

# Ageing Well

**Strategic Plan**

**April 23, 2009**

## Introduction

Aging Well is a partnership in greater Lyons Township dedicated to working with communities to create an environment in which people can age well. As Aging Well enters the last year of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grant, we have an opportunity to assure that during the next twelve months we will position the Partnership to respond to local opportunities and to achieve on-going funding.

The process was started in September 2008 when 40 leaders of Aging Well gathered to discuss the roles and accomplishments of Aging Well. Following the meeting, a Strategic Planning Committee consisting of members of Aging Well's Governing Council, workgroups and Community Action Teams was formed and met six times to develop recommendations for a strategic plan. This plan was reviewed and approved by the Governing Council and was presented to Community Action Team leaders and several workgroups for review and comment.

## Strategic Plan

### *I. Roles*

Aging Well will pursue all current and future activities with the following roles in mind:

- a. **Convener**—Aging Well will continue to bring together a diverse set of partners with the aim of improving long-term care services and supports for older adults and their caregivers in greater Lyons Township.
  - o *Successes*—Aging Well successfully involved older adults, not-for-profit agencies, businesses and governments to take part in the Governing Council, workgroups and Community Action Teams (CATs).
- b. **Education and Advocacy**—Aging Well will be the major and most visible advocate for older adult services and programs in greater Lyons Township.
  - The Partnership gains energy, support and recognition through strong connections with the greater Lyons Township communities
  - The Partnership will use its extensive community outreach efforts and its diverse membership with active citizens in every community to inform others about available programs and services.
  - Aging Well will use its influence and numbers to guide local governments and businesses in their funding and investment decisions in order to most effectively reach and serve older adults.
    - o *Successes*—Aging Well created an outreach network including CATs, village representatives and marketing professionals. It has developed planning, transportation and local resource guides and the One Call campaign which it has distributed through this network. CATs have involved trustees, village presidents, police and fire chiefs and local businesses in their efforts, and have informed them about the needs of older adults. CAT members have presented at village meetings and helped the Lyons Township affordable senior housing development obtain zoning approval.

- c. **Incubator and Researcher and Developer**—Aging Well will be the preferred venue to present new, promising and innovative programs and services and develop programs that require the collaboration of partners in greater Lyons Township.
- Evaluation will play a strong role in all new developments
  - Aging Well will pursue opportunities to sell materials or technical assistance from successful programs to others who seek to replicate Aging Well activities.
  - Aging Well will work collaboratively with Partners to provide support, feedback, encouragement, networking and community recognition for their efforts to respond to the needs of older persons.
  - Partners at times will be asked to institutionalize the work of Aging Well by assuming the administration and provision of an Aging well initiative.
  - The Partnership may also wish to continue projects without assignment to one organization or Partner.
  - Aging Well should encourage the development of new services for older adults and their caregivers, but should not be in the business of directly administering services for the long-term.
    - *Successes*—Aging Well created a strong foundation for the work plan by conducting an asset based community assessment. Community Actions Teams continually provide feedback on the needs and interests of older adults and other community members. The “Identifying At-Risk Older Adults” materials have been used by similar programs including the Culpepper, Virginia Partnership. The Planning and Transportation Guides have been used as models for other groups seeking to educate their communities.

## ***II. Process for Evaluating New Activity Proposals***

- a. **Roles**—If a proposed activity does not fit into the roles assigned to Aging Well, then the proposal will be rejected.
- b. **Suitability for Partnership Activities**—A central question will be if these activities are best accomplished by a partnership or if this would best be implemented by a singular agency.
- c. **Priority and Funding**—If an activity should be implemented by a partnership, Aging Well will determine where it fits in its priorities and if there are opportunities to fund the new activity.

## ***III. Structure***

- a. **Staffing**—Aging Well will need staff to continue operations.
  - Economic realities and fund development capabilities will determine the level of staffing that Aging Well can sustain.
- b. **Location and Administration**
  - **AgeOptions will remain the fiscal agent of the grant until the end of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grant.**
  - **Aging Well will be most successful with a local organization responsible for its continuation. The Aging Well Governing Council recommends that the Southwest Suburban Center on Aging**

**(SWSCOA) become the location and fiscal agent for Aging Well after the RWJF grant ends.**

- AgeOptions has served the Partnership well, but the future of the program is not in all of the 130 communities of suburban Cook County that AgeOptions serves, but in the greater Lyons Township area.
  - SWSCOA is located in greater Lyons Township, serves as the Central Point of Access and provides many valuable services to older adults and their caregivers.
  - The Partnership understands that it must support SWSCOA as the local administrator of our joint efforts and provide them the information that they need to accomplish this role.
- c. Community Action Teams**—CATs are a vital part of Aging Well and will continue and be supported with staff.
- d. Workgroups**—All existing workgroups have value and will continue with staff support.
- Aging Well needs to evaluate the effectiveness of each workgroup in order to determine which ones are priorities for funding and staff time.
  - Even if there is no work or funding for a particular group, the Partnership has active and engaged community members who will be convened periodically in order to determine if there are new opportunities or concerns that the Partnership should address.
- e. Governance**—As Aging Well will not be a separate 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit agency, it will need to retain a Governing Council with staff to support it.
- The Governing Council will continue to provide strategic direction to Aging Well.

*Special thanks to the Strategic Planning Committee for their work developing this Strategic Plan. The Committee consisted of Jim Durkan, Ted Paarlberg, Velaine Carnall, Mike Doepke, Robyn Golden, Jon Lavin, Dennis Sonnenberg, Debbie Vershelde. Also assisting in this process were Greg DiDomenico, Diane Slezak, Rob Mapes and Barbara Lueder-Manetti*