

Washoe County Senior Services

2014 Master Plan for Aging Services **Objective Summaries**ⁱ

June 1, 2014

Goal 1: Increase participation of seniors in volunteerism

Enrich the lives of seniors through volunteerism and improve the programs and services that help people of all ages.

VISION: Every Washoe County senior will have an opportunity to contribute to their community.

OBJECTIVE: Assess community opportunities for engaging seniors in volunteer service, advocacy, and community decision-making.

STRATEGIES:

- Promote options for improving and expanding services through volunteers.
- Engage the Washoe County Senior Services Advisory Board in planning and decision-making.
- Engage senior volunteers as community spokespersons.

ACTION PLAN:

- Promote senior volunteer programs.
- Develop a clearinghouse for volunteer organizations.
- Inform seniors of the availability of volunteer opportunities.
- Educate senior advocacy groups.
- Identify opportunities for seniors to participate on various city and county advisory groups and commissions.
- Support volunteers interested in joining these advisory groups and commissions.
- Determine the roles that volunteers can play within Washoe County Senior Services.
- Develop job descriptions for senior services volunteers.
- Develop management systems to recruit, train, supervise and evaluate volunteers.
- Create monthly volunteer reports.

Goal 2: Engage volunteers from the entire community in the “Master Plan for Aging Services”

Ensure that older persons have an active role in planning and managing senior services.

VISION: Every Washoe County resident will have an opportunity to participate in programs and services offered by Washoe County Senior Services (WCSS).

OBJECTIVE: Promote volunteer service and advocacy for all *Master Plan* priorities.

STRATEGIES:

- Advance Washoe County *Master Plan* priorities through volunteer engagement.

ACTION PLAN:

- Identify volunteer roles in the implementation and operation of the *Master Plan*.
- Publicize volunteer opportunities through various media, presentations, and other forms of outreach.
- Support volunteers engaged in the *Master Plan*.
- Prepare quarterly reports on the contributions and experiences of volunteers.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the volunteer initiative.

Goal 3: Food Insecurity

Expand seniors' access to food and nutrition services.

VISION: Every Washoe County senior will have adequate food and nutritious meals to maintain their health.

OBJECTIVE: Expand food services on the following schedule:

- In FY 2014, provide current Home Delivered Meals (HDM) (aka “Meals on Wheels”ⁱⁱ) clients a second meal option (an additional 60,000 meals annually served)
- In FY 2015, Increase HDM participants to 600 individuals (an additional 60,000 meals served annually)
- In FY 2016, Increase HDM participants to 750 individuals (an additional 91,000 meals served annually)

STRATEGIES:

- Maximize participation in Washoe County Congregateⁱⁱⁱ and Home Delivered Meal Programs and food distribution services.
- Explore strategies for minimizing the cost per meal.
- Explore strategies for engaging the community, non-profits, and retail outlets in expanding options for accessing food.
- Promote partnerships with non-profit and religious organizations that provide food.

ACTION PLANS:

- Expand Home Delivered Meals funding and food availability to ensure that clients have more than one meal a day.
- Advertise Home Delivered Meals and the Congregate Meal Program through various media, presentations, and other outreach strategies.
- Reduce cost of meal production by using volunteers to deliver home delivered meals.
- Support supermarkets in home delivery of groceries and continued access of Farmer’s Market vouchers.
- Evaluate the demand for food services and effectiveness of program operation.
- Evaluate kitchen capacity to prepare and serve increasing numbers of meals.

Goal 4: Home and Community-based Services

Ensure the availability of a continuum of care^v that supports “aging in place.”^v

VISION: Every Washoe County senior will have access to the essential services and supports that allow them to remain in their own homes.

OBJECTIVE: Expand services designed to maintain seniors in their homes and communities as they age. Provide subsidies for those who are low income and vulnerable (frail, socially isolated or age 80+).

