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**This is the 2024 Commission on Aging Monitoring Report for El Dorado County, Area Agency on Aging, Area 29 of the California Department of Aging.**

*El Dorado County provides Senior Services through the Department of Health and Human Services, Community Services Division*

## **INTRODUCTION**

These monitoring tools are utilized to create a consistent and objective means of evaluating multiple sites and services utilizing departmental goals and mandated inquiries. Each area of senior services and the senior nutrition program have tools which were consistent in content while still being able to reflect each area's unique character and the needs of their clients. Additionally, there are areas for comments from both the monitor and from the program's clients. These tools provide a measurable platform for year over year comparisons in each program.

This report required the participation of many members of the Commission on Aging for El Dorado County. Members were assigned an area or department to contact and monitor. The members were provided with a standard monitoring tool, contact information for the supervisor of their assigned program, guidelines for completion and submission of the monitoring tools. These items were to be used for review and preparation prior to the monitoring visit in order to better acquaint each commission member with the service area they were to monitor. Members of the Commission on Aging contributed their time and expertise to the thoroughness of this report and we hereby acknowledge them with sincere thanks.

The Commission on Aging would like to acknowledge the efforts of Yasmin Hichborn for her ongoing support and the development of the monitoring tool used to gather information for this report.

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## GUIDELINES FOR MONITORING

The California Department of Aging (CDA) requires evaluation and monitoring of the programs and services provided under the Older Americans' Act. El Dorado County, Area Agency on Aging (AAA), PSA 29 is a direct service provider of these programs and services and needs assistance to monitor the programs. The monitoring is conducted by the Commission on Aging (COA).

The procedure for conducting AAA monitoring by the COA is as follows:

- 1) The COA selects the commission members who will be conducting the monitoring visits.
- 2) The COA Commissioners assigned to monitor the programs receive the standardized AAA monitoring forms and procedures.
- 5) The COA Commissioner contacts the program supervisor as listed on the monitoring form to set up a date and time to monitor the program.
- 6) The COA Commissioners should familiarize themselves with the program brochures and be prepared to discuss the services listed in the brochure with the program supervisor to determine if the program is meeting its goals.
- 7) On the scheduled date, time, and location, the COA Commissioner will check in with the program supervisor or designee to begin the monitoring visit. It is important the COA Commissioner be an observer and monitor the program with minimum interference.
- 8) The monitoring form should be completed during the visit. The responses noted should be objective with any "No" responses requiring an explanation. If a program does not have any objectives noted in the plan, "N/A" (Not Applicable) is indicated on the form.
- 9) The monitoring forms can be completed by hand or electronically.
- 10) The completed monitoring forms should be returned to the HHSA Administrative Analyst.
- (11) The forms will be reviewed by the COA Program Coordinator and, if necessary, the responses will be discussed with the program reviewer.
- 12) The COA Monitoring Coordinator will compile the information received and create an annual monitoring report for review by the COA Commissioners and possible dissemination to the HHSA staff.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

### **Congregate Meal Sites**

All parameters of the monitoring were reported positively. Comments reflect the satisfaction of the meal participants and the courtesy and friendliness of the staff. The programs not only provide meals for the senior population, but as a bonus provide socialization.

Staff members were praised for their dedication and being the key element in the excellent service.

The Placerville site is noted for its lack of parking.

Some of the meal sites offered activities in close proximity to the mealtimes which encourage and complement the attendance at the meals.

The program has not been at capacity since COVID.

Staffing is and has been an ongoing issue. Pay at \$16.50 - \$19.94 per hour results in many staff with a second job and moving on to another position with higher pay.

**Central Kitchen Monitoring Placerville.** The monitoring was done as a part of the congregate meal sight visit.

- All areas for food preparation are clean.
- Food temperatures checked and recorded prior to service.
- Health inspection current and cleaning schedule followed.
- Storage areas are well organized, and supplies are rotated regularly.
- Employee and volunteer hygiene is maintained.
- Staff do an amazing job in the limited space.
- Staff work well together and appear to be efficient.
- Fire extinguishers (checked current) available.
- Policy and procedure manual available.

### **Home Delivered Meals**

- The wait list for home delivered meals is over 178 names. Volunteer and paid staffing shortages appear to be the main issue.
- Staffing is the biggest issue and finding staffing at the current pay level is difficult when competing with local businesses that offer higher pay.
- Consistent praise was noted for the dedication of the volunteer drivers and their abilities to connect with meal recipients.
- Comments included the ideas of supplying the drivers with brochures on Senior Services and Information and Assistance numbers.
- Consideration should be given to increasing the donation for a meal upward from \$3 as this is the suggested donation level for the significant number of years.
- The participants complained about the portion size.

