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**NASSAU COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

**OFFICE FOR THE AGING**

**ABSTRACT**

Four-Year Plan

Year Two

April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2024

**INTRODUCTION**

This abstract is a summary of the Nassau County Office for the Aging Four-Year Plan for the Federal Older Americans Act and the New York State Community Services for the Elderly Act. It outlines current and planned activities of the Nassau County Office for the Aging and describes any significant changes or additions in planned services. The Plan contains information on Federal, State and County sponsored programs. Throughout this Plan, the Nassau County Office for the Aging will be referred to as the Nassau County OFA.

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, the Nassau County Office for the Aging and its Advisory Council will not be conducting an annual public hearing this year.

## **GOALS**

The Nassau County OFA will continue to be guided by the six goals identified by the New York State Office for the Aging. We have also included additional goals that have been identified as a local priority. The specific goals are as follows:

1. Empower older New Yorkers, individuals with disabilities, their families and the public to make informed decisions about, and be able to access, existing health, long-term services and supports and other service options.
2. Enable older New Yorkers to remain in their homes with high quality of life for as long as possible for the provision of home and community-based services, including support for family caregivers.
3. Empower older New Yorkers to stay active and healthy through Older Americans Act services and those offered under Medicare.
4. Integrate ACL discretionary grants (i.e. Lifespan Respite, MIPPA) with OAA Title III core programs.
5. Promote the rights of older New Yorkers and prevent their abuse, neglect and exploitation.
6. Work in conjunction with other partners and the County to be prepared to respond in emergencies and disasters.

## **DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

Based on the latest data available from the US Census Quickfacts, it is estimated that there are 1,356,924 residents in Nassau County. Persons 65 years and older represent 18.2% of the population, or 246,960 individuals.

Original projections estimated that by 2040, there would be 40,000 residents over the age of 85 in Nassau County. However, recent data from Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2020 State Profile suggests the County has reached this milestone in the year 2020, two decades earlier than anticipated. Their estimates place the Nassau County demographic for residents 85+ at 40,311 for 2020.

## **NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

A needs assessment was conducted during the Summer of 2019 in preparation for developing the Four-Year Plan. The process utilized a self-report questionnaire, which was offered at farmers' market coupon distribution sites, senior community service centers and various golden gathering events. The survey was also offered through the Nassau OFA Facebook page. Areas that were identified as needs will continue to be addressed during this plan period.

## **SERVICE DELIVERY**

Below are the identified needs of the senior population in Nassau County. Also included are the actions the Nassau OFA is taking in order to address the needs.

### **1. Outreach and Service Delivery:**

The Nassau OFA will continue outreach to frail elderly, particularly those who are economically disadvantaged, and their caregivers through its many programs. Programs include long-term care, respite services, and eldercare and caregiver support services.

In addition, the Nassau OFA plans to continue its public information efforts and to utilize all available media resources to advise seniors and their families of the full range of available services.

The Nassau County OFA will continue to require that agencies conduct outreach efforts to locate minority and LGBTQ elders, particularly those who have limited income and their caregivers to encourage their participation in programs and services funded by the Nassau OFA.

The Nassau OFA presently funds 4 programs that target their services to the needs of minority elderly. These programs include 2 senior community service centers (Freeport Salvation Army Senior Community Service Center, Hempstead Senior Community Service Center), 1 senior lunch program located in a minority area (Bethel AME Lunch Program of Freeport), and a Hispanic center program that provides services to Spanish speaking elderly (Hispanic Brotherhood).

The Nassau OFA participates in many outreach events in order to connect with seniors in need. Some of these events include the annual celebration of Older Americans Month with our May Conference, End of Summer Luncheon, senior movie events and library outreach. Some community events we participate in include the Veterans Stand Down, Golden Gatherings, senior health fairs, heritage celebrations and National Night's Out.

### **2. Case Management (State Funded):**

The Nassau OFA Case Management Program continues to target its services to frail and low income elderly. These individuals are typically struggling to manage on limited incomes and do not have the support of family and friends. They are referred to case managers who conduct a needs assessment and provide services based on the assessment result. Priority is given to seniors over 85. Case Managers are trained to identify needs, recommend a plan of care and answer questions. The demand for case management services is continually increasing due to the growing number of older persons who live at home with dementia, memory loss, depression and mental illness.

In 2019, over 32,758 hours of case management were provided in Nassau County.