STRATEGIES:

- Promote integrated programs that address seniors’ difficulty managing activities of daily living (ADLs)^{vi} and instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs)^{vii}, and reduce the risk of institutionalization^{viii} and unnecessary hospitalization.
- Encourage the public and private sectors to offer a wide array of supportive services.
- Expand WCSS’s case management^{ix}, in-home care, and supportive services for those who are low income and vulnerable (frail, socially isolated or age 80+).
- Maximize participation in the WCSS’s DayBreak Adult Day Health^x Program.
- Expand caregiver options and supports under the Nevada Medicaid^{xi} State Plan.
- Foster integration of person-centered care model^{xii} in health and long-term care services.
- Foster nursing home diversion^{xiii} and care transitions^{xiv}.
- Implement Veterans Directed Home and Community-Based Care Program.^{xv}

ACTION PLANS:

- Leverage resources to increase the availability of home and community based resources.
- Increase the number of case managers, in-home care^{xvi} and support services.
- Establish eligibility criteria for low income and vulnerable seniors (frail, socially isolated or age 80+).
- Increase the number of case aides^{xvii} and supports for social workers.
- Evaluate the anticipated efficiencies from technology that support in-home nursing and social work tasks.
- Evaluate community demand for adult day and respite services^{xviii}.
- Seek alternative funding for DayBreak Adult Day Health, including Medicaid and Washoe County Indigent Fund^{xix}.
- Develop resources for advocates to use in support of modifications to the Nevada Medicaid State Plan and for State services for seniors and people with disabilities.
- Interview providers of adult day care and respite care and determine gaps in services.
- Expand homemaker services^{xx}; Evaluate personal care services^{xxi}.
- Educate senior advocacy groups about needed Medicaid changes.
- Educate the public and providers on person-center care.

Goal 5: Social Engagement

Promote events and activities that support active lifestyles.

VISION: Every senior in Washoe County will have opportunities for an active lifestyle, and to participate in social and community activities.

OBJECTIVE: Increase socialization for seniors who are isolated.

STRATEGIES:

- Engage community partners in offering an array of active living, social, and community activities.

ACTION PLAN:

- Convene a community partners' working group to develop a plan to expand opportunities for engagement.
- Identify the activities that are currently available in the community.
- Analyze barriers that seniors experience in accessing these opportunities.
- Evaluate the support services needed to ensure that isolated seniors can participate in activities.
- Facilitate the expansion of missing support services.
- Promote the availability of engagement opportunities through media, presentations, and other outreach strategies.
- Evaluate the impact of strategies on the level of social engagement.

Goal 6: Reduce Social Isolation

Enrich the lives of isolated seniors and those who live in group homes^{xxii}.

VISION: Every Washoe County senior will have access to services that enrich their lives and promote independence.

OBJECTIVE: Work to ensure that group home managers and in-home service providers offer social engagement opportunities.

STRATEGIES:

- Encourage service providers to offer an array of social engagement opportunities.
- Strengthen regulations governing social engagement in group homes.

ACTION PLAN:

- Identify appropriate roles for Washoe County Senior Services to play in improving the quality of socialization activities.
- Convene a group of providers to determine their level of support needs.
- Create a database of resources that promote social engagement.
- Solicit support in creating activity sheets for service managers.
- Facilitate operation of the Ombudsman Program.
- Re-examine licensing requirements for group homes.
- Evaluate service options and advocate for changes where deficiencies exist.

Goals 7: Affordable and Accessible Housing

Expand housing options to help seniors “age in place.”

VISION: Washoe County seniors will have access to affordable and accessible housing options that are near essential services.

OBJECTIVE: Support the development of a full-spectrum of affordable and accessible housing options located near services.

STRATEGIES:

- Encourage developers and city and county planners to create strategies and resources for expanding housing options and improving the accessibility of homes.

ACTION PLANS:

- Identify services, providers and possible partners to involve in the expansion of affordable and accessible housing options.
- Convene and provide support to broad-based steering committee^{xxiii} to explore options and barriers to the expansion of housing.
- Work toward adoption of Universal Design^{xxiv} and Visitability^{xxv} standards.
- Identify and modify regulatory provisions to encourage senior housing close to services.

Goals 8: Neighborhood Supports

Strengthen neighborhood supports that encourage seniors to “age in place.”

VISION: Washoe County seniors will have resources in their neighborhood that help them remain in their homes as long as possible.

