



**Aging
Well**

**Progress Report
2008-2009**

Aging Well Workgroups

Central Access Point

Leader: Jon Lavin, AgeOptions

Goal: This workgroup will focus on the creation and marketing of a single place in the community to call for assistance and comprehensive, accurate information. The workgroup will focus on facilitating communication and service coordination among providers.

With the Southwest Suburban Center on Aging named as the Central Access Point, this workgroup has shifted its focus to coordination of services. The workgroup has secured an e-referral system from the Ann Arbor partnership, made adaptations to it and SWSCOA, the British Home and AgeOptions will pilot test it. If it goes well, the group will expand the system to others.

The workgroup is also working to identify a publication to assist community members in determining the best long-term care services for their needs.

Community Outreach

Leader: Louise Starmann, Southwest Suburban Center on Aging

Goal: This workgroup has been responsible for the creation of a volunteer Senior Ambassador program to increase the ability of community organizations such as banks, businesses, police, fire, paramedics, local government, libraries and faith-based organizations to link older adults to needed services.

There are currently six Aging Well Volunteer Senior Ambassadors providing outreach throughout greater Lyons Township. They received orientation and continue to receive training on a regular basis about services available to older adults. The Ambassadors visit businesses frequented by older adults and their caregivers to provide valuable information about resources available in the community. As a result, older adults who may not have regular contact with senior services or a case manager have been provided with useful information. Since July 2007, there have been over 300 such visits.

The Community Outreach workgroup has expanded its efforts to increase the dissemination of important information to all twenty Aging Well communities. Community Action Teams are now taking this information out on their routine visits. The workgroup has created a partnership with representatives from fifteen of the local villages. Marketing professionals have also been brought into the partnership. At least once a month, village contacts and marketing professionals are provided with timely information about programs and services for seniors. They share this information by placing it in village newsletters, posting it in public spaces and discussing it with other service providers and older adults. These professionals also have the opportunity to provide the Community Outreach workgroup with information that will be distributed by the Ambassadors throughout the community.

Direct Care Worker Employer

Leader: Dennis Sonnenberg, The British Home

Goal: This workgroup is designed especially for those who employ or work with direct care workers (homecare workers and staff at long term care facilities and hospitals). This workgroup will address barriers, such as inconsistent training, to a stable and efficient direct care work force and identify ways to recruit the best possible workers to meet the area's long-term care needs.

Members of this workgroup have redirected their initial efforts in order to take best advantage of the collaborative efforts of Aging Well and have the largest impact on the community.

Nationwide, there are concerns that an impending shortage of direct care workers will cause a crisis in long-term care. Efforts of this workgroup have focused on recruiting and retaining high quality direct care workers to meet the long-term care needs of greater Lyons Township. A targeted recruitment effort, including a dedicated phone line and Web site with its own domain is being created. With the assistance of Valerie Denney Communications, the workgroup is developing a marketing campaign which will incorporate print media and utilize the new Web site. The workgroup will also hold a recruitment open house to invite potential caregivers and others who might be interested in exploring the opportunities available to them in the growing field of professional caregiving and facility support.

Isolated Older Adults

Leader: Patty Black, Pillars

Goal: This workgroup is responsible for creating the at-risk older adult card campaign to help first responders (police, fire, paramedic) identify and properly refer isolated and at-risk older adults in the community.

The Isolated Older Adults workgroup researched and determined characteristics of isolated and at-risk older adults and guidelines for identifying them. The workgroup has designed a functional, laminated card (that can be placed in a car visor, wallet or on a desk) and a binder card that list these characteristics along with information about who to contact to get help for someone who may be at-risk.

Members of the workgroup trained first responders on how to identify and refer isolated and at-risk older adults. Members of the workgroup conducted 33 trainings to over 300 police officers, fire fighters and EMTs in greater Lyons Township. Southwest Suburban Center on Aging has already reported an increase in calls from first responders referring at-risk older adults.

In addition to the trainings and as a follow-up, the workgroup members are designing a poster that will explain how to identify isolated and at-risk older adults. The posters will be given to fire and police departments throughout greater Lyons Township who will be asked to hang them up in their stations for officers to regularly see.

Also, the workgroup is planning to produce a DVD that will explain how to identify isolated and at-risk older adults. The DVD will also be given to fire and police departments throughout greater Lyons Township who will be asked to play them at roll call yearly and also at the time a new hire comes onto the departments.