**3. In-Home, Non-Medical Services (State Funded):**

The Nassau OFA contracts with not-for-profit and proprietary agencies to provide in-home, non-medical services to seniors in need. These services include housekeeping/chore services and personal care.

In 2019, the Nassau OFA and its subcontractors provided 130,624 hours of in-home, non-medical services to seniors in need.

**4. Social Adult Day Care (State & Federal Funded):**

Social adult day care programs provide assistance to frail and disabled older adults in a supervised group setting within in the community. Services include socialization activities, supervision/monitoring and nutrition. Programs also provide personal care which includes hands on assistance with mobility, eating and restroom assistance. All services are based on and individual care plan and assessment of the participant.

Social Adult Day Care is a component of Caregiver Respite, an NCOFA funded program which provides services to caregivers that enable them to have a much needed break from taking care of their loved ones.

In 2019, social adult day care programs provided 56,697 hours of service.

**5. Caregiver Services (State Funded):**

The New York Elder Caregiver Support Program encompasses services that aid caregivers. They include social adult day care programs, in-home or respite programs and supplemental services such as caregiver training, support groups and information and assistance services.

**6. Home Delivered Meals (Federal Funded):**

The Nassau OFA provides funding for home delivered meals to frail, homebound, older persons who are unable to prepare meals or shop for themselves. The program helps to reduce hunger and food insecurity and promotes health, nutrition and well-being of older adults.

In 2019, Nassau County OFA and its subcontractors provided 358,393 home delivered meals. We anticipate a large increase in the 2020 statistics for Home Delivered Meals due to COVID-19.

**7. Congregate Meal Programs (Federal Funded):**

The Nassau County OFA provides meals at 14 senior community service centers, 3 adult day care centers, numerous senior lunch programs and to residents of some senior housing. Congregate meal programs provide elder adults with the nutrition to live a healthy lifestyle along with the opportunity to socialize and benefit from the activities at the sites offering the program.

In 2019, there were 188,325 congregate meals served.

**8. Transportation (Federal Funded):**

The Nassau County OFA provides transportation to and from our senior community service centers. We also provide transportation for members of the centers to attend center sponsored outings and shopping trips.

In 2019, the Nassau County OFA and its subcontractors provided 136,543 bus trips.

**9. Elder Abuse Actions:**

The Nassau OFA regularly attends meetings conducted by the Adult Protective Services Committee within the Department of Social Services and is a member of the Family Violence Task Force. The Nassau County OFA has partnered with the Nassau County Police Department POP Unit and Scam Task Force.

**10. Legal Services:**

The Nassau OFA provides funding for the Senior Citizen Law Project. Seniors requiring legal assistance on civil matters can obtain help from this project through Nassau Suffolk Law Services.

**11. Nassau NY Connects/Information and Assistance (State Funded):**

The Nassau OFA provides information and resources to senior citizens and their families who are in need. Information is provided through the Nassau NY Connects Help-Line, website, social media, resource database, brochures, and speaking engagements. Staff also attends community fairs and special events throughout Nassau County in order to bring information and assistance directly to the senior community.

In 2019, NY Connects and Information & Assistance had contact with 6,231 people through phone calls and direct interaction. We anticipate a large increase in the number of contacts NY Connects provided in 2020 due to COVID-19 concerns.

**12. Collaboration and Community Engagement**

In order to fully commit to serving Nassau's senior population, the Nassau County OFA finds it extremely important to be out in the community and work closely with other agencies, municipalities and elected officials. This allows us to better serve everyone from every corner of Nassau County. Some engagements we participate in and/or plan include:

**Events OFA Coordinated:**

Older Americans Month May Conference, Movie Screenings, End of Summer Luncheon, Library Outreach, NYS Farmers' Market Program

**Events OFA Participated:**

Health fairs, Golden Gatherings, Molloy College Capstone Program, Town of Hempstead Beach Days, Senior Day events, Veterans Stand Downs, National Nights Out, Fun Day Monday at Bar Beach, NYS Senior Softball Association All-Star Game, Heritage Celebrations.

**Collaborations:**

Minority Affairs and Office of Hispanic Affairs to discuss partnerships, Great Neck Chinese Association to discuss cultural humility in meal provision at senior centers, met with many elected officials on the Town, County and State levels to discuss programs and resources for seniors.

