Department of Family Services
Adult and Aging Division

The number of persons age 65 and over is growing at a faster rate than the overall population of Fairfax County. By 2010, persons age 65 and older will be 9.2 percent of the county's total population, 104,400 persons. By 2020, it is projected that there will be 138,600 persons age 65 and older living in Fairfax County, and they will be 11.6 percent of the total population. In 1980, more than 13 percent of older adults spoke a language other than English at home, and by 2000 the number had more than doubled and continues to grow. From 1980 to 2000, the percentage of minorities in the older adult population increased from 6.4 to 18.3 percent. The incidence of disabilities among elderly – includes such conditions as arthritis and Alzheimer's – doubles every five years after the age of 65. Because the oldest baby boomers will turn 75 in 2021, the need for assistive services and programs will accelerate rapidly after 2020.

The Adult and Aging Division is planning for, and adapting services for, a changing population. The Adult and Aging Division provides services that target older adults and adults with disabilities. The services maximize independence and enhance social support networks already established by families and communities. The division also provides leadership and partners with the community in developing new support networks. The Adult and Aging Division includes the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging, Adult Services, Adult Protective Services, and Disability Services Planning and Development. (www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dfs)

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Cluster Care

In response to increasing numbers of people needing services, and to avoid a waiting list for home based care, a more efficient model was implemented to provide the assistance necessary to allow elderly persons and adults with disabilities to stay in their own homes. This model, termed "cluster care," builds on ideas from other local jurisdictions around the country that align services around "naturally occurring retirement communities," communities in which a significant number of residents have aged in their homes. The cluster care model has three components: task-based home care, volunteer services and home delivered meals. With task-based home care, clients receive help with services such as housekeeping and personal care (for example, bathing). Task-based home care services are provided to functionally impaired, income eligible older adults and adults with disabilities. Clients are served primarily through contracts with two home health agencies.

Volunteers are recruited in the cluster areas to provide friendly visiting, shopping, telephone reassurance and other assistance. Instead of having meals prepared by home care aides, some clients are offered Meals on Wheels, which are delivered by volunteers.

Building on the community model of providing services, ElderLink, in a public-private partnership with Inova HealthSource, along with the Adult and Aging Division, faith communities, and other county agencies, developed a community outreach program, Project Independence, initially focusing on older adults living in Franconia/Rose Hill and Annandale.

The program offers in-home assessments, information on resources, fall prevention and exercise classes. The county's contracted occupational therapist assists with the in-home assessments.

To increase assistive equipment options available to Fairfax County residents, the Disability Planning and Development unit facilitated the development of a recycling program for durable medical equipment. The program is managed by the Foundation for Rehabilitation Equipment and Endowment (FREE) in conjunction with the Arc of Northern Virginia and other community partners.

Nutrition Program/Home Delivered Meals

Home delivered meals are provided for individuals age 60 and over who are unable to shop for or prepare their own meals. Over 800 older adults and 45 adults with disabilities, who are under the age of 60, are served annually. The objective of the program, mandated by the Older Americans Act, is to improve nutrition and maintain the physical, mental and/or cognitive functioning of homebound seniors as long as possible.

The Fairfax Area Agency on Aging has memorandums of agreement with 25 community volunteer organizations that coordinate and drive 44 meal delivery routes. Meals are purchased by the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging through contracts with the following groups: Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development, Inova Health System, the Hermitage in Northern Virginia, Fairfax County Public Schools, Huong Binh Deli, Middle Eastern Catering, and the Korean Central Senior Center. Recruitment of volunteers for the delivery of meals and volunteers for the management of the routes is an ongoing effort.

The Nutritional Supplement Program targets low-income and minority individuals who are unable to consume sufficient calories from solid food due to chronic disabling conditions, dementia, or terminal illnesses. Close to 500 persons are served through this program annually. Clients' families pick up cases of liquid supplement from 11 sites around the county.

In program year 2007, over 1,300 clients were served by the home delivered meals and nutritional supplement program. The total number of meals served to clients for both nutrition programs was 216,541.

Meal routes have been created to serve older adults who have nutritional needs but who are unfamiliar with American foods. There are now two Vietnamese Meals on Wheels routes, a Korean meal route, and a Middle Eastern meal route. Fairfax County's approach to home delivered meals was presented at the 2007 National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) annual conference in California and received national attention in the Korean and Vietnamese press.