OBJECTIVE: Determine the feasibility of NORC’s (Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities)^{xxvi}, Senior “Villages”^{xxvii} and other neighborhood-based resources that support “aging in place”.

STRATEGIES:

- Investigate the feasibility of NORC’s (Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities) or Senior “Villages” in neighborhoods throughout Washoe County.

ACTION PLANS:

- Research NORC’s, Senior “Villages” and other innovative housing options.
- Convene a community discussion on options.
- Inform the public about the benefits and structure of NORCs, Senior “Villages” and other innovative housing options.
- Identify strategies that are appropriate for Washoe County.
- Develop a pilot project in one or more neighborhoods
- Evaluate and modify operations as needed.

Goal 9: Aging and Disability Resource Center

Assure that all seniors have access to the information and services that enable them to live healthy, safe, and productive lives.

VISION: Easy access to information on options that support “aging in place”.

OBJECTIVE: Washoe County Senior Services will work to ensure that Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)^{xxviii} provides easy access to Washoe County seniors, people with disabilities and caregivers and provides them with timely, accurate, and up-to-date information on programs and services.

STRATEGIES:

- Enhance the quality of information provided by and streamline the operation of the ADRC.
- Explore various public information vehicles for informing the public and seniors about critical issues, such as caregiving support, on a timely basis.
- Expand ADRC services on the following schedule:
 - Provide information and advocacy services to 40,000 seniors by FY 2016.
 - Increase options counseling^{xxix} service to 10,000 seniors by end of FY 2017.

ACTION PLAN:

- Engage other local Information and Referral services in discussion on ADRC.
- Increase the number of ADRC staff.
- Evaluate Nevada Aging and Disability Services^{xxx} ADRC services database and website (www.nevadaadrc.com) and identify solutions to operational issues; evaluate a possible County replacement.
- Create a system that assures the quality and timeliness of information and resources included in the ADRC.
- Publicize the ADRC.
- Evaluate consumers’ experience with the ADRC.
- Identify the resource and information needs of caregivers.
- Create printed, video, webpages, social media and other resources that allow caregivers to access “just in time”^{xxxi} information.
- Promote resources to caregivers.
- Evaluate the impact and quality of these caregiver resources.
- Train seniors in the use of social service assessment^{xxxii} and self-assessment tools.

Goal 10: Public Outreach

Assure that seniors are aware of the resources and services that can support healthy, safe, and productive lifestyles.

VISION: Washoe County will find the most vulnerable seniors, and ensure that they, their families and caregivers have access to the services that support “aging in place”.

OBJECTIVE: Expand early intervention and outreach methods to identify the most vulnerable seniors and provide them with information and access to services.

STRATEGIES:

- Develop and mobilize resources to find the most vulnerable.

ACTION PLAN:

- Expand the Gatekeeper Program^{xxxiii} to all law enforcement, fire safety and emergency response agencies.
- Improve the effectiveness of the Kids to Senior Korner Program^{xxxiv} in reaching seniors.
- Hire and train a public information team.
- Develop and implement a communication and public relations campaign.
- Identify critical gaps in information and knowledge.
- Create and oversee a volunteer Community Ambassador Program^{xxxv} to reach out to all segments of the community by providing up-to-date, accurate, and timely information.
- Outreach partnership with Washoe County Library^{xxxvi}; improve website for homebound seniors.
- Educate seniors about scams and how to recognize, avoid, and report them.
- Educate seniors about Social Security, public benefits, and other income sources.

Goal 11: Legal Services

Provide legal advice and representation to protect the rights of seniors, and to eliminate fraud and abuse perpetrated against them.

VISION: The civil and legal rights of all Washoe County seniors will be protected.

OBJECTIVE: Ensure services that protect the legal rights and safety of seniors are available.

STRATEGIES:

- Ensure services that assist seniors at risk of elder abuse, including self-neglect will be well coordinated and responsive.
- Institute a guardian ad litem^{xxxvii} program to protect the rights and assets of at-risk seniors.
- Foster the use of power of attorney^{xxxviii} and advance directives^{xxxix}.

