

EngAGEment Initiative
Nonprofit Organizations Serving Older Adults
Are we prepared to meet the changing needs of this growing population?
July 20, 2011
Program Summary

Overview of Four Key Nonprofits Serving Older Adults

1) AARP Connecticut, *Brenda Kelley, State Executive Director*, www.aarp.org/ct

- AARP has almost 600,000 members in Connecticut. They are a non-partisan group working to help Americans 50+. They advocate for their members on important issues around social security, access to health care, insurance and financial security. AARP is a clearinghouse for information and provides programs and tools to help older Americans make the best decisions about their health and financial security. Brenda presented important surveys and facts about older adults in Connecticut.

Surveys

- AARP Connecticut Survey: Connecticut 50+ Residents Worried about Health, Financial Issues: in January 2011, AARP conducted a telephone survey with over 400 Connecticut residents aged 50+. Key findings of this survey revealed about 80% of adults 50+ worry about one or more financial issue and many worry about long term care. 52% listed vacation and travel as activities they would dream of doing. More than 80% of Connecticut adults 50+ say that being able to stay in their homes is extremely important to them. Those surveyed identified their top concern as staying healthy and maintaining their mental health.
<http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/general/voices-america-dreams-challenges-ct.pdf>
- Genworth released a Cost of Care Survey in 2011 which reports on the cost of long-term care across the United States. Connecticut has higher costs on assisted living care, nursing home care and nursing home daily rates than the national median.
http://www.ctphilanthropy.org/s_ccp/bin.asp?CID=18566&DID=49409&DOC=FILE.PDF
- AARP released a report called, Valuing the Invaluable: 2011 Update, The Growing Contributions and Costs of Family Caregiving. The report shows that in 2009, about 42.1 million family caregivers in the United States provided care to an adult with limitations in daily activities at any given point in time. The estimated economic value of their unpaid contributions was approximately \$450 billion. In Connecticut it is estimated that value of caregiving in 2009 was 5.8 billion dollars. These facts are important as we see cuts in federal and state programs which help seniors stay in their homes. <http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/ppi/ltc/i51-caregiving.pdf>

Connecticut Facts

- Connecticut 50+ Facts: 16.9% of Connecticut Social Security recipients rely on Social Security for more than 90% or more of their income. 48.8% of Connecticut Social Security recipients rely on Social Security for 50% or more of their income. [Speakers Handouts\AARP Handouts\AARPFactSheet.pdf](#)
- Connecticut spends 9% of its Medicaid long-term care dollars on home and community based care. 91% of Connecticut's Medicaid long-term care dollars are spent on nursing home care. http://assets.aarp.org/rgcenter/health/state_ltc_b_09_ct.pdf

2) Connecticut Council of Family Service Agencies, *Robert Cashel, President and CEO of Family and Children's Agency*, <http://www.ctfsa.org>

- The Connecticut Council of Family Service Agencies, Inc. is a statewide network of seventeen independent, non-profit, family service agencies that deliver services to over 150,000 families annually from more than 100 sites located throughout Connecticut. Member Agencies are community-based, licensed by the State of Connecticut and nationally accredited. Their mission includes:
 - Building member-agencies' capacity for collaboration and innovation
 - Empowering member-agency networks to develop and provide services that move Connecticut's children, adults, and families toward self-reliance and healthy inter-dependence
 - Advocating for the development of effective State and Federal policies and programs that foster the well being of Connecticut's children, adults, and families
 - Being relevant and responsive to Connecticut's diverse populations
- The Family and Children's Agency which is a member of the Connecticut Council of Family Service Agencies, serves a large portion of older adults. They have 7 core areas for service provision, youth, mentoring programs, foster care, adoption, behavioral health, homelessness, and work with seniors. They see 10,000 clients a year providing services to approximately 2,500 seniors.
- Key programs for the Family and Children's Agency: Personal Alert Service which helps seniors stay safe and independent in their homes. It provides a reassurance program with case managers who go out to homes for safety checks and provides case management to seniors at home. Other programs include home health aides, transportation and home modification services. <http://www.familyandchildrensagency.org/services-for-seniors-lifeline-connecticut/content/view/61/62>

3) Connecticut Association for Community Action (CAFCA), *Rhonda Evans, Deputy Director*
www.cafca.org