To increase meal options, a new service of weekly UPS delivered refrigerated meals has been initiated. This service option will help relieve the waiting list, and will provide meals for persons who do not need the well-being check provided by the volunteers. Some people receiving Meals on Wheels cannot prepare meals, but can heat up already prepared meals.

For older adults who are able to leave their homes and go to centers, the congregate meals program provided over 281,000 meals at 29 public and private congregate meals sites. More than 3,200 older adults participated in this program. Participants are increasing in numbers and in ethnic diversity. An ongoing challenge is to identify and provide nutritious meals that are both palatable and pleasing in order to encourage good eating and better health. This year, client satisfaction surveys about meals were translated and administered to non-English speaking participants. Of the surveys completed, 422, or 60 percent, were completed in Spanish, Chinese, Korean, or Vietnamese. Meal options are being assessed, and different menu selections are being introduced.

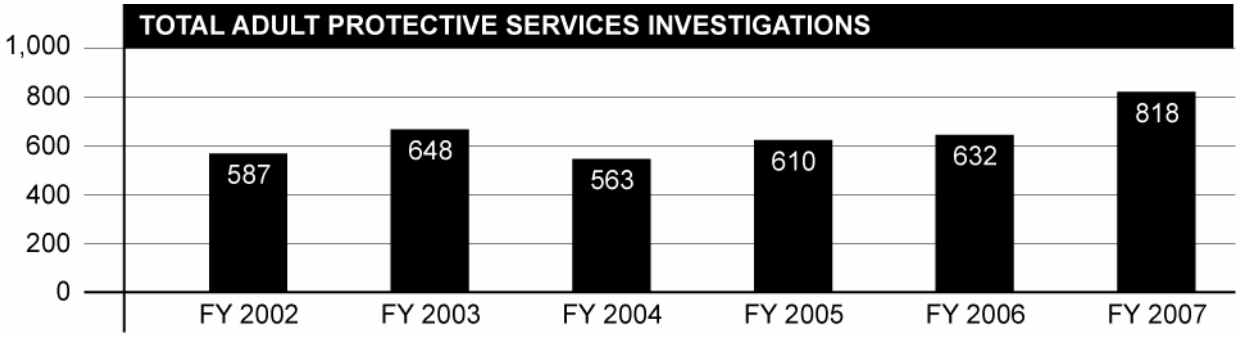
Fairfax Area Agency on Aging (AAA) Volunteer Services

In conjunction with the need to involve more volunteers in serving their neighbors, the Fairfax Area Agency on Aging volunteer services unit has been working to redesign their services. The unit is reorganizing into a regional approach with a name change to Volunteer Solutions. Each regional Department of Family Services office will have a volunteer coordinator to recruit and place individual volunteers and volunteers from local businesses and community organizations.

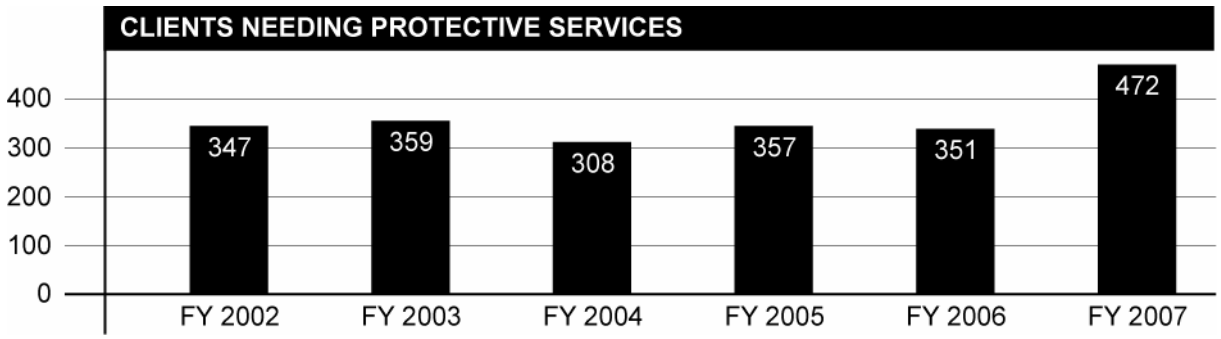
In 2007, a total of 2,293 volunteers performed 91,120 hours of volunteer service, providing such essential services as home delivered meals, telephone reassurance, friendly visiting, insurance counseling, and pet visits to nursing homes (Pets on Wheels Program). Based on the 2006 Independent Sector estimate for the dollar value of a volunteer hour ($18.77 per hour), the total value of the 91,120 volunteer hours is more than $1.7 million. The 2007 estimate for the dollar value of a volunteer hour will be released in April 2008. Volunteers also provided transportation to medical appointments and performed grocery shopping, minor home repairs, home maintenance, yard work, and other services that support older adults and adults with disabilities so that they can continue living in their own homes. (www.fairfaxcounty.gov/aaa)

