



DHS Area Agency on Aging

2100 Wharton Street, Second Floor
Pittsburgh, PA 15203

412-350-4234 / 412-350- 3193 (fax)
SeniorLine: 412-350-5460

Established in 2000 (Formerly, Allegheny County Department of Aging)

Administration

Patricia L. Valentine, DHS Executive Deputy
Director for Integrated Program Services
Mildred E. Morrison, AAA Administrator
Advisory Council to the Area Agency on Ag-
ing (15 members)
State oversight: Pennsylvania Department of
Aging

Mission

To help Allegheny County residents who are
60 years of age and older live independent
lives.

Legal mandates

AAA is required through the following agen-
cies and legislation to deliver services to the
elderly in a coordinated manner, utilizing all
community resources in an effort to avoid
duplication and ensure comprehensive
county-wide coverage:

- Federal Administration on Aging
- Pennsylvania Department of Aging
- Older Americans Act
- Pennsylvania Act 70

Area Agency on Aging Overview

People Served* (CY 2015)

- 49,600 (60 years of age or older)

AAA filled positions (a/o 01/16)

- 170 (county)

Contract Providers (FY 2015-16)

- 81

Budget (FY 2015-16)

- \$51.5 million
(1.1% county, 68.3% state, 25.4%
federal, and 5.2% other funds)

Approximately 54.5% comes from lottery
in the Aging Block Grant.

Contracted agencies account for 62% of
the AAA budget

*The approximate count of consumers served
by the Allegheny County Area Agency on Ag-
ing includes an unduplicated count of con-
sumers served in the Pennsylvania Depart-
ment of Aging (PDA) mandated Social Assis-
tance Management System (SAMS). The
count also reflects a small number of consum-
ers served in other systems other than SAMS,
and may or may not be unduplicated. The
count does not include people that received
services in the following categories: transpor-
tation, employment services, volunteer ser-
vices, outreach, and anonymous callers for
information and referral.



Allegheny County

Department of Human Services

Marc Cherna, Director

Area Agency on Aging
Mildred Morrison, AAA Administrator
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2016

Background

The AAA provides a wide range of services and resources for caregivers, seniors, and the public. These services and resources help older adults, aged 60 and older, live independent lives, in their own homes and communities as long as possible.

AAA services address a continuum of care ranging from those for active, independent older adults to those for persons who are more frail and vulnerable. The AAA provides services through programs at its main office on the South Side of Pittsburgh, a network of about 100 community-based service organizations and local municipal governments throughout the county.

Getting the information that you need about services and resources available for older adults....

SeniorLine:

412-350-5460; Toll Free: 1-800-344-4319; E-mail: SeniorLine@alleghenycounty.us

The AAA SeniorLine is the authoritative resource for information about access to services provided by the AAA and its community-based providers. It also provides referrals and assistance in connecting with other community organizations serving older adults. Professional care managers who are all certified by the Alliance for Information and Referrals Systems staff the SeniorLine. They handle calls and emails on weekdays between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Callers who leave a message or e-mail after normal office hours typically receive a call back or response by a care manager during the next business day.

More information about requesting information or applying for services from the AAA is available at <http://alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/About/Offices/Area-Agency-on-Aging.aspx>

Staying connected to your community. . .

➤ Senior Community Centers:

Senior Community Centers provide older adults with programming and services oriented to their needs and interests right in their communities. Participation in activities offers older

adults a great way to stay mentally and physically active, meet people and start new friendships.

Senior Centers are located in neighborhoods throughout Allegheny County. Older adults may choose to participate in health and fitness programs (including evidence-based programs); social and recreational events; educational opportunities; daily meals, shared-ride transportation to and from the centers as well as off-site programs that they can enjoy with their peers.

A list of DHS Senior Centers is available at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/seniorcenters.aspx.

➤ ***Volunteer Opportunities:***

Senior Community Centers offer many opportunities for older adults to volunteer at the center and with other community organizations. These opportunities include clerical support (typing, filing, answering the phone, greeting older adults, etc.); meal preparation and service; distributing home-delivered meals; leading senior center classes and workshops; serving on center advisory councils; and providing companionship to consumers in their homes.