- CAFCA is a state association representing 12 Community Action Agencies (CAA) in Connecticut. Community Action Agencies provide holistic case management to strengthen family economic security to 380,000 individuals, 168,000 families, and about 68,000 older adults aged 55+. They provide services to the whole family with a “no wrong door” philosophy. Their programs include independent living services such as transportation, home care, respite care, companions, employment programs, nutrition programs, affordable senior housing, energy assistance, intergenerational programs, senior volunteer programs and senior engagement programs. They refer clients to internal programs or connect people to appropriate external programs.
- CAAs face a 50% reduction in funding from the Community Services Block Grant.
- CAFCA launched an electronic benefits calculator (available in Spanish) which is a computer based questionnaire that screens for eligibility for many of the state and federal human service programs available to Connecticut residents.
<http://cafccalculator.cafca.org/>

4) Connecticut Association of Senior Center Personnel (CASP) *Pat Schneider, 2nd Vice President*, www.cascp.org

- The Connecticut Association of Senior Center Personnel is a trade organization for senior center staff. Their members volunteer to offer training and advocacy for other members. They are a constituent unit of the National Institute of Senior Centers and they promote best practices for senior centers like accreditation.
- Senior Centers in Connecticut are all very different. Some senior centers help people with public benefits, provide outreach, and work with caregivers. Many senior centers are the locations for transportation programs, nutrition programs (food banks), veteran programs and entitlements. Many senior centers in Connecticut are concerned with wellness programs, volunteer programs, self management of chronic diseases and offer inter-generational programs.
- CASP has published “A Profile of Senior Centers in Connecticut” report that provides detailed data on Connecticut’s senior centers.
<http://www.ct.gov/agingservices/lib/agingservices/pdf/profileofseniorcentersinconnecticut2011publicedition.pdf>
- 85% of funding for senior centers comes from municipal funding and they get a very small portion of state funding. Each center responds to the needs of their community and their programs follow the rules of their funders.

Trends and Emerging Needs in Services for Older Adults

- 69% of eligible households aged 55+ who qualify for food stamps (SNAP) do not get them.
- Senior centers see more people aged 50+ accessing food programs.
- Community Action Agencies see a shift in the demographic seeking services. Many middle income families aged 55+ are coming to seek services.
- Increased number of grandparents acting as care givers for young children.
- Aging in Place, home based services are lacking.
- Food insecurity, more and more seniors aged 50+ need help with accessing food.
- Lack of knowledge where to access social services programs.
- Huge waiting lists for existing programs and in some cases no available programs for people with disabilities.
- Connecticut programs are based upon a disease model and not based upon what an individual needs.
- The Money Follows the Person program relies on services in the community and if there is a lack of services in the community, those that qualify cannot leave their nursing home. <http://www.ct.gov/dss/cwp/view.asp?Q=414524&A=2345>
- Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) are inadequately funded and need to be expanded. <http://www.ct.gov/agingservices/cwp/view.asp?a=2510&q=385896>

Promising Practice Models

- The Community Renewal Team's inter-generational housing model which focuses on affordable housing to grandparents taking care of children. This model provides these grandparents with access to services. <http://www.crtct.org/Programs/Generations.htm>
- The Connecticut Association of Senior Center Personnel mentioned that The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving funded an "encore" program which focuses on job retraining and job readiness for people aged 50+.
- Fall prevention and memory development programs are needed.
- "Design, Create, Share" program is a great model. AARP engages women volunteers to learn about long-term care issues with the goal of these women helping other women to navigate this complex issue.
- New Haven, Bridgeport and Waterbury have implemented the Robert Wood Johnson program called Neighbor to Neighbor.
- Meaningful older adult volunteer assignments utilizing their skills.

Discussion and Questions

Are there best practices looking at systems servicing older adults?

- The ADRC model of linking Area Agencies on Aging with centers for independent living is a great model.
- We are the only state without a regional coordinator of services. Most funding comes from municipalities and regions do not work together.

What is the economic impact on your agency?

- Public dollars both federal and state are shrinking.
- Grants are for less money and for longer time frames.
- Senior Centers are in economic crisis mode. Early retirement is putting many seniors into debt and many cannot realize their retirement dreams.

Next Steps for the EngAGEment Initiative

- The Aging Leadership Team will analyze the results of what we have learned thus far from our two programs focused on State and Nonprofit services on Aging.
- The Council will work with Aging Leadership Team to plan future programs, issue briefs and possible research.

Program Statistics

Number of Attendees: 4 speakers, 14 participants, 3 staff

Evaluation Responses: 73% said with program was excellent or very good