

The Planning Process

PSA2AAA has an in-depth planning process involving all levels of the agency from weekly staff reporting through Executive Board review and input (details provided below):

- The Executive Board oversees the operations of the PSA2AAA; they review minutes, current financial statements, and discuss issues of the PSA2AAA and current older adults; meetings are held six (6) times per year and are conducted under the Ralph M. Brown Act for public noticing and open invitation.
- The Advisory Council is the grassroots voice for the older adult population. They are also instrumental with the development of the Area Plan. With meetings taking place ten (10) times per year, they discuss PSA2AAA issues as well as older adult issues.
- The Service Providers offer comments and concerns regarding older adults services on an ongoing basis throughout the year. Comments are directed to PSA2AAA staff for consideration. The close communication between PSA2AAA and the service providers is currently one of the most important aspects of planning in that given the current funding reduction/elimination and rising costs; the programs have been challenged as never before. Quarterly service provider meetings are also scheduled to encourage networking and brainstorming to better serve the older adult population.
- The Executive Director sits on two older adult councils: Community Services Council in Siskiyou County and the Older Adults Policy Council in Shasta County. Current issues are brought to the table at these meetings; service delivery is often enhanced due to the broad range of issues addressed.
- Participant surveys are conducted quarterly for most of the programs. This provides an opportunity to adjust services as needed and as encouraged by the client.
- Weekly staff meetings are conducted to encourage all staff to report and offer suggestions for the PSA2AAA services provided. This further improves the manner in which the services are conducted and ultimately benefits our older adult community.
- Public comment is always encouraged and considered. The PSA2AAA general public takes an avid interest in the older adults; Comments are accepted throughout all levels of the PSA2AAA.

It is through linking communications with all of the above that the PSA2AAA planning process remains evolutionary and trident in the ultimate provision of exemplary services to our older adult population.

Targeting

PSA2AAA embraces the directive from the Older American's Act and the Older Californian's Act which require that services be targeted toward specifically identified populations:

- 75+ years old
- Low-income
- Minority
- Isolated
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender

Within the PSA2AAA, we have:

- 2.9% of the population that is 75+ years of age, of which 44% of that population is considered to be at 125% or below poverty level
- 13% of the 60+ population is at 125% or below poverty level
- 5% of the 60+ population are minority individuals
- 10% of the population is considered to be low income minority individuals 60+
- 90% of the senior population is considered to be isolated, as described in the County Profiles
- Statistics are currently unavailable as to the percent of population that is lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender.

For all of the targeted population listed above, outreach continues to be one of the most important aspects of the PSA2AAA. The geographical challenges, along with the independent and "I can take care of myself" personalities, create the identification of these targeted populations to be most difficult, and sometimes literally impossible. It is common that people moving into the PSA2AAA area do so to escape the urban hustle and bustle and chose to relocate to the most remote areas of our country, wanting little if any human contact.

Despite this frontiersman approach to life in PSA2AAA, it is usually through the "people that you know" that we are able to break down these barriers and offer what little services are available to the isolated populations.

Forecasted demographics provide indications that most of the PSA2AAA population will very soon become 60+, with a greater than 50% of the total population. A key factor in helping people to retire within our communities is and will be through community education, which is also a key goal of the PSA2AAA.

Needs Assessment

The direction of the three (3) year Area Plan is driven by needs assessments of the community. A mirage of needs assessments have been conducted under different forums to best establish the unmet needs and the priority of the needs of the older adults and adults with functional impairments. As shown below, the assessments help to shape the direction of the Area Plan. Each of the needs assessments / surveys are itemized and discussed as follows:

1. In November, 2003, Chico State University received a sizable grant from the California Endowment to conduct a two-year needs assessment project which was entitled, "The Graying of the North State". The name was taken from the fact that large numbers of potential and current retirees are moving north, many of them with large equities from urban real estate gains to take advantage of a higher "quality of life" in Northern California's natural beauty, affordability, and rural atmosphere. This in-migration of urban retirees, couple with a persistent out-migration of youth to urban environments, has created a "graying" of the North State.

The PSA2AAA Executive Director(s) were actively involved and collaborated in all aspects of this project and had planned to utilize the final report as the primary needs assessment to plan this four-year Area Plan document. However, despite the massive contributions made on behalf of the PSA2AAA directors, the CED was unable to complete the project to date. Therefore, the final report could not be utilized as a needs assessment to help develop the four-year Area Plan, with the following exception.