Transportation

Leader: Bruce Jablonski, PeopleCare

Goal: This workgroup will focus on creating additional transportation options and coordinating existing programs that serve residents in the community. Participants will begin work on the creation and distribution of a transportation guide that will provide options, locations, phone numbers and usage guidelines.

The Transportation workgroup collected a list of all available transportation options for older adults in the greater Lyons Township area as well as their service areas, hours of operation and costs of service. Workgroup members created a transportation guide listing these options and printed 10,000 copies of the guide. The workgroup along with Aging Well partners and Community Action Teams distributed nearly all of the 10,000 copies of the guide. Assisted by volunteers from the Southwest Suburban Center on Aging, the group has updated the information in the guide and plans to reprint and re-distribute it this year. A Spanish-language version of this guide will be created and distributed.

Workgroup members found that there were more community transportation services available than they had expected, and that efforts should focus on assisting others to use the existing transportation services. Members of the Transportation workgroup have identified the need to work with people on the transition from driving to using the transportation options outlined in the Aging Well Transportation Guide. Workgroup members have developed a training program that will assist older adults in determining if they should be driving, discuss transitioning from driving to using public transportation, and develop their own personal transportation plan. The workgroup also plans to train people select people on how to help older adults choose the transportation options that best meet their needs.

After the successful collaboration between The British Home and PeopleCare to provide shopping transportation, the workgroup will also explore other similar collaborations to increase transportation options.

Planning for the Future

Leader: Bill Wilson, Law Offices of Wilson & Wilson

Goal: The Planning for the Future workgroup will create an educational campaign to increase knowledge among older adults and Boomers about their planning options, including wills, trusts, power of attorney, home modifications and health care. They will determine the best methods to engage older adults through education and will review existing planning materials.

In order to promote comprehensive personal planning, the Planning for the Future workgroup researched and developed the guide, "Starting the Conversation: A Greater Lyons Township Guide to Health, Home, Financial and Legal Preparedness." 10,000 copies of the guide have been printed and are being distributed throughout the Aging Well community.

To further increase personal planning, the workgroup is now offering panel presentations for businesses and groups. The presentations are free of charge and will include a diverse group of professionals covering a variety of topics. If you are interested in scheduling a presentation for your business or group, please call Barbara at (708)383-0258.

Community Action Teams

Aging Well Community Action Teams (CATs) are composed of older adults, local businesspeople, representatives of local governments and other partnership volunteers who work together to address the needs of older adults and implement programs, projects and events in their local village or city.

This year, efforts were made to strengthen the capacity of the CATs by offering trainings to all CAT members. In these trainings, Community Action Team members from all teams meet up to learn how they can make a powerful impact on their communities by being more informed of available services and by developing new skills. Community Action Team leaders continue to receive regular trainings when they gather together.

The members have also been thinking about sustainability of their efforts. In order to broaden their support and continue their programs they are developing and maintaining relationships with community partners such as their village officials, police officers and other representative of other organizations.

Bedford Park

- Started up under the leadership of Police Officer Chrystal Steffen.
- In Spring 2009, Mayor Brady appointed a new board to work on aging issues. Charles Ploszek was named Chairman.
- Lock Boxes are being offered to all senior citizens in Bedford Park.
- Snow shoveling will be made available for all Bedford Park residents ages 65 and over.

Bridgeview

- Developed and distributed a Senior Discount sheet for older adults in Bridgeview highlighting discounts for seniors.
- Plan to identify older adults who cannot leave home and provide them with information such as the team's Senior Resource Guide and other Aging Well materials
- Provided a second set of computer classes for older adults in partnership with Wilkins Elementary School.
- Will co-sponsor a Senior Health and Fitness Day with Bridgeview Park District on May 27, 2009.

Brookfield

- Partnered with the Brookfield Library and local high schools to provide Teen Tech Tutors. The program trains high school students to teach older adults how to use computers. Aging Well provided a letter of support for the grant proposal and helped with the training.
- Held their 4th Annual Family Fest in April 2009. The event, celebrating grandparents and their families, was attended by 60 guests and was supported by 18 local organizations.
- Joined the Brookfield Chamber of Commerce and is teaming up with them and Brookfield Recreation to bring future programs to the community.
- Will create a Senior Service and Resource Guide in Fall 2009.

Burr Ridge

- Had its first official team meeting in July 2008.
- Team will focus on recruiting older adults in Burr Ridge by providing Aging Well information at Burr Ridge summer village events.
- Seeking increased village support of team before continuing team meetings.

