

Heritage Area Agency on Aging Area Plan FY2020 – 2021 Summary

Goal 1: Iowa Aging Network will protect and enhance the rights; and prevent the abuse, neglect, and exploitation of older Iowans.

The EAPA program commonly sees neglect, self-neglect, and/or financial abuse of older adults. Through its program, and with additional funding support from the Victims of Crime Act grant, the program will be able to enhance service to individuals at risk for abuse. Legal Services provides advice and counsel for numerous legal matters to older adults region wide. A focus group dedicated to this specific issue has been created to strengthen scope and reach, and address gaps with self-neglect cases, hoarding, and individuals in rural, difficult to reach areas of the region.

Identified service gaps include:

- Older adults in the Heritage service area experiencing elder abuse, neglect or financial exploitation often do not recognize the signs of abuse or how to escape and recover the abusive situation.
- Older adults in the Heritage service area experiencing self-neglect issues of hoarding, homelessness, and bed bugs are difficult to reach and serve.
- Older adults in the Heritage service area who are caring for adult children with disabilities are not aware of available resources.

Examples of our results include:

- In FY2018, Heritage provided 1,496 persons with information on elder abuse prevention and awareness; 105 persons received elder abuse consultation services, and 42 older adults were provided 330 units of EAPA Assessment & Intervention services.
- 421 older adults received 792 units of legal assistance.

Goal 2: Iowa Aging Network will work with older Iowans, Iowans with disabilities, and caregivers as they fully engage and participate in their communities, make informed decisions, and exercise self-determination and control about their independence, well-being, and health.

LifeLong Links provides access to information and referral assistance to community support programs and to options counseling and caregiver support to assist individuals in developing a person-centered plan for maintaining independence in their community of choice. Nutrition education and counseling is provided to those at risk. The LifeLong Links advisory council serves as a focus group for this Area Plan goal and helps to measure determined strategies. A Nutrition focus group has been established to address health and nutrition-related goals including expanding outreach efforts to increase consumers in congregate meals, increased identification of clients at high nutritional risk for nutrition counseling and increasing education on OAA funded meals to help diminish utilizations stigma.

Identified service gaps include:

- Rural residents in the Heritage service area face additional barriers to accessing needed services.

- Caregivers are often so consumed with the caregiver responsibilities that they do not have time to research and connect with support services.
- Caregivers within the Heritage services area lack caregiver training opportunities and resources.
- High nutrition risk individuals within the Heritage service area lack sufficient nutrition education and nutrition counseling.

Examples of our results include:

- In FY2018, Heritage provided services to 1,376 caregivers within PSA 4. Services offered to caregivers included: information services, access assistance, counseling, options counseling, respite care, supplemental services.
- 5,014 persons received information and assistance. The most common topics the applicant provided information on included: Options Counseling, Medicaid, homemaker services, subsidized rental housing and assisted transportation.
- 2,407 older adults received a meal at a congregate dining site or at their home.
- 619 or 80% of older adults considered socially isolated received at least eight home delivered meals per month.

Goal 3: Iowa Aging Network will enable Older Iowans to remain in their own residence and community of choice.

Primarily contracted to community-based providers, older adults receive congregate and home-delivered meals, transportation support, and others. Heritage provides non-Medicaid case management services and provides funding for material aid and unmet needs when funds are available. A focus group dedicated to HCBS issues has been created to strengthen Heritage's work on this Area Plan goal in the strategies of increasing clients from rural areas and of diverse backgrounds. Heritage views advocacy as a vital part of its mission. As such, it will work with federal, state, county and local government officials to establish policies and programs, and provide funding that will enable its targeted population to age successfully.

Identified service gaps include:

- Older adults within the Heritage service area lack affordable non-medical transportation options on evening and weekends.
- Working caregivers within the Heritage service area lack knowledge on how to access available resources to assist with caregiving.
- Caregiver who care for adult children with disabilities within the Heritage service area lack knowledge on how to access available resources.
- Older adults within the Heritage service area need access to nutritious meals.
- The Heritage Agency needs to increase access to information, education and advocacy efforts within the service area.

Example of our results include:

- 532 older adults were provided with home and community based services such as: adult daycare, transportation, chore services, homemaker services, material aid, and personal care.