ACTION PLANS:

- Support and fund the non-profit Senior Law Project^{xl}.
- Promote the Senior Law Project through all media.
- Convene stakeholders^{xli} to create a guardian ad litem program; support the education of the public on its use.
- Conduct public seminars on advance directives and power of attorney at least twice per year.
- Work with Nevada Elder Protective Services to identify and implement strategies to prevent elder abuse.
- Promote public awareness of the indicators of fraud, abuse and neglect and how to report them.

Goal 12: Transportation

Expand public and private transportation options that allow seniors to live independently.

VISION: Washoe County seniors will have access to transportation for essential services, such as shopping, medical appointments, and socialization.

OBJECTIVE: Ensure the availability of adequate Americans with Disability Act (ADA)^{xliii} and non-ADA transportation services throughout all of Washoe County. Provide subsidies for those who are low income and most vulnerable seniors (frail, socially isolated or age 80+).

STRATEGIES:

- Engage the community and WCSS's partners in exploring strategies to expand transportation services.
- Subsidize reduced cost or free transportation services to seniors who are frail, socially isolated or age 80+.
- Engage volunteers in the expansion of transportation services.

ACTION PLANS:

- Conduct a literature review and identify best practices.
- Support a broad-based steering committee to plan for expanded services.
- Convene non-profit organizations to discuss possible pilot project.
- Design and evaluate an Escorted Transportation Pilot Project^{xliiii}.
- Define eligibility for low income and vulnerable (frail, socially isolated and age 80+).
- Increase funding for Taxi bucks^{xliv}, ACCESS^{xlv} coupons, and monthly bus passes.
- Analyze volunteer roles to support transportation projects.
- Investigate the feasibility of providing volunteer transportation through non-profit groups.
- Evaluate the capacity of homeowners' associations to offer transportation for seniors in their developments.

ⁱ **The Master Plan complete report** and background information is available to the public on the Washoe County Senior Services website: www.washoecounty.us/seniorsrv/MP/MasterPlan.htm

ⁱⁱ **Meals on Wheels** are programs that deliver meals to individuals at home who are unable to prepare their own meals. Because they are housebound, many of the recipients are the elderly or people with disabilities. Meals are prepared to USDA standards and meet 1/3 of the recommended daily allowance for seniors, and often are delivered by volunteers.

ⁱⁱⁱ **Congregate Nutrition Services**, established in Washoe County in 1972 and Home-Delivered Nutrition Services, established in 1978, provide meals and related nutrition services to older individuals in a variety of settings including congregate facilities such as senior centers; or by home-delivery to older individuals who are homebound due to illness, disability, or geographic isolation.

^{iv} **A continuum of care** is a service that helps providers identify ways of coordinating and linking resources to avoid duplication and facilitate seamless movement among care settings.

^v **Aging in place** is defined as "the ability to live in one's own home and community safely, independently, and comfortably, regardless of age, income, or ability level."

^{vi} **ADL or Activities of Daily Living** includes eating, bathing, dressing, toileting, mobility and transferring (from a bed to a wheelchair), which are the essential activities that sustain life and health. Those who have ADL limitations can be totally or partially dependent on others because of one or more chronic conditions (e.g., diabetes, heart disease or dementia). This care is provided in the home, group homes, assisted living facilities or nursing homes.

^{vii} **IADL or Instrumental Activities of Daily Living** include cooking, shopping, housework, money management (paying bills) and other essential activities that are necessary for someone to live independently. This assistance is provided to people who live in their own home or apartment.

^{viii} **Institutionalization** refers to moving in to a nursing home or other restrictive environment.

^{ix} **Case Management** is a patient-centered, goal-oriented process of assessing the need of an individual for particular services and obtaining those services and monitoring care.

^x **DayBreak Adult Day Health** is a state licensed Adult Day Health facility that provides medical services (e.g., medication and behavior management) under full time nursing oversight. Clients are provided nutrition, social and health services in a secure environment.

^{xi} **Medicaid** is a U.S. government program, financed by federal, state, and local funds, of hospitalization and medical insurance for persons of all ages within certain income limits.

