public awareness of mental health disorders, remove barriers to diagnosis and treatment, and coordinate mental health services (including mental health screenings) provided with funds expended by the area agency on aging with mental health services provided by community health centers and by other public agencies and nonprofit private organizations;
- (9) Each area agency on aging shall 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 2000 in carrying out such a program under this title.
- (11) Each area agency on aging shall 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.
  - (13)(A) Each area agency on aging shall provide assurances that the area agency on aging will maintain the integrity and public purpose of services provided, and service providers, under this title in all contractual and commercial relationships.
  - (13)(B) Each area agency on aging shall provide assurances that the area agency on aging will 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.
  - (13)(C) Each area agency on aging shall provide assurances that the area agency will 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 non-governmental contracts or such commercial relationships.
  - (13)(D) Each area agency on aging shall provide assurances that the area agency will 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 non-governmental contracts or commercial relationships.
  - (13)(E) Each area agency on aging shall provide assurances that the area agency will, 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) Each area agency on aging shall provide assurances that funds received under this title will not be used to pay any part of a cost (including an administrative cost) incurred by the area agency on aging to carry out 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.

## Part B. Section 5

Narrative Summary of the Proceedings of the AAA Area Plan Public Hearing. Attach a written narrative (no more than five pages) summarizing the proceedings of the AAA Area Plan Public Hearing.

**March 17, 2008**

**12:30 PM**

**Bristol Township Senior Center**

A public meeting was announced in the press and convened at the Bristol Township Senior Center, 2501 Bath Road in Bristol PA.

A presentation by Brian Duke, Director of the Bucks County Area Agency on Aging reviewed the current demographics and trends, the goals of the 2004-2008 plan and progress toward meeting those goals, and the goals presented during the Pennsylvania Department of Aging State Plan Town Meetings.

Following the presentation the floor was opened to answer any questions and solicit any input that those in attendance wished to offer regarding the County Plan on Aging.

Comments included:

- Many of the older residents of the Bristol Township area have been in their homes for along period of time and prefer to age in place. There is a need for reliable home repair services to help some residents maintain their home or make emergency repairs.
- It was suggested that perhaps a registry of home repair services or vendors could be made available. Alerts regarding possible fraudulent practices or contractors would also be appreciated. Some of the issues homeowners reported include cleaning gutters, lawn care and outdoor maintenance. There was also discussion on whether a fund could be established to help provide grants to home owners to subsidize repair costs.
- Some attendees stated that perhaps services to help with home repairs could also be used for home modifications such as the building of a ramp to access thee home.
- Attendees requested that more information be provided about services available through thee AAA.
- Two members of a senior advocacy organization expressed support for recently introduced legislation to change the eligibility criteria for the state family caregiver support program.

- The members of the advocacy group also expressed concern over the confusion regarding Medicare and Medicaid coverage. The attendees were informed about the APPRISE insurance counseling service.
- Transportation services provided by Bucks County Transport are appreciated. There are concerns about occasional lateness and missed pick ups. Attendees expressed a desire for transportation services which would be available on Saturdays or weekday evenings.
- Attendees inquired as to how they could express ideas for changes to SEPTA.
- The Turnpike Interchange project is about to begin soon and could go on for about 12 years. The project is very large and may have an impact on the ability to access the Senior Center, noise levels in the Senior Center, and detour routes may impact the Center. One concern expressed is that changes may inhibit the delivery of meals to meals on wheels clients.
- Attendees have been on the waiting list for in-home services provided through the Options program. Two attendees reported being on the list and not receiving services that would have been helpful to their recovery from illness and injury respectively. A request was made to advocate for more funding so these services are available. Attendees also asked about what other services are available in the community to help meet care needs.
- A question was raised that if in home services such as those referred to from the Options program are not available – can a person request an extended stay in sub-acute or short stay rehab. Attendees feel that admission and discharge criteria do not mesh well with post discharge care needs and services.
- There is confusion on the criteria for Medicaid coverage. Educational programs would be helpful. One attendee reported being told different things at different facilities regarding Social Security income.
- The attorney for the Legal Aid service stated that there has been an increase in the number of bankruptcy cases in the last two years. An attendee said she knows of neighbors who are having a hard time keeping up with their bills and is aware of more neighbors filing for bankruptcy. The attorney for Legal Aid said that collection agencies are getting more aggressive and at times make misleading threats to older persons who may be isolated in their homes.
- Attendees expressed concern over the increasing cost of living including pharmaceutical expenses, utilities and food.
- Attendees stated they are concerned about increasing property taxes.

- Confusion about health insurance coverage can lead to the utilization of more expensive health care services. For example uninsured and underinsured persons are utilizing emergency room services for care which could be provided in another primary care setting. There seems to be fewer clinics open for care.
- There seems to be higher risks associated with acute care in hospitals. One example given is infection rates. It was suggested that educational programs be provided on what to look out for when one is hospitalized.
- Some managed care plans are increasing deductibles, premium costs are increasing as are co-payment requirements. It was requested that advocacy activity by the AAA look at these changes and see what can be done.
- There was concern expressed that there is an increase in the number of physicians who are not accepting Medicare due to reduced reimbursement rates.
- There is confusion in the changes to Medicare Part D, how one is notified, and what the impact of the changes will be to a person on one plan vs. another.
- It was suggested that a resource be developed which could provide information on the health and social services available in the community. Perhaps the red book created by the United Way would be a start.
- An attendee asked that is housing and property taxes become too high are there any options available which could allow one to stay in their home. Options such as the YWCA shared housing program were discussed.