Countryside

- Held annual leaf raking service project in November 2008 in partnership with local youth groups and helped out over 40 of Countryside older residents.
- Worked with the La Grange/La Grange Park CAT to provide an identity theft prevention training in March.
- Will hold a Spring Chore Day in May 2009 to assist older adults in clearing debris from their homes.
- Working with youth group leaders to create an ongoing senior chore program.

Hickory Hills

- Held their 3rd annual "Walk around the Pond" event to promote fitness on April 18.
- Have seen increased interest in their senior discount program.
- Offered a flu shot clinic in October 2008.
- Exploring the development of a local resource guide for seniors.

Hinsdale

- Welcomed new members from the village, police department and library.
- March 2009 Talk It Over was about railroad safety with presenter Barry Kaufman.
- Annual summer picnic attracts over 100 older adults who attend and learn about local aging resources.

Hodgkins/McCook

- Have received financial and in-kind support from both villages.
- Team continues to support a drop-in center twice a month at the Hodgkins park district.
- McCook Mayor hosted the team's March lunch meeting.
- The team will have an office at the new Hodgkins village hall.

Justice/Sterling

- Carol Jasckt is the new leader of the Justice CAT.
- Created a newsletter for older adults in Justice which has been distributed at park district, library and village hall.
- Developed a senior resource guide for Justice older adults. Guide is in final draft and will be printed in and distributed in April 2009.

LaGrange/LaGrange Park

- Promoting a Lock Box program with both village fire departments. With this program, older adults can keep a key to their home in a secure box that is only accessible to the fire department. That way, the fire department will not need to knock down a door of an older adult who calls 911 and cannot answer the door.
- Continuing to supply the File of Life to residents.
- Worked with the Countryside CAT to provide an identity theft prevention training in March.
- Plan to partner with La Grange Public Library to offer joint programs.

Riverside, North Riverside, Lyons

- Held an intergenerational “Have a Heart for the Troops” valentine writing event in January 2009.
- Hosted a resource event promoting local transportation passes for seniors in March 2009.

Summit

- Worked with Summit Library to offer a senior safety presentation by the Cook County Sheriff’s Office in March 2009.
- Will work to identify homebound seniors and then inform them of aging resources.
- Informed local older adults about senior benefits and resources with a presentation by Maribeth Stein of AgeOptions
- The 59th Street Seniors Club joined the Team for a program and luncheon in December 2008 at the Summit Task Force Building.

Westchester

- Held a presentation on good nutrition in partnership with a local grocery store in April 2009
- Will sponsor a 5 Wishes presentation with the Westchester Library in May 2009.
- Formed a sub-committee to discuss intergenerational program ideas for the future. Team is contacting local high school journalism students who will interview older adults from Westchester to collect stories that will be bound and kept at the Westchester Public Library.

Western Springs and Indian Head Park

- Held a Senior Safety Expo in June, 2008 at Lyons Township South High School in partnership with local Police and Fire Departments. The event featured brief presentations on personal, home and travel safety. Segments were recorded by LTTV and were aired on local cable channels after the event.
- Researching ways to distribute their summer safety expo on VHS and DVD to older adults and those who could not attend the event including homebound older adults.
- Continue to work with The Theater of Western Springs to present their Senior Scenes play reading program for older adults. The team was awarded a \$1000 grant to support the purchase of scripts.

NEW – Master CAT

- This new group convened after a recent All-CAT training on home chore and repair services.
- The initial area of focus will be to identify and develop or advocate for chore and home maintenance services for older adults in greater Lyons Township.
- Members from several CATs met for the first time in March, 2009 and are developing a list of short and long term goals.

Thank you to each and every Aging Well volunteer/partner for your continued support as we work together to create an environment where people can age well.

For more general information about Aging Well or the Aging Well workgroups, call (708)383-0258 or email barbara.lueder-manetti@ageoptions.org.

For more information about Community Action Teams, please call Annette McClain at (708)354-1323 x19 or email her at annette.mcclain@ageoptions.org.

Visit our Web site at www.agingwellpartnership.org for up-to-date information about all Aging Well events and its initiatives.

Aging Well is an integral part of Community Partnerships for Older Adults (CPFOA). CPFOA is a national program funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to help communities develop leadership, innovative solutions and options to meet the needs of older adults over the long term.

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