^{xii} **Person centered care** is a philosophy of care where the client makes the decision about who provides their care, and how and where it is provided. It is an evidence-based practice that keeps people in their homes longer than other methods.

^{xiii} **Nursing home diversion** is achieved by providing clients with services that allow them to remain in their community rather than being placed in a nursing home.

^{xiv} **Care transition** is a set of actions designed to ensure the coordination and continuity of health care as patients transfer between different locations or different levels of care within the same location.

^{xv} **Veterans Directed Home and Community-Based Care Program** is Veteran-Directed Home and Community Based Services gives Veterans of all ages the opportunity to receive the Home and Community Based Services they need in a consumer-directed way. Veteran-Directed Care is for Veterans who need skilled services, case management, and assistance with activities of daily living (e.g., bathing and getting dressed) or instrumental activities of daily living (e.g., fixing meals and taking medicines); are isolated or their caregiver is experiencing burden.

^{xvi} **In-Home Supports** are defined as services for individuals who are living at home with family members (i.e., immediate or extended family) or for individuals who are living on their own, with roommates or others without disabilities. In-Home Supports may include supervision, teaching and/or assistance provided directly to or in support of the individual with developmental disabilities or is support of caregivers. In-Home Supports are utilized to achieve and/or maintain the outcomes of increased independence, productivity, enhanced family functioning, and inclusion in the community for individuals with developmental disabilities.

^{xvii} **The Case Aide** provides services to current clients in Senior Social Services; they support care plans developed by and under the direction of licensed Social Workers. The Case Aide will assist with tasks that keep elders independent and in their own homes, providing more frequent and one-on-one contact. Duties will include behavior support for activities of daily living (medication management, bill paying, etc.), transportation and appointment assistance, home safety assessments and repair assistance/oversight, and assistance with care plan implementation.

^{xviii} **Respite care** is the provision of short-term, temporary relief to those who are caring for family members who might otherwise require permanent placement in a facility outside the home.

^{xix} **Indigent Funds** - By law, every Nevada County shall provide care, support and relief to the poor, indigent, incompetent and those incapacitated by age, disease or accident, lawfully resident therein, when those persons are not supported or relieved by their relatives or guardians, by their own means, or by state hospitals, or other state, federal or private institutions or agencies. Funds used to operate these programs are referred to as **Indigent Funds**.

^{xx} **Homemaker Services** are non-medical support services, such as food preparation, house cleaning, laundry, and shopping provided by trained personnel to disabled, sick or convalescent individuals in their home.

^{xxi} **Personal Care** is medical and non-medical help given to elderly or infirm people with essential everyday activities such as washing, toileting, dressing, grooming and meals.

^{xxii} **A group home** is a private residence for people with chronic disabilities. Typically there are no more than six residents and there is a trained caregiver there twenty-four hours a day.

^{xxiii} **A steering committee** is a body within an enterprise that supports the steering of its actions. Its main concern is making strategic decisions concerning future realization of the enterprise's projects.

^{xxiv} **Universal Design** (often "inclusive design") refers to standards for buildings, products and environments that ensure they are usable and accessible to older people, people without disabilities and people with disabilities.

^{xxv} **Visitability** standards make homes easier for people who have limited mobility (walker, cane, or wheelchair) to visit friends and family rather than having to turn down invitations, or not be invited at all. These features also permit formerly non-disabled people to remain in their homes if they develop a disability. These and Universal Design standards avoid expensive renovations, moving to a different house, living in an inaccessible home, or moving to an institution or nursing home.

^{xxvi} **A Naturally Occurring Retirement Community (NORC)** is a community that naturally evolves over time to include a relatively large concentration of senior residents; some communities develop services and volunteer programs to support them.

^{xxvii} **Senior Villages** or neighborhood villages are communities that support seniors in their homes by providing services, assistance and volunteer support. Senior Villages are not considered NORC's because they do not have a high concentration of senior residents.

^{xxviii} **The Aging and Disability Resource Center program (ADRC)** is a collaborative effort of the Administration on Aging (AoA) and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to provide information and access to long term supports and services. The ADRC program serves as a single point of entry into the long-term support system for seniors, people with disabilities and caregivers. ADRCs are also referred to as a "one stop shop" or "no wrong door" system. ADRCs benefit consumers by helping to identify needs, gathering information and resources to meet those needs and reducing the stress of navigating benefits.

