

SUMMARY

2008-09 UPDATE to the 2005-09 EL DORADO COUNTY AREA PLAN FOR SENIOR SERVICES

The following are key changes and highlights in the four-year plan:

- **New Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Director.** Doug Nowka, the El Dorado County AAA Director for the past twenty years was appointed Director of Human Services on October 27, 2007. Janet Walker-Conroy was appointed the new AAA Director effective February 15, 2008. Jan Walker-Conroy has extensive experience in the aging network. She is currently Assistant Director of Human Services and has been the designated Public Guardian/Public Conservator for El Dorado County since 1996. She has served in many additional capacities during her years of service with the County, including Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP)/Linkages Site Director, Medi-Cal Administrative Activities/Targeted Case Management Coordinator and Manager of Senior Programs with oversight of the Home of Elder and Adult Resource Team (HEART) programs.
- **Enhanced Services Provided by Senior Legal.** Senior Legal Services (SLS) has been enhanced by upgrading the Legal Secretary to a Paralegal, and with the addition of a second Paralegal/Notary. Senior Legal Services provides legal education and services to El Dorado County residents, 60 years and older, regardless of income. The improved staffing has resulted in a 30% increase in the number of seniors being seen in the office, an increased ability to personally answer the phone, and draft documents to be completed within one week of an appointment. SLS has increased the number of litigation cases they can handle, and an attorney is now able to travel with a Notary offsite to the South Lake Tahoe Senior Center, El Dorado Hills Senior Center, and to homes, hospitals and nursing homes for appointments without closing down the main office at the Placerville Senior Center.
- **Home of Elder and Adult Resource Team.** Completion of a long awaited new facility located at 3047 Briw Road, enabled Human Services to reinstate the co-location of HEART (Home of Elder and Adult Resource Team) services on March 10, 2008. Back in 2002 the Board of Supervisors directed the co-location of Public Guardian, Adult Protective Services, In-Home Supportive Services, Representative Payee, Senior Information and Assistance/Central Intake and the care management programs of Linkages and MSSP to one single location, identified as HEART. This consolidation of programs significantly improved communication, decreased duplication, and resulted in more effective response time and intervention. The merger of Community Services and Social Services, combined with space requirements resulting from increased service demands and the establishment of the Elder Protection Unit, had required the temporary dispersal of these programs to various locations within the County.
- **Daily Telephone Reassurance Program under the Direction of the Friendly Visitor Program.** YANA (You Are Not Alone) a free daily telephone reassurance service is now under the direction of the Friendly Visitor Program. Both programs utilize volunteers and work in concert with each other to provide social contact and reassurance to isolated seniors, enabling them to remain independent longer. YANA volunteers may discover that someone they call would benefit from having a Friendly Visitor. Likewise, Friendly Visitors can discover that the person they regularly visit would benefit from YANA daily calls. The programs compliment one another, and it is an advantage to both that they share operation staffing.
- **Increased Public Authority Presence in the Tahoe Basin.** In an effort to better assist the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) recipients and care providers in the Tahoe Basin, a Public Authority Registry/Training Specialist will be available at the department facility in South Lake Tahoe located at 981 Silver Dollar Avenue on the second and fourth Wednesday of every month, beginning in April 2008. Public Authority staff will be on hand to enroll and provide orientation for IHSS providers, maintain the Care Provider Registry, assist recipients with employment issues, provide training and education, and help foster positive working relationships between IHSS recipients and their care providers.
- **Shingle Springs Congregate Meal Site to Close.** Historically, federal and state funding has not kept pace with the ever-increasing cost of providing meals in the Senior Nutrition Program. The El Dorado County Board of Supervisors has provided significant financial support to the Senior Nutrition Program to ensure that congregate and home-delivered meals are available throughout the County. However, due to current fiscal conditions, the Board of Supervisors has deemed it necessary to close the Shingle Springs congregate meal site in April of 2008. Participants will be directed to the Diamond Springs and El Dorado Hills meal sites for lunch and other social activities. Home-delivered meals in the Shingle Springs/Cameron Park area will continue to be provided.
- **Warming Center Opened at the Placerville Senior Center.** In a collaborative effort, the El Dorado County Office of Emergency Services, Public Health Department, and Human Services Department (AAA) opened a Warming Center at the Placerville Senior Center for senior residents and their caregivers during the extreme weather this past January. Planning is on-going to determine what location(s) best meet the need of the community if warming centers are required in the future. A response plan for extreme cold will also be finalized.
- **Elder Protection Unit Receives Award.** The Elder Protection Unit (EPU) received a California State Association of Counties (CSAC) Merit Award for 2007. The Elder Protection Unit is a combined effort of the El Dorado County District Attorney's Office, County Counsel, and both the Social Services and Community Services divisions of the Human Services Department. This award demonstrates the outstanding work being accomplished by EPU to safeguard County seniors from abuse, neglect and exploitation. Since its inception in February 2006, EPU has conducted more than 400 abuse/neglect investigations, referring 120 of them for civil or criminal litigation.