

Department of Neighborhood and Community Services

LOB #172:

SENIOR ADULT PROGRAMS

Purpose

Senior Adult Programs serve as a focal point in connecting active older adults to vital programs and services that help them stay healthy, independent, and maintain active involvement in their community. These programs are the front end of Fairfax County's continuum of care for senior adults. Senior Adult Programs provide opportunities for recreation participation, skill development, health and wellness programs, volunteering, and leisure and educational enrichment through a variety of programs, classes, and activities. These services, with a focus on prevention, serve as a vehicle for helping senior adults maintain their self-sufficiency and for reducing the isolation of senior adults in their community who have limited mobility or interaction with others. Focusing on prevention helps delay or avoid the necessity for more intensive and costly services that are available further along the continuum of care.

Description

Senior Adult Programs operate in the Regional Services and Center Operations (RSCO) division. The Senior Adult Program includes three discrete service areas: Senior Centers, Senior+ Services, and Center Without Walls.

Fairfax County Senior Centers are part of the continuum of services for older adults in Fairfax County, along with Adult Day Health Centers. There are currently 14 senior centers (Bailey's, Herndon, Hollin Hall, James Lee, Kingstowne, Lewinsville, Lincolnia, Little River Glen, Lorton, Pimmit, Providence, South County, Sully, and Wakefield) throughout Fairfax County for residents aged 50 years and older. Current and future needs of senior adults in Fairfax County are identified through collaboration with Area Agency on Aging, Department of Family Services and the Health Department. The program includes a meal component serving a daily lunch. This meal meets one-third of the current federal dietary guidelines for senior adults. Meals are funded under Title III-C of the Older Americans Act through the County's Area Agency on Aging. Senior Center staff receives training in food handling, serve lunches, and compile reports as required by federal guidelines. Transportation is available through Human Services Transportation to senior center participants, and is coordinated and monitored by center staff. Many participants attending the senior centers take advantage of weekly trips to grocery stores and pharmacies. Centers generally operate Monday through Friday from 9am to 4pm. In addition, several sites offer services during the evening and on weekends to accommodate the needs of a diverse and growing senior population. A majority of the programs and services offered at the senior center are volunteer led. Participants pay an annual membership fee (currently \$48) that provides access to these services.

Senior+ Services support the needs of older adults with minor cognitive and physical disabilities at all senior centers. Senior+ Services promote the inclusion of all participants in the day-to-day activities of each senior center and supports center participants in moving along the continuum of care when appropriate. It focuses primarily on providing modifications, adaptations, and strategies supporting the ability of all to participate. Recreation Therapists provide inclusion services in helping to adapt and modify daily activities at each center. Case Managers assist individuals who require more intensive care. The County contracts with ServiceSource, a non-profit organization, to implement this service. As a service within each senior center, Senior+ Services follow the same operations of Senior Centers (e.g. transportation, hours of operation, meals, annual registration fee).

Centers Without Walls provide resources within communities that do not have a brick and mortar senior center. This service utilizes space donated by community organizations including space within churches and other community locations to offer ongoing health and wellness classes for older adults. Participants can choose from a variety of eight-week health and wellness classes within their community. It relies heavily on volunteer support and leadership to monitor classes and other administrative duties as needed. Currently, Centers Without Walls are operated in the Burke, West Springfield, and Great Falls areas.

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Benefits

Older Adults Are Engaged in Their Community: Older Adults regularly meet with peer groups both in and out of the center. Older Adults volunteer for and in their community. Older Adults enjoy multi-generational programming both in and out of the center.

Older Adults Develop Lifelong Learning Skills: Older Adults' cognitive functions are improved or maintained through exposure to diverse cultures, technological skills, new crafts, languages, physical and leisure activities.

Older Adults Are Healthy & Well: Older Adults improve or maintain balance, strength, and flexibility. Older Adults make healthier dietary choices to improve or maintain physical and mental well-being. Older Adults receive health education and assessments that improve healthcare decisions.

Older Adults Develop Positive, Supportive Relationships: Older Adults develop close friendships that support them as they transition through the aging process, including the loss of a spouse, friends, or family and adjustment to geographical moves.

Older Adults and Their Families Are Connected to Services: Older Adults and their families/caregivers are informed of and directed to other services as their changing needs are identified.

Mandates

This Line of Business is not mandated.

Trends and Challenges

The demographic composition of Fairfax County has changed with the aging of the overall population. Between 2008 and 2013, the number of Fairfax County residents, age 65 and older, grew by 8.6 percent, to comprise 11.1 percent of the County's total population. Currently, 6.4 percent of those persons over 65 are living alone in Fairfax County. These demographics are projected to rise over the next 20 years. The County continues to respond to the growing needs of this population and must ensure proper resources to accommodate these trends. Below are trends and challenges that impact Senior Adult Programming:

Services to low-income senior adults: Statistics show that 22 percent of those attending senior centers are living in poverty (225 percent of the poverty scale). This trend indicates that Senior Adult Programming can play a major role in supporting the needs of low-income seniors.

Meeting the program needs of the older adult spectrum: Older Adults fall within a wide age spectrum beginning at age 50. This requires multiple levels of program planning, adaption, and programming selection. Physical limitations, cognitive abilities, and variety of health issues are all challenges that need to be addressed in providing resources to each age group within the spectrum. As resources become more limited, the ability to meet the programming needs of each of these age groups becomes more challenging.

Expansion of Center Without Walls: As this population continues to grow and so will the need for additional space, services, and programming opportunities. Trends indicate that older adults will want to participate in activities in their immediate community with little or no transportation needed. The Center Without Walls concept provides an alternative to expanding programming opportunities within individual neighborhoods without making additional investment in facilities and transportation.

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Older adults with intellectual disabilities: The number of individuals with disabilities has out-paced County growth by 11 percent, while the number of individuals with disabilities, age 65 and older, grew at a rate almost 70 percent higher than that of the County average. Traditionally, adults with intellectual disabilities did not have the extended life expectancy that they have today. Senior Adult Programming is beginning to acknowledge and address the specific needs and programming requirements to support this population in their successful involvement in community activities.

Capacity issues at older adult programs: Many of the older adult programs are currently at capacity. Waitlists exist for classes and continue to grow. Participants cannot access certain classes and programs that support their independence and self-sufficiency because of limited space.

Resources

Category	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Adopted
LOB #172: Senior Adult Programs			
FUNDING			
<u>Expenditures:</u>			
Compensation	\$1,910,186	\$2,091,221	\$1,938,303
Operating Expenses	1,736,751	1,804,366	1,802,222
Total Expenditures	\$3,646,937	\$3,895,587	\$3,740,525
General Fund Revenue	\$242,676	\$253,469	\$252,376
Net Cost/(Savings) to General Fund	\$3,404,261	\$3,642,118	\$3,488,149
POSITIONS			
Authorized Positions/Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)			
<u>Positions:</u>			
Regular	31 / 31	33 / 33	33 / 33
Total Positions	31 / 31	33 / 33	33 / 33

Metrics

Metric Indicator	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Estimate	FY 2017 Estimate
Senior center attendance	284,392	277,342	296,883	311,727	327,313
Cost per attendee	\$6.10	\$6.65	\$6.99	\$7.04	\$7.04
Percent of seniors satisfied with programs and services	93%	96%	93%	90%	90%

Attendance at Senior centers increased primarily due to the opening of Providence Community Center, which features a senior center on-site. Additionally, a renewed focus on programming for the younger senior adult population, which is rapidly growing in the County, provides attractive options for that target group. Service quality results indicate a continued high level of satisfaction with senior centers.