Adult Protective Services

In fiscal year 2007, the number of Adult Protective Services investigations grew by nearly 30 percent from 632 investigations in fiscal year 2006 to 818 in fiscal year 2007.



Of the cases investigated: 74 percent involved persons over age 60; 26 percent involved persons under age 60; and 21 percent involved persons in institutional facilities. There were 472 adults needing protective services.



Of the cases of adults needing protective services:

- 118 involved caretaker neglect.
- 222 involved self neglect.
- 72 involved abuse.
- 55 involved financial exploitation.
- 5 involved other types of exploitation.

Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

During program year 2007, the Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program advocated for the rights and well-being of residents living in the 33 nursing facilities and 77 assisted living facilities in northern Virginia. As of July 1, 2007, Fairfax County had 16 nursing facilities (2,194 beds) and 48 assisted living facilities (3,729 beds), for a total of 5,923 beds, or 55 percent of northern Virginia's 10,803 beds.

The Ombudsman Program handled 278 complaints through formal investigations and negotiations; 159 pertained to Fairfax County. Additionally, the volunteer ombudsmen handled 863 complaints that did not require formal investigations or mediation; 503 of those involved Fairfax County facilities. The program received 9,364 inquiries regarding resident care and facility information; 3,705 came from Fairfax County residents. Consultation to facility staff totaled 214, with 105 of those for Fairfax facilities.

During 2007, the program continued to benefit from a capable team of 73 volunteer advocates, 39 for Fairfax facilities, who significantly increased the program's impact and presence around the region. Volunteer ombudsmen are recruited primarily through area newspapers, volunteer bureaus, outreach presentations, and by word of mouth. The program is benefiting from good media exposure – new applicants are often familiar with the program from reading past publicity. Once trained, volunteer ombudsmen are assigned to one particular facility and are asked to visit at least four hours per week. (www.fairfaxcounty.gov/ltcombudsman)

Caregiver Support

Through the Older Americans Act, the federal government provides funding to support family caregivers of elderly persons. The Fairfax Area Agency on Aging uses these federal funds to provide a range of services that support caregivers, including public information, support groups, respite care and assisted transportation. Cross-agency and public-private partnerships are formed to maximize use of the funds and provide more comprehensive services.

The Fairfax Caregiver Seminar Consortium provides seminars for family caregivers. Members of the consortium are the Alzheimer's Association – National Capital Area; Alzheimer's Family Day Center; Fairfax County's Departments of Community and Recreation Services, Health, and Family Services; Thomas West Financial Services; and the Fairfax County Public Library. Twelve seminars were held in fall 2007 and additional seminars will be held in spring 2008.

The "Fairfax Area Resources for Caregivers of Older Adults" (version two) was published in August 2007. *Caregiver Corner Online*, a monthly electronic newsletter sent to all who sign up for it on the county's Web site, reaches over 1,000 subscribers.

The Fairfax County Kinship Care Committee is a collaboration among the Department of Family Services, Fairfax County Public Schools, and other county agencies to research and meet the needs of grandparents and other relatives raising minor children. Two support groups for the relative caregivers have been meeting for more than three years.

In April 2007, respite was provided for the kinship families using two sites on the same day: the Gum Springs Community Center in Alexandria and the Mott Center in Fairfax. These two sites made it easier for kinship families from various regions of the county to attend, and grandparents and other relatives were able to spend time as they liked, knowing that the children were being cared for at the community centers.