### **You Are Not Alone Program (YANA)**

The YANA program is a high impact low-cost service for older county residents living alone. This service allows older adults to find comfort and security knowing that someone will be checking on them daily. If something does happen, family or friends will be notified. Calls are made daily in the morning prior to 10:00 AM. STAR, from the Sheriff's Department makes calls Monday through Friday. Volunteers make calls on the weekends. Several attempts will be made to contact the person and if contact is not made a series of steps are followed to ensure their safety and well-being. Neighbors or Law Enforcement are called to physically check on the person. The program currently serves 43 participants.

- Additional volunteers are needed to make calls.
- Social calls not acceptable are the only limitation.

**Long Term Care Ombudsman Program**

The goal of the Ombudsman program is to advocate for the rights of all residents of long-term care facilities. Title VII of the OAA responsibilities are: complaint management; witnessing of advance health care directives and property transfers; family and resident council development and participation; information and consultation to individuals about long term care facilities; facility staff training and consultation; representing the needs of residents, policymakers and the public; advocating or seeking change in laws and systems on behalf of residents; and, providing information and educational materials about long-term care services.

Service Delivery: Services are free and confidential. The files are neat and organized. Client confidentiality is maintained, and former ombudsmen must maintain that confidentiality even after leaving the program. The program has no regulatory or enforcement authority and residents must consent for a complaint to be pursued. Referrals to legal service are made as necessary.

Unmet Needs: Challenge to quantify. The program supervisor feels there is insufficient funding and insufficient paid staff. Staffing shortage addressed by increasing the number of volunteers.

Targeting: Older individuals and dependent adults are being served regardless of their socioeconomic status or area of residence.

General Program Information: The program is able to work with an adequate staff of volunteers. This program is a critical advocacy service for institutionalized individuals and activities are encouraged in compliance with state policy.

Underserved populations: Underserved persons include high-need residents, LGBT residents and holocaust survivors.

### **Senior Legal Services**

El Dorado County Senior Services is uniquely fortunate to have onsite attorneys. Paid and volunteer staff are courteous, welcoming and knowledgeable regarding the needs of our senior population.

The demand for services continues to increase as the senior population increases in El Dorado County. The waiting list for non-emergency services may be up to six months.

Limited number of legal support staff reduces the efficiency of the staff attorneys. The addition of support staff would allow the staff attorneys to focus on issues requiring their expertise.

Outreach is limited due to the lack of staffing resources.

The goals of providing legal services to El Dorado County seniors are being met; limited by the staffing resources.

### **Senior Health Education Program (SHEP)**

SHEP strives to support health programs and to increase participants socialization. The program emphasizes dignity, and a practiced philosophy of meeting the client where the client is in order to build a bridge of trust over which information, services and teaching takes place.

SHEP not only addresses the client's service needs, but they also conduct an assessment of additional service needs to ensure full-service delivery to clients. Classes include Bingocize and Fall Prevention. As appropriate, referrals are made to the Fall Prevention Program.

SHEP provides a critical function within El Dorado County. The program is delivered with a strong focus on customer service and a sound understanding of regulatory and funding parameters.

Additional volunteers are needed to expand services.

### **Information and Assistance (I&A)**

Information and Assistance (I&A) is an indispensable service which is enhanced by the expertise of Jordan Brushia, the supervisor. Outreach and referrals have exceeded the staff expectations for 2024.

I&A outreach addresses all activities associated with Family Caregiver Support Program (FCSP), Senior Health Education Program (SHEP), I&A and community networks. The staff ensure the availability of informational and educational resources on-site to accommodate walk-in clients. The I&A brochure is available in Spanish and English. A caller or visitor is never sent away without pertinent information or a referral.

The I&A staff are extremely knowledgeable of the issues affecting seniors and the services available. The staff in their face-to-face contact and in their communications emphasize dignity and practice the philosophy of meeting the client where they are at to build a bridge of trust over which information, services and teaching takes place. Program participants are introduced to other participants in programs wherein group service delivery occurs.

Housing insecurities have increased since early 2023.

Service priorities are constrained by funding allocations and available funding is maximally allocated.

### **Senior Day Care**

Adult Day Care - a most valued program that El Dorado County Senior Services offers. It is open to participants who need and who would benefit from the activities, stimulation, care and safety at a challenging point in their lives. Staff carefully screen and evaluate potential clients. Staffing limitations only allow higher functioning clients to participate at this time. When adequate staff aboard, the services will be offered to lower functioning clients. There is a waiting list of 20 clients.