2. Chico State University (CSU) conducted a mail-out survey, of which the results helped to form the direction of the Area Plan. CSU used a stratified sample of 200 random households with a senior householder, for each county. When comparing a multi-county tabulation, CSU weighted each county's responses by the total number of senior households in each county.

CSU received the following completed surveys: 47 (or 23.5%) from Lassen County, 55 (or 27.5%) from Modoc County, 60 (or 30.0%) from Shasta County, 68 (or 34.0%) from Siskiyou County, and 55 (or 27.5%) from Trinity County.

The results of the five-county survey indicated the following as the largest unmet needs:

- 62.6% Drug Costs
- 56.8% Dental Costs
- 53.6% Energy/Utility Costs
- 45.6% Yard Upkeep
- 41.9% Medical Costs
- 33.5% Optical Costs

(All other unmet needs fell at or below 18 %.)

All of the needs indicated above (with the exception of Yard Upkeep) are addressed under Goal #4, Health Care. The general education of how to access less costly services, insurances, and prescriptions is the only aspect of which we are funded (through the Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP)). Ongoing advocacy efforts will continue to occur throughout the four-year planning cycle.

The Advisory Council plans to develop a Volunteer Bureau beginning in the fiscal year 2006/2007 which will not only address the Yard Upkeep unmet need, but many other needs throughout the counties. (In light of the aggressive workload the Council has chosen for the first of the four-year cycle, the members decided to wait one year to begin the development of the Bureau.)

3. The PSA2AAA Information and Assistance Services Providers summarize all inquires received during the last fiscal year (03/04) and provided counsel and the following results listed in order of greatest unmet need:

- Transportation
- Housing
- In-Home Help and Home & Yard Maintenance
- Caregiver Help
- Energy / Utility Costs
- Health Care

Goal #3 Transportation, Goal #4 Health Care, Goal #5 Energy / Utility Costs were developed to address these needs.

4. The PSA2AAA Advisory Council members conducted a needs assessment survey. Each member (five in each county) was asked to conduct ten (10) surveys, with participants “from all walks of life”. A total of 149 assessments were received and tallied. The results are in order of greatest unmet need:
 - Transportation
 - Health Care
 - Energy / Utility Costs
 - In-Home Help and Home & Yard Maintenance
 - Loneliness and Depression

As indicated above, the Volunteer Bureau development will help to address the unmet needs of In-Home Help and Home & Yard Maintenance, and Loneliness and Depression.

Other interesting and helpful components resulting from this particular needs assessment are the following profile developed from the majority of responses:

A 77 year old woman, is widowed, non-minority, has lived (not alone) in the area 28 years, in a house, drives an automobile, receives \$771 -\$1,225 per month combined income, participates in senior activities 2 – 3 times per week, and does not have difficulty taking care of her own needs.

5. Over 240 surveys were mailed to all service providers, PSA2AAA Executive Board and Advisory Council members, newspapers and radio stations, caregivers, law enforcement agencies, first-responders, and to the general public (inclusive of adults with functional impairments and assisted living facilities), of which 17 responded. The results are in order of great number of comments:

- Outreach
- Transportation, Nutrition, and Volunteerism tied for 2nd greatest unmet needs

Increased outreach has been incorporated into the Area Plan through the Goals No's 2, 4, & 5. Transportation needs are addressed in Goal #3. PSA2AAA is meeting all *possible* needs of nutrition, given the limitation of funding through the OAA. The plan to increase Volunteerism has previously been addressed in the above two assessments in the development of a Volunteer Bureau.

6. A workshop was held with The Older Adults Policy Committee members (composed of Shasta County department heads and community leaders) to identify and plan for the needs of the "Baby Boomers". The results of this workshop are incorporated into a broad-based planning approach to meeting the Boomer needs, which is under construction at this point. The results have been distributed to all other directors from State Area Agencies to initiate a "sharing" of information and ideas. Further discussion related to planning for the Boomers occurs within Goal #2 Service.
7. A workshop was held with the Shasta County Commission on Aging to identify and plan for the needs of the "Baby Boomers". The results of this workshop indicated that *"All of our commissioners agreed that those needs and services are in place along with your agency's proposals"*. The commissioners also expressed their confidence and appreciation of PSA2AAA in their efforts to benefit the Baby Boomers. Therefore, no new goals were developed as a result of this particular planning meeting.
8. There was a discussion with the PSA2AAA Advisory Council to identify and plan for the needs of the "Baby Boomers". The results of this discussion was that the Advisory Council believed that the correct mechanisms were currently in place to meet the needs of the Baby Boomers at this time and for ongoing assessments throughout the upcoming years. There were no additional recommendations made by the Advisory Council.
9. Current year informal needs assessments were conducted with focus groups, grass-root level representatives, and with local and state-wide agencies. Again, the overall unmet needs and priorities resulted in re-establishing the above unmet needs for the upcoming Area Plan cycle.

