

## **County Forum on Creating a More Aging-Friendly Community Ideas from June 7, 2013 Forum at the Korean Central Senior Center**

**Number of participants:** 70

Fairfax County is one of the most diverse counties in the U.S. The Board of Supervisors wants all county residents, regardless of their English-speaking ability, to contribute their ideas and participate in community planning. In order to facilitate participation across the whole population, several 50+ Community Forums were held specifically for non-English speaking older adults. The participants at the Korean Central Senior Center were primarily Korean-speakers. They were interested in participating in the process of developing the 2013/2014 50+ Action Plan. All the forum topics (Housing, Transportation, Community Engagement, Safe & Healthy Community, and Services) were discussed with the entire group.

The Fairfax Area Agency on Aging (AAA) director facilitated the forum in English. One bilingual AAA staff person interpreted for the Korean-speaking participants, and the AAA Multicultural Community Planner recorded the ideas and comments that were expressed.

### **Feedback from participants:**

#### **Housing:**

- Possible ways for helping with modifying 2-level homes to help older adults remain in the home
- Are there more affordable chair lifts for multi-level homes?
- Wheel chair accessible homes needed. Need modifications to prepare for the future. Need help repairing bathrooms and make it affordable. Bathrooms need to be more accessible.
- Programs and volunteers needed to help with home modification so wheel chairs and walkers can be used.
- In senior apartment the bathroom sinks need to be more accessible. They are too high.

#### **Transportation:**

- Participants are frustrated because Fastran bus drivers have been 1 hour late; county budget cuts have affected transportation services; some buses are on-time, but many are not. Should view this as a school and respect the timely attendance.
- Seniors-on-the-Go! Language barrier problem on return trips. Adult children call to place the first way trip, but no one to call for the return trip. Can Fairfax County expand its vendors to include speakers of other languages?
- A Volunteer Solutions volunteer gets request for grocery assistance and other services, but has not seen any requests from Korean clients. What are the criteria for someone to be a client to receive that type of volunteer service?

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### **Services:**

- In-home services - Are there any services with helping to dispense medication and reminding or taking someone to their medical appointment?
- When going to a specialist, are there any translation services? It cost client \$80 to hire someone on their own.

### **Community Engagement:**

- Korean Senior Center has been active many years. They set up their programs like a school
- Staff shared information about Volunteer Solutions. One person said she would like to volunteer and will be contacted by VS staff.

### **Safe and Healthy Community:**

- Chronic Disease Self-Management is an example of a health management program
- All participants have sidewalks in front of their homes.