The community is supportive of these programs-yet outreach to the community is needed to raise awareness of the program's existence. With strong support for families who need assistance in caring for their parent, spouse or other person, Senior Day Care, by any name, fills a great need. The staff interacts with family members and disseminates information and other county resources and services.

The management of the programs continues to be innovative and very passionate about the services they deliver and how to do more. The staff is friendly, competent, knowledgeable and patient.

### **Family Caregiver Support Program (FCSP)**

The Family Caregiver Support Program (FCSP) provides in-home respite care, and caregiver support group. The program focuses on the 60-plus year-old frail elderly population. The number of hours of respite in-home care has been reduced by one-half.

FCSP information is disseminated through regular mail, email, phone, brochures, and online. The staff utilizes telephone calls and emails with caregivers, in-home health aides and nurses. In addition, they have personal contacts with the senior care facilities in the county.

The staff not only address the client's requested service need, but they also conduct a comprehensive assessment of additional service needs to ensure full-service delivery. As appropriate, referrals may be made to the Senior Health Education Program (SHEP), Senior Legal Services and Senior Day Care.

FCSP staff emphasizes dignity, and a practiced philosophy of meeting the client where the client is in order to build a bridge of trust for delivery of services.

The workshops provided by FCSP cover a wide range of pertinent topics and address many caregiver concerns. In addition, a library of books for caregivers to use is available.

### **Senior Activities Program in Placerville**

The Placerville Senior Center offers a wide range of group activities in the areas of crafts, physical fitness, general and specific interest classes and volunteer opportunities.

The activities program meets the goal of offering a diverse and comprehensive range of events and activities.

Senior activities are promoted through bulletin boards postings which can be viewed by anyone entering the senior centers. In addition, the Senior Times contains a listing and calendar of activities and events occurring at the senior centers throughout the County. The senior center and outreach staff vigorously pursue outreach opportunities through group meeting and one-on-one communications.

Group activities include quilting, basketry, painting, pottery and physical exercise which are facilitated by volunteers. Materials for the crafts are donated by volunteers.

The activities are enthusiastically received by our seniors.

Limitation for all programs: the lack of parking at the Placerville Spring Street center.

### **Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP)**

The overarching goals for HICAP in El Dorado County are to enhance community awareness of Medicare issues and raise awareness of the availability of local assistance.

The assistance includes education as well as advocacy to resolve residents' issues. HICAP uses an array of media formats to inform clients and the public of the current status of Medicare including changes to rules and laws that might either impact on a Medicare-eligible person's ability to enroll in Medicare or for an existing beneficiary's continuing utilization of Medicare. Newer issues relate to client confusion when transitioning from Covered California to Medicare and how Medicare coverage coordinates with Medi-Cal managed care.

HICAP has been able to meet all client requests for counseling. Counselors add "extra" time for clients that are not available during designated counseling hours. During the Annual Election period from October into December counselors have been willing to expand the amount of time available to meet the significant increase in client requests. The counseling program is delivered through both in-person and by telephone one-on-one interactions. The program can meet the demand for counseling services except for the two-month annual enrollment period. As demand increases HICAP will consider adding additional counselors.

HICAP has met its performance measure for serving low-income clients and served a significant number of English as second language clients.

Information promoting community awareness of HICAP is provided via monthly articles in the Senior Center newsletter, distribution of descriptive program brochures and inclusion of an array of other senior services promotions.

Spanish translation services are available on site at the Placerville Senior Center. Translation services for other languages are available by phone.

HICAP continues to be a well utilized and highly rated program by El Dorado County residents.

### **Senior Shuttle Services**

The senior shuttle provides shopping trips in the greater Placerville area every other Tuesday for our senior residents. The senior shuttle trips are by reservation and provide curb-to-curb service.

The senior services information packet is provided to participants in the program. Bilingual or translation services are available if required.

Shuttle services are unavailable for seniors residing in rural areas and this is a service the staff is reviewing the feasibility of providing.

### **Fall Prevention Program**

The Fall Prevention Program provides for the free installation of in-home fall prevention equipment for low-income elder or disabled County residents.

Older adults wish to age in their homes. The installation of safety accommodations can increase independence for older and disabled adults and help them age safely in their homes. In addition, education services to assist in preventing falls are provided to clients in their homes.

Installation of large ramps is an unmet need due to the permitting process and cost.

The program is on track to spend allocated funds.

### **Transportation/Assisted Transportation**

The Transportation/Assisted Transportation program provides a last resort non-medical transportation services for alone and isolated elder and disabled County residents.

The program has monetary limitations but has been supplemented by grants. The needs of the program have been met through the initiatives of the staff. The services are provided by County staff and vendors.