**13. Health, Wellness and Disease Prevention Programs/Management:**

Title IIID funds are utilized to develop and provide evidence-based health, wellness and disease prevention/management activities at multi-purpose senior centers, adult day programs and other locations in the County where seniors congregate.

There is continued work with local nonprofits, universities and hospitals to provide experts to speak about health promotion topics as part of our evidence-based wellness mission. Topics include health education, nutrition counseling, fall prevention, mental health, oral health, home safety, medication, safety and individual health assessments. For example, medication management presentations are scheduled to review drug interactions, side effects and possible risks of taking prescription and non-prescription medications. These presentations are followed by individual review sessions conducted by pharmacology students (with oversight from a professor) who look at an individual's medications and discuss any potential problems.

**NEW INITIATIVES**

The COVID-19 Pandemic has challenged us to adapt to a new way of providing services and has shaped several of the new initiatives we are working on for 2021.

One of the biggest challenges older adults in Nassau County have faced as a result of the pandemic is social isolation. Throughout the pandemic the Nassau County OFA and its partner non-profits have been building an online presence by providing socialization, exercise classes, music classes and art classes via Zoom and Facebook Live. Even though it could be challenging, we are teaching our senior residents how to download and use these applications in order to participate. Continuing these online opportunities as we move forward is critical to ensure engagement and multiple access points to education and services. We also expanded our animatronic pets program to combat the social isolation problem. We delivered hundreds of animatronic cats and dogs to seniors suffering from social isolation and plan on continuing the program.

The emergence of COVID-19 illustrated a widespread need for home delivered meals as a result of the challenges faced with grocery shopping, access to food and quarantine policies. As a result, the Nassau County OFA will be looking to expand our home delivered meals program and will be looking to procure a third provider in order to assist with the additional burden placed on the current system.

The Nassau County OFA is looking to partner with Long Island Federally Qualified Health Centers. This contractual partnership will enable mobile health visits and education at senior community service centers and social adult day care programs. Using technological applications such as Zoom and Facebook Live, will allow for a wider reach of these educational visits.

Nassau County OFA is looking to expand the contractual relationship with Cornell Cooperative extension of Nassau County. The Nassau County OFA would like to host educational events, lunch and learns and other opportunities at their farm in East Meadow. The expansion of this agreement will also enable more Registered Dietician hours to be provided to Nassau County residents.

The Nassau County Office for the Aging earned Age Friendly status under AARP. We received two grants in partnership with the City of Glen Cove. The programs we are working on are as follows:

- 1) “Walk With a Doc” is a partnership with Northwell Glen Cove Hospital. The program will connect people with local healthcare professionals, educate on various health topics, examine the walkability of their communities, and get active while walking. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic they will be offering virtual “Talk With a Doc” videos with physicians that will discuss health topics of concern to the community. After watching the videos, participants are encouraged chose a location in their community to walk and provide feedback on the walkability and safety of their path. Their feedback will be reviewed and addressed in the City’s Age-Friendly Action Plan that is currently in development.
- 2) The “Glen Cove TimeBank” is a program coordinated between The Glen Cove Senior Center and Hofstra University that will provide Glen Cove residents and organizations with an opportunity to request and provide select services for their neighbors and other organizations. Some services include doing yardwork, hosting virtual art classes, assisting with grocery shopping or learning a language. The key belief of TimeBanking is that everyone has something to offer, everyone could use help sometimes, and everyone’s time is of equal value. An hour of one person’s time directly equals another person’s hour of their time, regardless of the type of service provided. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, initial services will be limited to those that can be accomplished remotely or via social distancing, but will be expanded over time.

Receiving these two grants in partnership with the City of Glen Cove will allow the establishment of a Center for Excellence, as well as Nassau County to move towards more Age Friendly policies.

### **PROGRAM EVALUATION**

The Nassau County OFA’s monitoring and assessment of contractors and in-house direct services include both announced and unannounced on-site monitoring visits of each program and an annual agency assessment held at our office. Monitoring reports are completed by field staff and include information on all aspects of the program. They are reviewed by a supervisor and then sent to the agency for any necessary corrective action.

Nassau NY Connects conducts an annual mail-in satisfaction survey among randomly selected service recipients. Agencies also conduct their own client satisfaction surveys during the year. Results of these surveys have led to changes in program operations.

In addition, the Nassau County OFA conducts a fiscal audit of contracted agency programs to assure funds are spent in accordance with all applicable Federal, State and Local requirements.