Given in input from all of the above, the following reports the greatest unmet needs, in order of priority:

- Transportation
- Health Care / Prescription Costs
- In-Home Help and Home & Yard Maintenance

- Energy / Utility Costs

Upon evaluation of these needs, it is realized that PSA2AAA is ultimately challenged with trying to develop new modes of assistance above and beyond the funding through the Older American's Act and the Older Californian's Act. The Advisory Council continues to step forward identify unrecognized current alternative services and to develop new strategies.

Thank you to all that participated in this very valuable exercise!

Identification of Priorities

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

The Needs Assessments conducted provide the priority of needed services relative to Title IIIB Supportive Services funding (all other services are more specific without the ability to implement priorities between programs).

An “Adequate Proportion” identifies the minimum percentage in which categorized services will be provided. They are as follows:

- 30% Access Programs
- 1% In-Home Programs
- 10% Legal Assistance Programs

Actual review of funding support that the Adequate Proportion is meeting the prioritized needs identified in the needs assessments in that Transportation is funded 53% of the total federal Title IIIB funding, through the Access Programs.

Following Transportation, is the Information & Assistance (I&A) Programs at 16%. The I&A Programs are the portal into the service delivery system. Thusly, it is recognized as the next highest priority of the Title IIIB services.

In-Home Programs consist of two Homemaker programs. While this program historically was more highly supported, the out-weighting need to fund Transportation limited available funds for these other programs. The Homemaker program is funded at 2.8% of the Total Title IIIB funding.

Lastly, the Legal Assistance Programs were previously funded at 14% of the Title IIIB funding. However, again in an effort to direct more of the funding to Transportation, it was decided to reduce Legal Assistance funding by one percent per year until it reached 10% at which time it would level out.

POPULATION PRIORITIES

The PSA2AAA will continue to provide services which prioritize the “targeted populations” as identified in the “Targeting” portion of the Area Plan. Those populations are: 75+ years old, low-income, minority, isolated, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender.

SECTION 1. OLDER AMERICANS ACT ASSURANCES

Pursuant to the Older Americans Act Amendments of 2006 (OAA), the Area Agency on Aging assures that it will:

A. Assurances

1. OAA 306(a)(2)

Provide an adequate proportion, as required under OAA 2006 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;

2. OAA 306(a)(4)(A)(i)(I)

(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 (aa) and (bb) above.

3. OAA 306(a)(4)(A)(ii)

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;

4. OAA 306(a)(4)(A)(iii)

With respect to the fiscal year preceding the fiscal year for which such plan is prepared—

- (I) identify the number of low-income minority older individuals in the planning and service area;
- (II) describe the methods used to satisfy the service needs of such minority older individuals; and
- (III) provide information on the extent to which the area agency on aging met the objectives described in assurance number 2.

5. OAA 306(a)(4)(B)

Use outreach efforts that —

(i) identify individuals eligible for assistance under this Act, with special emphasis on—

- (I) older individuals residing in rural areas;
- (II) older individuals with greatest economic need (with particular attention to low-income minority individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas);
- (III) older individuals with greatest social need (with particular attention to low-income minority individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas);
- (IV) older individuals with severe disabilities;
- (V) older individuals with limited English proficiency;
- (VI) older individuals with Alzheimer’s disease and related disorders with neurological and organic brain dysfunction (and the caretakers of such individuals); and
- (VII) older individuals at risk for institutional placement; and

(ii) inform the older individuals referred to in sub-clauses (I) through (VII) of clause (i), and the caretakers of such individuals, of the availability of such assistance;

6. OAA 306(a)(4)(C)

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;

7. OAA 306(a)(5)

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;

8. OAA 306(a)(9)

Carry out the State Long-Term Care Ombudsman program under OAA 2006 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;

9. OAA 306(a)(11)

Provide information and assurances concerning services to older individuals who are Native Americans (referred to in this paragraph as “older Native Americans”), including—

(A) information concerning whether there is a significant population of older Native Americans in the planning and service area and if so, 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) to the maximum extent practicable, coordinate the services the agency provides under this title with services provided under title VI; and
- (C) 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.

