

## SUMMARY

### 2011-2012 Update to the 2009-2012 El Dorado County Area Plan for Senior Services

#### **Significant Accomplishments for Fiscal Year 2010-11**

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The surge in the growth in the aging population in El Dorado County continually affects the planning and service delivery system, bringing about real and emergent challenges for the aging services network in our County. A progress report on the status of objectives set for the second year reveals that challenging economic times has inhibited our ability to implement many proposed activities. While demographic and economic variables created significant challenges in program implementation, considerable progress has been made in this subsequent year of the planning cycle year in supporting and honoring our older residents in El Dorado County. Significant changes and accomplishments have been achieved by the El Dorado County Area Agency on Aging (AAA) during the second year of the 2009-2012 planning cycle. These accomplishments and activities demonstrate the AAA's commitment to assess the needs of older adults, adults with disabilities, and their caregivers in the community and make responsive improvements to enhance the service delivery system based on information obtained from older adults, their caregivers, and informed community members and service providers. These accomplishments include:

**The Home-Delivered Meals Wellness Outreach Program.** The Mental Health Services Act Prevention and Early Intervention program was implemented in November 2010 to enhance meal services to include mental health prevention and brief intervention services to program participants and their caregivers. Services are designed to help address feelings of isolation and loss, decreasing risk factors for depression, and improving access to mental health care and support. They include mental health education and support, participant, family, and caregiver training, depression screening and assessment services, referrals to appropriate community resources, and care coordination, advocacy, and follow-up. Twenty-four Home-Delivered Meals volunteer drivers received comprehensive training on 11/17/10 on observational skills for recognizing signs and symptoms of depression and the referral protocol for accessing mental health support. Mental health personnel accompanied volunteer drivers on 18 routes on the west slope and 5 routes in the South Lake Tahoe region in FY 10-11 to meet a total of 240 program participants and initiate the dialogue about mental health and wellness. Sixteen participants were referred to mental health services and 24 received referrals to other appropriate community resources.

**Outreach to Targeted Populations.** Increasing utilization of services by older adults who have the highest economic and social needs and who are least able to advocate for themselves makes evident the AAA's commitment to the greater good of community resources. Senior Day Care Services (SDC), in collaboration with community partners, hosted a conference, "Alzheimer's...Navigating the Journey," for family and professionals caring for individuals affected by Alzheimer's Disease and other related dementias on 5/14/10 in Placerville. More than 250 family members, caregivers, and health care professionals and 40 vendors were in attendance. SDC, in a collaborative effort spearheaded by the Alzheimer's Foundation of America, participated in the National Memory Screening Day on 11/16/10 to promote early detection of Alzheimer's disease and related illnesses, and to encourage appropriate intervention. SDC presented a Dementia 101 Series of three classes designed to provide instruction and support for family caregivers in January 2011.

Capturing the voices of difficult-to-reach older adults is critical to ensuring that the needs of underrepresented groups, such as the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) seniors are adequately assessed during the planning and development of programs and services. AAA staff will conduct a cultural competency training program to provide advocacy, education, and outreach for inclusion of LGBT seniors and their caregivers. Outreach will focus on attracting a cross-section of generations, professions, genders, and persuasions. The training program will provide the opportunity to learn about LGBT issues and enhance professional development.

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**Proposed Local Funding Cuts to Senior Services Averted.** The county, like the state and the nation as a whole, has suffered from the ongoing economic downturn. Faced with a projected budget shortfall of \$11 million for Fiscal Year 2011-12, the El Dorado County Chief Administrative Office listed discretionary general funds for the Board of Supervisors to consider from all of the County Departments on 10/19/10 on how the County could close the projected deficit. The list included potential cuts to the Senior Nutrition Program/Activities, Senior Legal Services/Elder Protection, and Senior Day Care Services. A total of \$675,000 General Fund was under consideration to be eliminated from the AAA Programs. A reduction of \$400,000 from the \$1.37 million Senior Nutrition Program total budget would have resulted in the elimination of five of seven congregate meal programs. The closure of the sites would also have resulted in the elimination of the senior activities at those sites since the facility leases would have been terminated. One quarter of seniors dependent on consuming a hot meal at one of the facilities at risk of closure would have to do without. Senior Legal Services/Elder Protection Unit faced the potential of a large cut (\$215,000 from the \$315,000 total budget) which would have resulted in the reduction in force of an attorney and paralegal and the elimination of the Elder Protection Unit. A reduction of \$60,000 General Fund Contribution to Senior Day Care Services would have resulted in program elimination.

The El Dorado County Board of Supervisors voted not to make any cuts to these programs-saving senior programs among others. Community meetings are being held at the seven congregate meal sites to explore potential cost-saving options for the Senior Nutrition Program.

**ARRA Funding.** The Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Funds were utilized in the first quarter of FY 10-11 to continue enhanced care coordination and monitoring through the Information & Assistance Program (I&A) and to support Senior Nutrition Services in two communities. CSBG ARRA funds were utilized from October 1, 2009 through September 30, 2010 to continue and expand the El Dorado County I&A Program to assist seniors, disabled and low-income individuals by evaluating their unique needs, helping them make informed decisions about appropriate community support, and providing linkage to specific programs and services. More than 1,400 individuals were assisted during the 15-month period. ARRA funds were used to offset salaries and facility lease costs for two congregate meal sites at risk of being closed 7/1/10 due to loss of local overmatch funding. The two Senior Nutrition Program meal sites in Diamond Springs and Pollock Pines, two communities with relatively large senior populations, many of whom are living on limited incomes, were maintained with CBSG ARRA funds through 9/30/10.

**Needs Assessment Activities.** In preparation for the planning and development of the comprehensive needs assessment to be utilized in the identification of priorities to be pursued in the next Area Plan planning cycle 2012-2016, systematic assessments of older adult needs must be conducted by identifying deficiencies and gaps in senior services and by outlining solutions to meet these needs and bridge the gaps. The I&A program will continue to analyze program data to determine gaps in services and prepare biannual unmet needs reports to advise the Commission on Aging and assist in the determination of program and funding priorities. Determination of consumers' perception of awareness of services, ease of access, and quality of service delivery will be priority for the upcoming fiscal year. Client satisfaction will be assessed at three community focal points utilizing the AAA's active client base to gather baseline expectation and perception data as well as service preferences. I&A will measure referral outcomes and gaps in services. While services offered to the targeted groups are not proportionate to the 60-plus population in the County, it is the priority of the AAA to provide services to the special populations outlined in the OAA. AAA staff will establish affiliations with stakeholder groups representing the interests of target populations to develop resource links and enhance knowledge and skills for working with these often hidden, underserved older adults.