



## ABSTRACT

**A DRAFT SUMMARY OF THE 2019 ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (AIP), FOR OLDER AMERICAN'S ACT (OAA), NEW YORK STATE COMMUNITY SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY (CSE), EXPANDED IN-HOME SERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY PROGRAMS (EISEP), AND OTHER SOURCES.**

The Erie County Department of Senior Services is committed to promoting the well-being of adults age 60 and over through coordinated and cost-effective services that enhance their independence, dignity and quality of life. These services include: information and assistance; congregate meals; transportation; health insurance counseling; fitness and health promotion; and intensive home and community based services for our most frail older adults, including case management; home care; personal emergency response systems (PERS); and home delivered meals. Caregivers of the frail elderly are also assisted with services that provide respite, such as senior adult day care programs, and with other services which help support their day-to-day caregiving responsibilities.

As the Area Agency on Aging, it is the responsibility of the Erie County Department of Senior Services to plan, coordinate, advocate, and initiate the development of a comprehensive service delivery system at the local level to meet the short and long-term needs of Erie County's older adults and their families. The Department works with older adults, providers, elected and public officials, and volunteers to coordinate existing services, and to facilitate the development of new ones. The preparation of a four-year plan and subsequent Annual Implementation Plans, outline efforts the Department will make to address existing and emerging needs in the community. These plans specify how federal and state funds will be used by the Department throughout the planning period.

**This Abstract provides a summary of the objectives and activities for programs and services funded primarily through the above referenced sources for program year 2019-20, the final year in the 2017-2020 Four-year Plan. A new Needs Assessment Survey will be disseminated in 2019, and the results will inform the 2020-2024 Four-Year Plan.**

### **A. ERIE COUNTY SENIOR SERVICES' PRIORITIES FOR 2019**

- Enhance the visibility and public awareness of Erie County's Aging and Disability Resource Center --- *NY Connects*; expand staff presence in Erie County communities; and increase the number of clients served annually.
- Continue to expand training to ensure NY Connects staff can expertly assist older adults, the disabled, caregivers and others in need of long term services and supports, and direct them to the most appropriate service or program to address their needs.
- Build on the success of the BIP Innovation Fund pilot, "Ready, Set, Home," and identify ways to incorporate program elements into sustainable funding streams.
- Establish new partnerships to help NY Connects and the Department of Senior Services better serve veterans residing in Erie County.

- **Maintain the Department’s role in Age-Friendly Erie County (AFEC) to maintain a key role with the University of Buffalo’s IDEA Center for Inclusive Design, People Inc., and AARP-NY, in developing and implementing a framework for the project which includes the AFEC community assessment, advisory board, and plan of action for the community.**
- **Strengthen the EISEP case management system to ensure older adults receive consistent service throughout Erie County.**
- **Expanding to meet the growing demand for health insurance information and assistance; NY Connects staff obtaining certification with the Health Insurance Information Counseling & Assistance Program (HIICAP).**
- **Address shortcomings in the availability of personal care services throughout Erie County by contracting with new agencies, expanding the use of consumer-directed services, and working with community partners to advocate for workforce development in this crucial area of need.**
- **Increase community capacity to serve family caregivers of the frail elderly, especially those with Alzheimer’s disease, through new and expanded community partnerships.**
- **Reduce falls by older adults by working with community partners to increase fall prevention efforts, including building capacity to deliver the evidence-based “A Matter of Balance” program.**
- **Decrease the number of falls by older adults by effectively identifying seniors with elevated risk of falls and referring them to an appropriate fall prevention intervention.**
- **Following receipt of American Association of Diabetes Education’s accreditation, continue program expansion and work to steps to attain Medicare reimbursement.**
- **Increase the number of retired seniors volunteering for programs that directly benefit older adults in the community including respite programs and evidence-based wellness programs.**
- **Work with community partners to effectively meet the nutritional needs of Erie County’s older adults by supporting local Meals on Wheels providers, and increasing awareness of the Stay Fit dining program.**
- **Work to address persistent transportation needs of Erie County’s most vulnerable older adults, including those with behavioral health needs.**
- **Build regional partnerships to gain efficiencies and increase the Department’s ability to generate new resources to support expansion of services.**

## **B. ADVOCACY**

**Goal: To promote public policy, legislation, and private sector initiatives which address the needs of older adults. Senior Services will advocate for additional resources and modifications in public policy to further promote the independence and optimum well-being of older adults.**

The following are some of the advocacy issues that will be addressed by Senior Services in 2019:

- Continue to promote the reauthorization of the Older Americans Act and provide input to help facilitate the modernization of the bill.
- Increase funding for Older Americans Act programs that expand home and community based services, transportation, legal assistance, evidence-based health promotion, employment opportunities, caregiver support, and nutritional services.
- Advocate for a dynamic role for Area Agencies on Aging, as well as Aging and Disability Resource Centers, in the delivery of long term services and supports in New York State.
- Support the advocacy agenda of the Association on Aging in NY and AARP's "Age Friendly Erie County" initiative.