**March 20, 2008**

**12:00 PM**

**Penridge Senior Center**

A public meeting was announced in the press and convened at the Penridge Senior Center, 146 E. Main Street in Silverdale, PA.

In addition to members of the Senior Center, community members including State Representative Paul Clymer were in attendance.

A presentation by Brian Duke, Director of the Bucks County Area Agency on Aging reviewed the current demographics and trends, the goals of the 2004-2008 plan and progress toward meeting those goals, and the goals presented during the Pennsylvania Department of Aging State Plan Town Meetings.

Following the presentation the floor was opened to answer any questions and solicit any input that those in attendance wished to offer regarding the County Plan on Aging.

Comments included:

- There is a need for greater access to information about services and resources available to older persons. It was suggested that perhaps the press be used to inform the public of services and resources available.
- A question was raised about where one can get assistance with Property Tax and Rent Rebate Applications.
- The value of the Senior Center in the community was discussed. Pennridge Senior Center is experiencing growth and the programs are appreciated by members and the community.
- The internet is used by a growing number of members at Pennridge. It was suggested that emails and website links be used to convey information about resources and services.
- Local radio is popular among the residents of the area and could be used to convey information.
- The number of pamphlets available in some locations is a bit intimidating. It would be good if there were staff available to meet with members or local residents and provide counseling as to what services or resources would best meet their needs.
- There was a request to learn more about what the Area Agency on Aging does. Educational programs would be appreciated. The audience was also informed as to the Information and Referral Services and the contact number for that service.
- A concern was expressed about the local drinking water supply and how someone could address problems with the quality of the drinking water. References were made to the local government and water service.
- Attendees expressed concerns about the possibility that increases in Social Security or other personal income may place them above the eligibility income limits for PACE and PACE-NET. Explanations as to how PACE and PACE-NET are operated in terms of eligibility criteria were provided and persons were invited to contact the AAA with any questions.
- Retail stores and some drug companies advertise savings in drug costs. It is felt that not all of the information is provided and may be misleading. An educational program on the discounts offered by retail stores or drug companies along with points of caution would be welcomed.
- It was suggested that the AAA help to advocate on behalf of older persons in matters related to auto insurance. An attendee reported some confusion over discounts applied to a person over the age of 55 when not all members of his household are over 55.

Rep. Clymer sought clarification from Harrisburg. Discounts can be provided as long as all policyholders on a policy are over the age of 55. A request was made that the AAA may consider advocacy regarding issues such as this.

- The Transportation services which are offered are appreciated. There is concern about the long waiting times for pick up through the shared ride program.
- Attendees indicated that they are hearing more and more about reverse mortgages. They requested educational programs which would help them make decisions about this financial option.
- Rep. Clymer reported on some enhancements to local transit via a grant received by the Bucks TMA. Attendees expressed support of the planning and development of more public transportation options such as light rail between Lansdale and Quakertown.
- Concern was expressed about the levels of property tax which can impoverish an older person on a fixed income or cause them to move. A discussion followed on pending legislation and activity in the State House regarding the lowering of property tax.

**May 12, 2008**

**9:30AM**

**Doylestown Public Library**

**55 East Court Street**

**Doylestown, PA 18901**

**Annual Hearing Block Grant  
And review of County 4 Year Plan**

Comments and questions offered during the public meeting convened to hold the annual hearing on the Block Grant budget and to review the draft of the County 4 year plan included:

- One attendee asked if services of the Area Agency on Aging are only provided to residents with low income or those with greater need. Staff from the AAA explained that information and referral services among others are open to all residents of Bucks County.
- It was noted that the AAA provides many services and there are challenges as to how dollars are allocated among services which are all equally in need.
- Concern was expressed over the amount of dollars available for home and community based services. Discussion followed on the absence of a cost of living increase in the Governor's budget and inequities created by hold harmless legislation which does not take into account accelerating growth in the population of older persons.

- Attendees asked what advocacy activities they can become involved with.
- Several examples of community based partnerships from the non-profit or faith based sectors were identified. Discussion followed on ways to inspire public-private partnerships in the municipalities of Bucks County.
- The changing role of care management in an environment with limited resources was discussed.
- An attendee asked how the business community could become more involved in supporting persons who are growing older.
- The waiting list for the Options program was discussed both in terms of advocacy efforts and possible ways to decrease the list through links to services provided by other organizations and enhanced awareness of benefits such as Veteran's benefits.
- The Senior Reach program and other collaborative efforts between the Bucks County Area Agency on Aging, MH/MR and Behavioral Health were recognized.
- A brief discussion focused on how emergency preparedness plans at the local and county level can be enhanced to engage vulnerable older persons.