The Kinship Care Committee and Fairfax County's Channel 16 produced a televised report, *Senior Times: Grandparents Raising Grandchildren*, which received national recognition from the Alliance for Community Media, as the winner in the seniors category of the 2007 Hometown Video Awards.

Education, Information, and Outreach

Adult and Aging's Disability and Caregiver Resources intake staff responded to more than 5,000 aging, disability and caregiver inquiries, by phone, walk-in, and Internet. The monthly newspaper, the *Golden Gazette*, reaches 25,000 people and now has more than 750 readers subscribing to the large print version. The newspaper is also available online and on tape. Over 6,000 people received long term care information at more than 150 speaking engagements by Adult and Aging staff. In addition, more than 800 county residents were counseled individually about insurance options, and as many attended education sessions on insurance options.

The Long Term Care Coordinating Council identified as a priority focus for its work the need to make information about long term care services readily available to the public. To help address this need, a partnership with SeniorNavigator was initiated. SeniorNavigator is a Web-based, statewide information service for seniors and those who care about them. To ensure access for persons without computers, SeniorNavigator Centers were established in 42 senior centers, libraries and community centers. The Fairfax Area Agency on Aging continues a leadership role in the ongoing partnership with SeniorNavigator.

The Fairfax County Department of Family Services' Disability Services Planning and Development unit developed a strategic partnership with SeniorNavigator and the Long Term Care Coordinating Council to form DisAbilityNavigator, which will provide comprehensive

information and referral services to people with disabilities in Northern Virginia. Ten public hearings were held to gather and document input from people with a variety of disabilities. This information will be used to make the Web site as useful and user friendly as possible. Funding was secured through the Long Term Care Coordinating Council's incentive fund. DisAbilityNavigator is scheduled to be launched in August 2008.

ISSUES/TRENDS

In 2007, the Board of Supervisors released *Anticipating the Future: Fairfax 50+ Action Plan 2007*, which identifies actions to be taken to address the needs of the growing number of older adults and to tap the talents of the older adults in our community. The Board's report focused on community planning and revitalization, universal design concepts to ensure that housing meets the needs of every age, affordability of housing, transportation planning, increased volunteerism and employment options for older adults, building on the strengths of our diversity, supporting caregivers, using technology to increase independence, addressing health and mental health challenges, taking steps for safety and security, and addressing the impact the growing population of older adults has on service capacity. In addition, the Board of Supervisors asked each department to develop initiatives in response to the increasing number of older adults, resulting in more than 60 proposals countywide. The Adult and Aging Division submitted plans for recruiting volunteers, expanding Project Independence (focus on assessments and exercise classes to enhance well-being), and increasing caregiver support.

Partnerships with neighborhood associations, faith communities, businesses, and community based organizations results in communities that support the well-being of older adults and adults with disabilities. Several neighborhood associations in the county are exploring the prospect of forming cooperatives for the purpose of purchasing and sharing personal and home maintenance services essential for living safely in their homes. This cooperative village model was initiated in Beacon Hill in Boston and has gained national attention. Adult and Aging division staff working in partnership with county and community organizations, is arranging an April 12 symposium to explore this and other village approaches so that local groups and neighborhood associations can consider the possibilities for creating a village in their own neighborhoods. Adult and Aging staff are also working with the Long Term Care Coordinating Council on a June forum for faith based organizations to increase awareness of resources for serving older adults.

The cluster care model is successfully and cost effectively arranging, facilitating, and purchasing essential services for persons who are not financially or physically able to secure services for themselves. Through the cluster care model, community gaps in services are identified and addressed. New this year are facilitated online grocery shopping for persons unable to leave home to shop and UPS delivered meals for persons who would otherwise be on a waiting list for Meals on Wheels. Availability and flexibility of funding is essential to continue the improvements being made through cluster services.

The Commission on Aging, the ASSB, and the Long Term Care Coordinating Council will continue to take the lead in assessing community service gaps for older adults and proposing innovative options for action. As noted in the Board of Supervisors' *Fairfax 50+ Action Plan*

development opportunities in housing, transportation, engagement, and specialized services exist and are crucial for the well-being of older adults.