



## **El Dorado County Area Agency on Aging 2009-2012 Area Plan for Older Adult Services Executive Summary**

The El Dorado County Area Agency on Aging (AAA) has developed the 2009-2012 Area Plan, *Community Preparedness for an Aging Landscape*, for submittal to the California Department of Aging (CDA) as required by the federal Older Americans Act and in accordance with direction from CDA. The Area Plan is designed to report on the status of older adults, develop and prioritize goals based on a comprehensive evaluation of needs and propose actions to enhance the aging experience of local residents at home and in the community. Historically, the Area Plan has been submitted on a four-year cycle. This one-time-only Three-Year Plan covers the period July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2012. The Plan outlines a strategy that builds awareness, encourages action, fosters collaborative efforts and improves resident access to information in the aging network. This strategy provides guidance to help the AAA meet the challenges of and create opportunities for a growing older adult population during the next three years. As part of the Area Plan process, CDA requires an Annual Report on progress made in meeting goals and objectives and an Annual Update, which provides an opportunity for the AAA to modify the Area Plan as necessary to accommodate changing service needs as well as increases or decreases in grant funding levels and availability of other resources.

El Dorado County is experiencing an extraordinary increase in its older adult population. In 2000, there were 26,023 residents in our County who were age 60 and over, representing 16.7% of the total population. The U.S. Census Bureau reported a 25% growth in the 60+ population in the County between 1990 and 2000, more than two times the rate of growth at the state level and more than three times the rate of growth at the national level. The size of the 85+ population group grew 43%, which is greater than the 25% increase at the state level. The projected growth rate in the 60+ population in the County between 2000 and 2010 is 58%, more than twice the national rate. Between 2000 and 2020, the aging population is expected to more than double, with one in four residents over the age of 60. Over the last few generations, there has been a significant increase in the percentage of Americans aged 65 who are expected to survive to age 90. From 1940 to 2050 there is a projected six-fold increase in older adults expected to survive to age 90. To meet the growing demands that will result from escalating numbers of older adults in El Dorado County, the AAA will need to improve its organizational capacity to plan for and develop a long-term continuum of care system that identifies and addresses unmet needs, improves service coordination and eliminates duplication of services.

### **CONTENT OF THE AREA PLAN**

This Plan, which provides the format and the structure to identify and address older adult needs, consists of three parts:

- **Part One: Background** provides an overview of the older adult population in El Dorado County, the programs and services available and regional collaboratives. This section also includes a review of the planning process, assessment of older adult needs and consequent identified priorities for aging services in the community.
- **Part Two: Goals and Objectives** describes the model that best captures our aspirations for the future... that El Dorado County will be recognized as a community that addresses basic needs and maximizes the independence of older adults and supports the well-being of all its residents. This section sets out our specific goals under eight priority areas. In each area, there is the introduction of principal objectives, with a brief rationale, list of responsible parties and potential collaborators and plans for action over the next three years.
- **Part Three: Appendices** summarizes the plan for allocating funds for access, in-home, legal assistance and community-based services received under Title III of the Older Americans Act and State funding allocations. This section also includes administrative information, assurances made by the AAA, and other pertinent information as required by the California Department of Aging.

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE AREA PLAN

In order to plan and develop a comprehensive and coordinated service delivery system for the increasing number of older adults and the large number of “baby boomers” (boomers) who are beginning to need and qualify for aging services in El Dorado County, systematic assessments of their needs must be conducted. A community needs assessment of the aging experience in El Dorado County was conducted over a two-year period in 2007-2008. The process of the study included both quantitative and qualitative analysis methods. AAA staff conducted a thorough analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau and California Department of Finance, supplemented with other pertinent national, state and local research data. To enhance community-planning input, staff also conducted numerous key informant interviews, roundtable discussions and surveys of both consumers and service providers.

The Plan focuses on eight critical issues that address identified needs of older residents in the County. The issues of most concern were those regarding quality of life and access to health and social services needed to remain at home. Supporting informal caregivers who provide long-term care to vulnerable older adults who need help to remain at home and in the community, as well as targeting underserved populations that may not be adequately served or assessed during the planning and development of programs, was of paramount concern, particularly to key informants. Insufficient awareness of and accessibility to long-term supportive services remains a community concern among older adults. Service providers expressed the need for an improved, well-coordinated network of long-term care services for older adults, one that is also adequately prepared for the sheer number of boomers who are beginning to need and qualify for aging services.

