

## AGING AND ACTION FORUM: Partnering Through Hard Times May 13, 2009

Following is the summary of the discussions that took place at the forum.

### Housing Issues

Moderator/Facilitator: Kathy Winter, HUD

Notes: Nicki Stajcar, DEA

- Guidelines for on site meals
- Is there enough affordable rental housing? Greater need for affordable assisted living
  - Need for affordable assisted living facilities
  - Need for moderate income housing for persons not eligible for T-19 but not enough resources for desired housing
- Need for additional resources for home modification to allow people to remain in their homes.
- Improved collaboration/coordination among providers, area agencies on aging, and government agencies (including VA) for available options
- Need for more section 8 vouchers
- Thru collaboration, improve building codes to provide additional assisted living facilities/tenants

### Transportation

Moderator/Facilitator: Mary Stahlhut, DOT

Notes: Nicki Stajcar, DEA

- Consider transportation coordination options counselors.
- Diversification of vehicle size to better meet needs.
- Remove barriers to utilize volunteer drives
  - Qualification of drivers
  - Insurance issues/misunderstanding
- Define best practices for existing volunteer programs & replicate
- Continue engineering improvements to enhance safety for all road users
- Collaboration of agencies, providers & consumers
- Iowa Needs to communicate safety needs for long distance travel for older adults (inter & intra state) with national NTSB
- Continue to plan for the population shift – older lowans population increasing. Need to plan long term – 20-30 years out.

## Financial Fraud and Elder Abuse

Moderators/Facilitators: Chantelle Smith, Office of the Attorney General and Linda Hildreth, DEA

Notes: Deanna Clingan-Fischer, DEA

Issues/concerns raised:

- Fragmented system—need state entities to collaborate to protect dependent adults
- Confusion between elder abuse and dependent adult abuse
- Abuse/fraud is under-reported and under recognized
- Education is needed for DHS, law enforcement, county attorneys, and other stakeholders
- Education is needed for the general public so it is understood: what is abuse, who can report, where to call and what resources are available
- How is dependency determined? Seems to be no consistent interpretation
- Lack of intervention resources—unmet need for these resources. Small upfront costs compared to the large return on investment
  - Elder Abuse Initiatives need to be statewide, not just in 30 counties
  - Office of Substitute Decision Maker needs to continue with increased funding
  - Prosecution –need county attorneys to understand and pursue
  - Advocacy –need to know how to effectively communicate the need
- Exploitation by a person in a position of trust such as power of attorney. Few penalties applied
- Misuse of power of attorney, guardianship and conservatorship powers. Not much is done or pursued to make the victim whole. There is no real deterrent as these cases are generally not prosecuted
- Substitute Decision Makers are not available across the state. DHS looks to substitute decision makers when a dependent adult has been abused, neglected or exploited as an intervention but many times cannot find a decision maker to act
- Need consistently applied penalties for abuse, neglect, exploitation and other financial crimes
- Need a separate crime unit with in the County Attorney or Attorney General’s office to prosecute financial crimes
- Concerns over internet scams and gambling issues were raised
- DHS needs an Assistant Attorney General to assist with the dependent adult abuse appeals. There is an assigned AG for child abuse cases, but not for dependent adult abuse cases
- Need separate adult abuse units within DHS throughout the State of Iowa
- Need an effective advocacy network for older adult issues to communicate concerns to legislators and other policy makers
- Need a system statewide, like the Elder Abuse Initiative, to address elder abuse concerns
- Need to focus on reaching out to older persons to discuss protecting oneself from identity theft, fraud, scams, abuse, neglect and exploitation

## Long Term Services & Supports

Moderator/Facilitator: Kyle Kostelecky, Family Life Extension Specialist

Notes: Mary Anderson, DEA

### 1) FAMILIES & OLDER IOWANS

More funding for education efforts aimed toward consumers in the area of access to information/resources.