10. OAA 306(a)(13)(A-E)

- (A) maintain the integrity and public purpose of services provided, and service providers, under this title in all contractual and commercial relationships;
- (B) disclose to the Assistant Secretary and the State agency—
 - (i) the identity of each nongovernmental entity with which such agency has a contract or commercial relationship relating to providing any service to older individuals; and
 - (ii) the nature of such contract or such relationship;
- (C) demonstrate that a loss or diminution in the quantity or quality of the services provided, or to be provided, under this title by such agency has not resulted and will not result from such contract or such relationship;
- (D) demonstrate that the quantity or quality of the services to be provided under this title by such agency will be enhanced as a result of such contract or such relationship; and
- (E) on the request of the Assistant Secretary or the State, for the purpose of monitoring compliance with this Act (including conducting an audit), disclose all sources and expenditures of funds such agency receives or expends to provide services to older individuals;

11. 306(a)(14)

Not give preference in receiving services to particular older individuals as a result of a contract or commercial relationship that is not carried out to implement this title;

12. 306(a)(15)

Funds received under this title will be used—

- (A) to provide benefits and services to older individuals, giving priority to older individuals identified in OAA 2006 306(a)(4)(A)(i); and
- (B) in compliance with the assurances specified in OAA 2006 306(a)(13) and the limitations specified in OAA 2006 212;

B. Additional Assurances:

Requirement: OAA 305(c)(5)

In the case of a State specified in subsection (b)(5), the State agency; and shall provide assurance, determined adequate by the State agency, that the area agency on aging will have the ability to develop an area plan and to carry out, directly or through contractual or other arrangements, a program in accordance with the plan within the planning and service area.

Requirement: OAA 307(a)(7)(B)

(i) no individual (appointed or otherwise) involved in the designation of the State agency or an area agency on aging, or in the designation of the head of any subdivision of the State agency or of an area agency on aging, is subject to a conflict of interest prohibited under this Act;

- (ii) no officer, employee, or other representative of the State agency or an area agency on aging is subject to a conflict of interest prohibited under this Act; and
- (iii) mechanisms are in place to identify and remove conflicts of interest prohibited under this Act.

Requirement: OAA 307(a)(11)(A)

- (i) enter into contracts with providers of legal assistance, which can demonstrate the experience or capacity to deliver legal assistance;
- (ii) include in any such contract provisions to assure that any recipient of funds under division (i) will be subject to specific restrictions and regulations promulgated under the Legal Services Corporation Act (other than restrictions and regulations governing eligibility for legal assistance under such Act and governing membership of local governing boards) as determined appropriate by the Assistant Secretary; and
- (iii) attempt to involve the private bar in legal assistance activities authorized under this title, including groups within the private bar furnishing services to older individuals on a pro bono and reduced fee basis.

Requirement: OAA 307(a)(11)(B)

That no legal assistance will be furnished unless the grantee administers a program designed to provide legal assistance to older individuals with social or economic need and has agreed, if the grantee is not a Legal Services Corporation project grantee, to coordinate its services with existing Legal Services Corporation projects in the planning and service area in order to concentrate the use of funds provided under this title on individuals with the greatest such need; and the area agency on aging makes a finding, after assessment, pursuant to standards for service promulgated by the Assistant Secretary, that any grantee selected is the entity best able to provide the particular services.

Requirement: OAA 307(a)(11)(D)

To the extent practicable, that legal assistance furnished under the plan will be in addition to any legal assistance for older individuals being furnished with funds from sources other than this Act and that reasonable efforts will be made to maintain existing levels of legal assistance for older individuals; and

Requirement: OAA 307(a)(11)(E)

Give priority to legal assistance related to income, health care, long-term care, nutrition, housing, utilities, protective services, defense of guardianship, abuse, neglect, and age discrimination.

Requirement: OAA 307(a)(12)(A)

In carrying out such services conduct a program consistent with relevant State law and coordinated with existing State adult protective service activities for -

- (i) public education to identify and prevent abuse of older individuals;
- (ii) receipt of reports of abuse of older individuals;
- (iii) active participation of older individuals participating in programs under this Act through outreach, conferences, and referral of such individuals to other social service agencies or sources of assistance where appropriate and consented to by the parties to be referred; and
- (iv) referral of complaints to law enforcement or public protective service agencies where appropriate.