## THREE-YEAR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The 2009-2012 Area Plan was developed with a particular focus on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning and delivery of a continuum of aging services. The eight goals and seventy-three objectives of the three-year Plan, with accompanying outcomes and evaluation measures, address the following priority areas of need:

**Goal 1 - Aging in Place** *Assist older adults in accessing needed services that will promote and sustain their health, independence and self-reliance.* Objectives focus on encouraging healthy lifestyles, teaching older adults to access public benefits that support their health and planning for long-term care. Objectives include providing educational opportunities relative to Medicare, chronic disease prevention and management and legal issues of interest; hosting a community health fair and medication management “brown bag check-ups” with a local pharmacist; designating a key staff person to serve as a Medi-Cal specialist for older adults; exploring the feasibility of opening a second Senior Day Care Center; pursuing the provision of training and employment opportunities through a cooperative agreement with the American Association of Retired Persons; advocating for enhanced transportation services and hosting an annual celebration of Older Americans Month.

**Goal 2 - Caring for the Caregiver** *Support, supplement and enhance the role of informal, unpaid caregivers who provide home care assistance to individuals who are-incapacitated to some degree and in need of help to remain at home.* Improving informal caregiver and care recipient outcomes can be achieved through Family Caregiver Support Program activities such as: assessing the needs of employed caregivers and educating employers about the issues of working caregivers; developing an educational series of workshops on strategies to cope with caregiver burden and conducting community outreach to the medical community, home health agencies and faith-based organizations.

**Goal 3 - Preparing for the Boomers** *Focus on the impending needs of the growing older adult and emerging target populations, with particular emphasis on the growing needs of the boomers.* Strategies focused on appealing to the boomer generation include: advocating for a new senior center in the Placerville area; exploring the feasibility of a congregate nutrition site at the Cameron Park Community Center; promoting innovative activities and annually assessing service preferences and boomers’ knowledge of and need for resources; developing a class to help boomers understand the long-term care system; establishing a focus group on changing trends in the volunteer workforce and hosting a volunteer/job fair in collaboration with the OneStop Employment Resource Center.

**Goal 4 - Focus on Hidden Populations** *Plan for the long-term care needs of underserved target populations, including low-income minorities, isolated residents of remote areas of the County, persons with dementia and lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender persons.* Objectives that focus on increasing access to programs for underserved populations include: participation in National Memory Screening Day and hosting an Alzheimer's conference; establishing affiliations and collaborative efforts with stakeholder groups representing the interests of target populations to assess needs and providing cultural competency/sensitivity training for AAA program staff.

**Goal 5 - Safety and Well-Being** *Optimize safety and well-being of older adults in El Dorado County by enhancing the provision of critically-needed goods and services.* Addressing the adequate provision of the most basic needs of food and shelter and disaster preparedness will be accomplished through the following objectives: expanding and enhancing home-delivered nutritional services by starting new meal routes in locations not currently served and implementing a depression screening and early intervention component; promoting the availability of food resources; exploring the feasibility of an elder shelter; conducting a needs assessment of affordable housing; providing education about universal design to ensure home safety, property tax relief and sheltering in place; developing an AAA emergency operations plan and conducting a pilot survey to better ascertain community preparedness for disaster among faith-based and community-based organizations.

**Goal 6 - Elder Abuse Prevention** *Promote elder rights by providing information and resources for individuals to protect themselves against elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.* The range of elder abuse protection efforts will include enhancing crime prevention e-mail notification services; arranging for the provision of mandated reporter training for AAA program staff and volunteers; hosting an elder abuse conference; training additional Long-Term Care Ombudsman volunteers to provide advocacy for facility residents and conducting quarterly Senior Legal Services presentations.

**Goal 7 - Awareness of Services** *Increase awareness of services to improve access and choice of community resources and enhance the ability of older adults to advocate for benefits and needed support services on their own behalf.* Strategies to enhance accessibility to necessary supportive services include developing AAA marketing materials and an interactive web page; conducting more targeted information and assistance outreach to hospital discharge planners, veterans' representatives and related personnel and providing community education on employment assistance available through the OneStop Employment Resource Center as well as education on the nutritional, educational and recreational opportunities available at the local senior centers.

**Goal 8 - Improving Quality and Capacity of Care** *Promote effective, efficient and responsive delivery of aging services by enhancing the quality and capacity of Older Americans Act-funded in-home and community-based services.* Quality assurance activities and professional development include the following objectives: implementing a comprehensive older adult needs assessment, consumer satisfaction and performance feedback process; assessing AAA program employee training needs; enhancing the effectiveness of the Information and Assistance Program by improving data management and staff proficiency and regularly reviewing unmet needs data to assist in the determination of program and funding priorities.

Review of goal objectives will be conducted during each annual Area Plan Update process. As development and implementation of organizational activities evolve, revisions will be made as necessary in response to the ever-changing landscape of our community and the persons we serve.

## **CONCLUSION**

*Community Preparedness for an Aging Landscape* celebrates successful aging in El Dorado County and provides direction to the AAA and the Commission on Aging in addressing the identified needs of older adults and their caregivers. We are confident that our coordination across service systems will continue to make El Dorado County a desirable place in which to live and age with dignity.