- Perhaps exploring new methods, innovative methods of dispersing information about services
- Media/marketing appropriate for urban/suburban/rural areas
- i4a.org
- lifelonglinks.org
- 211
- What kinds of programming are available?
  - ex: about to become a resident caregiver (mom's moving in)
- Clarity on trade terminology for consumers

Part of this education should include a prevention model, not just "when you need it" or acute access.

Some know of services, many do not know the "home agency" that provides the service. Not aware, for example of AAAs menu of services.

### 2) HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS

Education for LTC providers and acute care providers – all levels – CNAs, geriatric nurses, RNs, MDs, administrators, and everything in between. Primarily the medical staff (nurses and MDs).

- Mandate? Would like this – it was the consensus of the medical staff in the room.
- Curriculum changes as these folks work their way through their training (nursing/med school)
  - Development, disability, mental health, family interaction, chronic and acute conditions
- In addition, some form of incentive or even "marketing ploy" to attract students to study geriatrics, LTC, gerontology to fill these needs in Iowa

### 3) SERVICE PROVIDERS

Educate each other about how to work together better. Reduce fragmentation of services/agencies. Policy that makes it easier to work together than separately!

- Reducing "silo" mentality would increase formal and informal care options as resources are presented in a manner that is smooth and seamless
- Streamline plans of work to allow for and encourage collaboration
  - Even create policy that rewards this style of doing business (providing services)
- Educate service providers in a way that innovation and collaboration is a regular part of their planning instead of "doing it like we've always done it"

#### 4) SUMMARY

Overall, the group was looking for the following types of education for families, older adults, health care staff, and provider staff:

- Caregiver
- Nutrition
- Health care provider
- Program awareness
- Rural understanding
- Mental health

The ultimate plea was to finally move our number of 26.2% of services provided as HCBS (where it has been for years/decades) to something closer to 50%.

The group was seeking policy that rewards power in numbers. Looking at joint effort by all and a system that makes it easier to collaborate than fragment/work separately. Perhaps a single point of entry model of all (service provider resources, access for older lowans and their families, and education for health care staff).

### Employment

Moderator/Facilitator: Doug Keast, IWD

Notes taken by: Terry Hornbuckle, DEA

#### 1) Introduction:

The attendees during the introduction identified the following as issues for employment and older workers:

- Employer awareness of ADA, aging and disability
- Discrepancy in employment rates when comparing older and younger populations
- Stigma and discrimination – ageism
- Older veterans
- Entrepreneurship
- Impact of the recession on employment for older lowans
- New technology and the digital divide
- Increasing need to continue working, while the employers and community at large have a perception that older lowans don't need to work
- Impact of earnings on other benefits – and the lack of knowledgeable individuals readily able to assist working individuals on various forms of public assistance manage this. There are numerous poverty issues. lowans over 60 who need to work also have a high incidence of poverty – more discussion on living wages and what this means for lowans with work, housing and many other forms of assistance will need to be addressed.
- Competition for jobs issues for individuals 50 and older

## 2) Why do older lowans continue to work?

- There is a need to support other dependents within extended family
- Loss of a business
- To maintain social contacts
- To maintain a steady income
- Self worth and value
- Still in a farm culture

## 3) Types of Work Issues?

- Schedule and flexibility
- Flexibility of technology supports and opportunities to learn
- Availability of opportunities to acquire skills with new technology
- Access to life long learning supports
- Opportunities for training with other new skills

## 4) Problems Getting the Job – for Older Job Seekers:

- Physical limitations
- Resume
- Overqualified
- Transportation – especially rural
- Competition with the younger/cheaper employee
- Younger supervisors – comfort level
- Resistance/fear of learning technology
- Lack of customer service jobs
- Cultural (disrespect of older people)
- Lack of rural jobs in general
- Positives: work ethic and experience of older workers

## 5) Training and Retraining needs for future jobs:

- Identification of the “high growth industry”
- Different learning styles
- More marketing about the benefits of hiring experience
- Collaboration needs – AAA’s, RWIBs, other employment agencies