#### **D. COLLABORATIVE WITH COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS**

**Goal:** Senior Services will bolster cooperative efforts in the public and private sectors to successfully meet the demands of our growing population.

The Department will work together with key community stakeholders in the following ways in 2019:

- Join with other community funders to address persistent concerns including prevalence of chronic disease, hospital readmissions, and social engagement.
- Engage health insurers in the process of exploring what new and mutually beneficial ways the aging network's services may be of value to them and other payers.
- Work with community partners to address persistent gaps in the long term services and supports system, including access to and awareness of services.

#### **E. SERVICE OBJECTIVES**

**Goal:** To enable older adults to remain in their homes with a high quality of life for as long as possible through the provision of home and community based services including supports for family caregivers.

In line with the above considerations, the Department of Senior Services will maintain current programs making modifications as needed to reflect the changing needs of the consumer. These services include:

**Access Services** (transportation, information and assistance, outreach, and case management)

- To strengthen Going Places Transportation Services, a county-wide transportation and mobility management system designed to assist older adults temporarily or permanently not able to drive with access to health, nutrition, social, and income maintenance services.
- To strengthen performance of Erie County NY Connects with new standard expectations defined by the NY State Office for the Aging and the NY State Department of Health.

- To continue to provide outreach activities that help older adults, their families, and the general public become aware of, and linked to, community information on programs, services, benefits, and entitlements.
- To maintain the county-wide case management system of Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program (EISEP)-funded services as a tool for reducing long term care costs.

#### In-Home Services

- To maintain homecare services, through Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program (EISEP), funding available to functionally impaired older persons, including homemaker/personal care and housekeeper services.
- To continue chore maintenance and telephone assurance services, provided under contract with community-based agencies.
- To continue the distribution of personal emergency response services (PERS), which promote the safety and independence of frail and vulnerable older persons.
- To ensure provision of home delivered meals for homebound Erie County residents unable to prepare meals for themselves.

#### Wellness and Nutrition Services

- To provide hot, noonday meals and enhance socialization at congregate dining sites located throughout the county. Registered Dietitians provide nutrition education and one-on-one nutrition counseling. Nutrition staff also presents healthy meal preparation demonstrations.
- To continue to develop evidence-based programs, including the peer-led Living Healthy Diabetes Self-Management, Chronic Disease Self-Management programs, and A Matter of Balance.
- To continue to introduce health and wellness initiatives, such as the National Council on Aging's (NCOA) *Aging Mastery Program*, encouraging the development of behaviors across various dimensions and leading to improved health and overall well-being.
- To continue to implement the Farmer's Market Coupon initiative, providing low and moderate income older adults with fresh fruits and vegetables during the summer months.
- To continue to support the University Express Program, promoting civic engagement and providing older adults lifelong learning and educational opportunities for personal growth and enrichment.

#### Legal Services

- To continue to offer Education and Outreach opportunities in legal issues affecting older adults and their ability to plan for their own financial, long term care, and health care needs.
- To continue to offer Legal Advice and Representation for older persons, grandparents and relatives who serve as primary caregivers of minor children, through a contract with the Center for Elder Law & Justice and the Kinship Care Program.

### Caregiver Services

- To continue to utilize social adult day care, providing care for frail and impaired older adults in a supervised setting while also serving as a respite program for the caregivers.
- To continue to provide the Caregiver Coalition's Powerful Tools for Caregivers training classes for caregivers and social events for persons with Alzheimer's and their spouses, scheduled at venues that are staffed and provide added safety and security.
- To continue to provide in-home respite, and encourage the development of community based volunteer respite programs, to help sustain the efforts of family caregivers.

### Additional Programs and Services

- To continue operation of the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), which recruits and places volunteers in service within community organizations.
- To continue community-based initiatives designed to recruit volunteers who provide direct assistance, such as transportation and minor home repairs, to at-risk older adults.
- To support employment opportunities for older adults through the coordinated resources available to Supportive Services Corporation (SSC); Senior Jobs; Senior Aides; Senior Community Services Employment Programs; and The Workforce Investment Board.

For further information, please contact Jennifer Wood, (716) 858-7532

Written comments regarding the plans for services to older adults contained in this Abstract will be accepted until Friday, November 16, 2018 at Erie County Department of Senior Services Public Hearings, 95 Franklin St., Room 1341, Buffalo, NY 14202-3968. Comments may also be sent via [SeniorInfo@erie.gov](mailto:SeniorInfo@erie.gov).