➤ ***Transportation Services:***

Older adults living in Allegheny County are eligible for several shared-ride transportation services through the AAA, DHS Office of Community Services, ACCESS Transportation Systems, and the Port Authority of Allegheny. Services include:

- **Older Persons Transportation (OPT)** is an AAA-sponsored shared-ride service for older adults, 60 years of age and older, that provides transportation for specific purposes, including medical and other health-related appointments, senior center visits, grocery shopping and adult day care.
- **Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP)** is a free service for non-emergency medical transportation available to Medical Assistance consumers.
- **ACCESS 65 Plus** is a shared-ride service that persons, 65 years of age and older, may utilize for any purpose
<http://www.portauthority.org/paac/RiderServices/ACCESSParatransit.aspx>

The **Port Authority Senior Citizen Free Fare Program** allows persons, 65 years of age and older, who present a Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Senior Citizen Identification card or a Medicare card at the time of fare payment, to ride Port Authority fixed-route service free of charge at all times. Additional information about how to register can be obtained at <http://www.portauthority.org/paac/RiderServices/RidersWithSpecialNeeds.aspx>

Contact the Allegheny County webpage at www.alleghenycounty.us for more information about the above services.

➤ ***Employment Opportunities:***

The AAA supports the DHS Office of Community Services Senior Training and Employment Program (STEP). STEP provides training and work opportunities to Allegheny County

residents, age 55 years and older, who meet program income guidelines. Individuals enrolled in the program receive 20 hours of training and work experience per week in non-profit or government agencies and are paid minimum wage. In addition to work experience and training, enrollees receive employment placement assistance for full-time and part-time jobs in the private sector. Pre-application is required to enroll in any of these services.

More information about employment opportunities is available at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/employment.aspx or by calling 412-350-7119.

➤ ***Assistance with obtaining additional services in the community:***

The AAA assists with obtaining information on a variety of community resources such as:

- **LIHEAP** (Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program) - home heating bill payment help.
- **PACE** (Pharmaceutical Assistance Contract for the Elderly) - discounted prices on prescription drugs.
- **Property Tax Abatements** – Allegheny County offers several abatements and exemptions that may reduce an older adult’s county tax bill: Act 50 — Homestead/Farmstead Exclusion and Act 77— Senior Property Tax Relief.
- **Rent Rebates** – The Pennsylvania Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program provides rebates for income-qualified older adults and permanently disabled citizens.
- **SNAP** (Food Stamps) Help paying for groceries.

➤ ***Personal Care Supplement:***

Dom Care provides family homes for adults who are not able to live independently. No more than three participants can live in a Dom Care home, thereby allowing the providers to give individual attention and assistance with daily living activities in a safe and caring setting.

www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/domcare.aspx

➤ ***Health Care and Insurance questions answered:***

The APPRISE program is a free health insurance counseling program that helps older adults to fully understand and make well-informed choices about their health insurance, health care benefits, and options. Trained counselors provide unbiased counseling to consumers so that they can make informed decisions for themselves about Medicare, prescription drug coverage, health maintenance organizations (HMOs), long-term care insurance, supplemental health insurance, and Medicaid benefits. APPRISE is operated by Family Services of Western Pennsylvania under contract with the AAA and can be reached by calling 412-661-1438.

➤ ***Living safely at home . . .***

In-home services:

The AAA provides a variety of services to enhance the ability of persons age 60+ to live safely in their own residences. A variety of programs are offered, including one that features Co-payment for services is available on a sliding scale, the Family Caregiver Support Program targeted to reduce the stress caregivers experience by reimbursing the cost of services or out-of-pocket caregiving expenses, and the PA Aging Waiver which coordinates a broad range of services for frail elders meeting state requirements for higher

levels of need. The process for obtaining services begins with a call to the SeniorLine, which leads to an assessment of your needs. Based on the assessment results, a care manager works with you and your family or caregiver to develop and coordinate a care plan of services that can be provided in your home and community. The care plan may offer a combination of the services including but not limited to the following:

- **Home-delivered Meals:** Nutritious meals delivered to homebound older adults who are at nutritional risk and are unable to safely prepare meals, have difficulty leaving home to purchase groceries or have no other means to acquire meals on a regular basis.
- **Home Health and Personal Care:** Services provided to older adults who need help with personal health and hygiene, daily living activities (bathing, dressing, grooming, etc.), and taking medications on schedule.
- **Light housekeeping and home maintenance:** Services provided to ensure that your home environment is healthy and livable. Assistive devices (e.g., handrails for stairs and bathtubs) can be installed if needed.
- **Senior Companion Program:** The Senior Companion program assists older adults 60 years and older who may have various health issues or are lonely and could benefit from a friendly visitor. In most cases, these individuals have difficulty with daily living tasks, and senior companions help them retain their dignity and independence by providing regular, helpful visits.
- **Checks and Balance Volunteer Bill Pay Program:** This program helps low income or disabled older adults with their personal finances. Trained volunteers provide assistance with personal budgeting, preparing checks to pay bills and maintaining a check register. In some cases, a Representative Payee can be appointed by a government agency to manage the benefits of an older adult who is unable to manage their finances.
- **Carrier Alert Program:** This program allows U.S. Postal Service mail carriers to provide daily checkups on the well-being of older adults living alone. Carriers alert the AAA if they notice an accumulation of uncollected mail, indicating a reduction in mobility, which may also indicate that an illness or accident is making it difficult for the resident to call for help.

More information about the FCSP is available at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/caregiversupport.aspx

➤ **Additional Services:**

Nursing Home Transition Program:

This program provides an opportunity for residents of nursing homes to explore the possibility of returning to live in the community.

Reducing hospital re-admission by recently discharged at-risk older adults:

Working with partner hospitals, the AAA's Community Care Transitions Program (CCTP) seeks to reduce the incidence and cost of hospital re-admissions by improving health care for recently discharged older adults.

Protecting older adults who are abused, neglected, abandoned or exploited:
Elder Abuse Hotline: 412-350-6905; Toll Free: 1-800-344-4319

The Elder Abuse Hotline accepts calls 24 hours a day, seven days a week from anyone who believes that an older adult has been abandoned or is being abused, neglected (including self-neglect), or exploited (including financially). People who make reports have the right to remain anonymous and be protected from further involvement in the case. AAA Older Adult Protective Services staff who determine what if any steps need to be taken to ensure the reported victim's safety and well-being investigate every report. Victims have the right to have all information about their case kept confidential.

Ombudsman Program:

AAA Ombudsmen advocate for consumers of long term-care services, no matter where they reside. They assist consumers in nursing facilities, personal care homes, adult day care centers, Domiciliary Care Homes and those who receive care in their homes. They resolve issues related to their rights as a consumer or the quality of care they receive.

Volunteers are an important part of the Ombudsman Program. Volunteer Ombudsmen are people from the community who are specially trained to find answers and resolve problems people experience in the long-term care system. Volunteer Ombudsmen advocate on behalf of consumers, and take time to listen to concerns on a person-to-person basis. **To speak to an Ombudsman about long-term care concerns or to learn more about becoming a Volunteer Ombudsman, please call 412.350.5791.**

Administration:

The AAA is an agent of the PA Department of Aging and the AAA Administrator directs its operations. Service implementation is supervised by two division chiefs, supervisory and administrative staff, and contracting agencies. The AAA is a unit of county government under the authority of the Director of the Department of Human Services, DHS Executive Deputy Director for integrated program services, County Manager and County Executive.

Area Plan:

The AAA's four-year Area Plan for 2012-16 is posted on the DHS website at www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/plansbudgets.aspx

Publications:

Pittsburgh Senior News - includes informative feature articles about aging services and senior center event calendars in each monthly issue
<http://pittsburghseniornews.com/documents/>

Allegheny County Senior Resource Guide - a comprehensive annual guide to older adult services in the community.