^{xxix} **Options Counseling** is provided by certified and trained experts who assist seniors, families and caregivers, and includes outreach (finding the hard to serve), information, assistance with complex issues, and advocacy and eligibility with public benefits. The purpose is to help them with access to the essential health and long term care services, and help them make decisions about their care, and learn about social activities, programs, services and benefits.

^{xxx} **The Nevada Aging and Disability Services Division** provides leadership and advocacy in the planning, development and delivery of a high quality, comprehensive support service system across the lifespan. This allows all of Nevada's elders, adults and children with disabilities or special health care needs to live independent, meaningful, and dignified lives in the most integrated setting appropriate to their needs.

^{xxxix} **Just in time** training refers to providing information and resources to a client at the time when clients need it rather than providing training in advance of the need.

^{xxxix} **A social services assessment** is a review, carried out by a social worker, of your physical and mental needs. They identify any physical problems seniors have plus the emotional/social aspects of a seniors' life in order to determine the type and amount of care required.

^{xxxix} **The Washoe County Gatekeeper Program**, based on a national best practice, trains fire safety and emergency personnel to recognize non-medical issues (e.g., dementia, caregiver isolation, poverty and confusion) that need intervention by a social worker, and how to make a referral for service. This model has been shown to reduce suicide among older adults.

^{xxxix} **Kids to Seniors Korner** is a local program administered by Catholic Charities that conducts neighborhood outreach to find hard to serve and socially isolated children and seniors.

^{xxxix} **The Community Ambassador Program** is a model project of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation "Pathways to Positive Aging" where volunteers serve seniors in their own communities, in their own language, within their own cultural norms, and does so where seniors live, worship, socialize, and learn (<http://capseniors.org/>)

^{xxxix} **A Washoe County Library** branch is in the Washoe County Senior Center, 1155 East Ninth Street (9th and Sutro), Reno, NV.

^{xxxix} **A guardian ad litem** is an expert appointed by a Court to investigate and report on the facts related to a guardianship petition. Courts appoint these special representatives for infants, minors, and mentally incompetent persons, all of whom generally need help protecting their rights in court.

^{xxxix} **A power of attorney (POA) or letter of attorney** is a written authorization to represent or act on another's behalf in private affairs, business, or some other legal matter, sometimes against the wishes of the other.

^{xxxix} **An advance health care directive**, also known as **living will**, **personal directive**, **advance directive**, or **advance decision**, is a set of written instructions that a person gives that specifies what actions should be taken for their health, if they are no longer able to make decisions because of illness or incapacity.

^{xi} **The Senior Law Project (SLP)** is a non-profit law firm operated by the Washoe County Department of Senior Services. The SLP provides legal services to persons 60 years and older, who are residents of Washoe County, without charge, although donations are welcomed.

^{xi} **A stakeholder** is a party that has an interest in an enterprise or project. The primary stakeholders in a typical corporation are its investors, employees, customers and suppliers. However, modern theory goes beyond this conventional notion to embrace additional stakeholders such as the community, government and the public.

^{lii} **The Americans with Disabilities Act** of 1990 (ADA) prohibits discrimination and ensures equal opportunity and access for persons with disabilities. The Federal Transit Administration works to ensure nondiscriminatory transportation.

^{liii} **Escorted Transportation** are paid employees or volunteers that escort vulnerable seniors (memory loss, frailty) to doctor's appointments, shopping and other essential services and help them return home, safely.

^{liiv} **Washoe Senior Ride (WSR)** is a program of discount vouchers ("**Taxi Bucks**") that can be used to pay part of taxi fares and tips. WSR is a service of the Regional Transportation Commission (RTC) and is funded by the Washoe County sales tax for public transportation.

^{liiv} **RTC ACCESS** is the paratransit service that provides door-to-door, prescheduled transportation for people who meet the eligibility criteria of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). RTC ACCESS passengers have disabilities which prevent them from riding RTC RIDE independently some or all of the time.