Requirement: OAA 307(a)(15)

If a substantial number of the older individuals residing in any planning and service area in the State are of limited English-speaking ability, then the State will require the area agency on aging for each such planning and service area -

(A) To utilize in the delivery of outreach services under Section 306(a)(2)(A), the services of workers who are fluent in the language spoken by a predominant number of such older individuals who are of limited English-speaking ability.

(B) To designate an individual employed by the area agency on aging, or available to such area agency on aging on a full-time basis, whose responsibilities will include:

- (i) taking such action as may be appropriate to assure that counseling assistance is made available to such older individuals who are of limited English-speaking ability in order to assist such older individuals in participating in programs and receiving assistance under this Act; and
- (ii) providing guidance to individuals engaged in the delivery of supportive services under the area plan involved to enable such individuals to be aware of cultural sensitivities and to take into account effective linguistic and cultural differences.

Requirement: OAA 307(a)(18)

Conduct efforts to facilitate the coordination of community-based, long-term care services, pursuant to Section 306(a)(7), for older individuals who -

(A) reside at home and are at risk of institutionalization because of limitations on their ability to function independently;

(B) are patients in hospitals and are at risk of prolonged institutionalization; or

(C) are patients in long-term care facilities, but who can return to their homes if community-based services are provided to them.

Requirement: OAA 307(a)(26)

That funds received under this title will not be used to pay any part of a cost (including an administrative cost) incurred by the State agency, or an area agency on aging, to carry out a contract or commercial relationship that is not carried out to implement this title.

Requirement: OAA 307(a)(27)

Provide, to the extent feasible, for the furnishing of services under this Act, consistent with self-directed care.

C. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Title 45 Requirements:

CFR [1321.53(a)(b)]

(a) The Older Americans Act intends that the area agency on aging shall be the leader relative to all aging issues on behalf of all older persons in the planning and service area. This means that the area agency shall proactively carry out, under the leadership and direction of the State agency, a wide range of functions related to advocacy, planning, coordination, interagency linkages, information sharing, brokering, monitoring and evaluation, designed to lead to the development or enhancement of comprehensive and coordinated community based systems in, or serving, each community in the Planning and Service Area. These systems shall be designed to assist older persons in leading independent, meaningful and dignified lives in their own homes and communities as long as possible.

(b) A comprehensive and coordinated community-based system described in paragraph (a) of this section shall:

- (1) Have a visible focal point of contact where anyone can go or call for help, information or referral on any aging issue;
- (2) Provide a range of options;
- (3) Assure that these options are readily accessible to all older persons: The independent, semi-dependent and totally dependent, no matter what their income;
- (4) Include a commitment of public, private, voluntary and personal resources committed to supporting the system;
- (5) Involve collaborative decision-making among public, private, voluntary, religious and fraternal organizations and older people in the community;
- (6) Offer special help or targeted resources for the most vulnerable older persons, those in danger of losing their independence;
- (7) Provide effective referral from agency to agency to assure that information or assistance is received, no matter how or where contact is made in the community;
- (8) Evidence sufficient flexibility to respond with appropriate individualized assistance, especially for the vulnerable older person;
- (9) Have a unique character which is tailored to the specific nature of the community;
- (10) Be directed by leaders in the community who have the respect, capacity and authority necessary to convene all interested individuals, assess needs, design solutions, track overall success, stimulate change and plan community responses for the present and for the future.

CFR [1321.53(c)]

The resources made available to the area agency on aging under the Older Americans Act are to be used to finance those activities necessary to achieve elements of a community based system set forth in paragraph (b) of this section.

CFR [1321.53(c)]

Work with elected community officials in the planning and service area to designate one or more focal points on aging in each community, as appropriate.

CFR [1321.53(c)]

Assure access from designated focal points to services financed under the Older Americans Act.

CFR [1321.53(c)]

Work with, or work to assure that community leadership works with, other applicable agencies and institutions in the community to achieve maximum collocation at, coordination with or access to other services and opportunities for the elderly from the designated community focal points.

CFR [1321.61(b)(4)]

Consult with and support the State's long-term care ombudsman program.

CFR [1321.61(d)]

No requirement in this section shall be deemed to supersede a prohibition contained in the Federal appropriation on the use of Federal funds to lobby the Congress; or the lobbying provision applicable to private nonprofit agencies and organizations contained in OMB Circular A-122.

CFR [1321.69(a)]

Persons age 60 and older who are frail, homebound by reason of illness or incapacitating disability, or otherwise isolated, shall be given priority in the delivery of services under this part.