

DANE COUNTY 2023 AAA BUDGET PRIORITIES **DRAFT #4**

Draft from POS Agencies

Advocacy

The AAA Board endorses advocacy efforts in two vital areas that reach beyond the scope of what AAA is responsible for during one calendar year. The Board supports the work of community partners in support of:

- Subsidized Senior Housing
- Senior Transportation

Priorities to be Funded *(in alpha order)*

CASE MANAGEMENT (CM) SERVICES – Provide an additional \$117,323 for the 2023 CM budget to continue to serve older adults in Dane county on a cost to continue basis. This amount is equal to the 2022 CM budget (\$1,289,266) adjusted for the current inflation (Consumer Price Index at 9.1%).

History: Dane County fulfills state-mandated requirements through the Older Americans Act to provide Client Centered Case Management Services that assist older individuals to remain living in their own home. This is accomplished by partially funding services for adults 60 and over that are 240% below the poverty level through 12 geographically defined agencies called Senior Focal Points. The remainder of the funding comes from local municipalities, towns, villages and nonprofit organizations. Focal Point Case Managers assess the needs of the client and arrange, coordinate, monitor, evaluate, and advocate for multiple services to meet specific complex needs. This preventative and cost saving program is recognized by the State as a “Best Practice” for meeting the ongoing needs of a growing population of older adults in Dane County.

Justification: The need for general case management services has rapidly increased over the years and the role of case management has expanded drastically. Physical health, mental/behavioral health, food insecurity, transportation and housing/homelessness are just some health/socioeconomic drivers that have fallen under the case management umbrella. Reasons for budget request are below:

- **Demography of Aging**
According to the American Community Survey data (2015-2019), the total number of older adults (60+) in Dane county is 101, 275. This number is projected to increase to 144,540 (by 2035) and to 153,070 (by 2040). By 2040, one in four adults in Dane county will be 60 and over. In addition, 28.2% of our older adults are living alone, 26.5% are living with a disability and 5.1% are living in poverty with 17.3% living at 200% of poverty or less. Among housing units occupied by householder age 65+, 56.3% with rental costs and 26.5% with owner costs are cost burdened (costs $\geq$ 30% of income or more). The population of elderly (age 60+) POC has increased by 76%, from 4,082 in 2010 to an estimated 7,184 according to the ACS 2015-2019 estimate. During this same time-period, the White Non-Hispanic population grew at 33%, from 70,843 to 94,091 (Arial Barak, DCDHS Program Analyst). CM services (2016-2021) saw an increase of 11.1% in the number of clients (2,927 to 3,254) and an increase of 18.4% in the number of direct service hours (20,865 to 24,707).
- **COVID and Aging**
It became evident early in the coronavirus pandemic that older age is a risk factor for becoming

severely ill with COVID-19. However, the virus's impact on older adults goes beyond a higher risk for serious infection: it also includes limited access to care for all health conditions, as well as considerable social and economic hardships. According to the 2021 International Health Policy Survey, older adults in the U.S. have suffered the most economically from the COVID-19 pandemic, with more losing a job or using up all or most of their savings. Many older adults in Dane county have lost a loved one to COVID, become socially isolated with less support, lost income and gone without seeking care thus exacerbating the need for more complex case management services.

- **Inflation and Aging**

The burden on older Americans is the latest example of how inflation — at 41-year highs — is exacerbating inequalities across the economy. Higher prices on food, gas and housing are weighing heavily on those who can least afford the increases and are creating new challenges for a population that is also most vulnerable to the novel coronavirus. Adding to the strain, millions of older Americans have given up regular incomes to retire during the coronavirus pandemic. The US inflation is soaring as the Consumer Price Index (all items) is currently at 9.1%, energy index rising to 41.6% and food index rising to 10.4% (June 2021-June 2022, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics). Medicare/fixed income rose by 3% but was quickly absorbed by increased Medicare premiums due to increased drug costs.

All of the above leads to clients needing diverse case management services with higher levels of acuity, yet funding for this program has not kept up with the growing need and/or inflation. Issues related to mental illness, homelessness/affordable housing, food insecurity, access to transportation and the need for benefit counseling have become the top challenges older adults faced in Dane county (2022 CM reports). These and other critical needs require more case management hours per client than in past years and decreases the overall number of clients each Senior Focal Point can serve without additional funding from Dane County.

Without the cost-to-continue increase in funding, it will be difficult for focal points to provide CM services to older adults and may lead to waitlists, result in poor quality of life and placement in more costly care (Nursing Homes/Assisted Living Facilities).

Outcomes: By increasing GPR funding to align with population growth, higher inflation and expanding roles of CMs due to higher acuity clientele, low-income senior adults will receive Dane County Case Management Services that will allow them to remain living in their homes and age well.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY - Increase funding on a cost to continue basis by a total of \$31,930 to include: (1) \$27,930, for salary and taxes to retain our current program specialists and remain competitive with the local industry standard (\$63,000/yr); (2) \$4,000 for staff benefits for the two program specialist positions.

History: Funding for the Cultural Diversity Program currently comes from Older Americans Act (OAA) monies and County GPR. However, the program budgeted for Dane County's Older Adult Cultural Diversity Program remained relatively flat from \$31,400 in 2003 to \$43,471 in 2015 for two part time staff. In 2017 the budget increased to \$74,708 and \$80,638 in 2018 and \$109,688 in 2021. This money has paid for a contract with NewBridge Madison and allowed the Cultural Diversity program specialist position to be 1 FTE. The Black and Latinx Cultural Diversity programs provide health education discussions, health-related presentations, support groups, exercise classes and socialization opportunities.

Justification: Dane County continues to experience an increase in racial-minority population (over 15% according to the 2020 Census Data, www.2020.census.gov). The three leading minorities age 60+ represented in Dane County continue to be Hispanic, Asian/Hmong, and Black. According to the 2020 US Census 6.5% of the elderly population (age 65+) in Dane County are Hispanic and 5.5% are Black. NewBridge Madison's two cultural diversity program specialist positions cover the entire County. It has been virtually impossible to provide programming in all the neighborhoods and communities where Black and Hispanic older adults in Dane County reside. Currently, 130 African American and Hispanic older adults in Dane County are actively participating in the programming being offered. This number has been greatly impacted by the COVID epidemic. There has been very few in-person activities held by the Cultural Diversity program due to the heightened risk for these populations and the strong reluctance of participants to engage in group activities. NewBridge has provided about 50 Cultural Diversity program participants with a computer so they can participate in the virtual programming being offered. In past years NewBridge Madison struggled to attract applicants and retain quality staff. As a result of the inconsistency in staffing, the number of older adults that participated in the program decreased. Our current Black and Hispanic Cultural Diversity Program specialists are well qualified, high-profile, individuals who are elevating the program to the next level. The volume and quality of programming has increased dramatically. There are typically 10-12 activities per month for each group (5-6 up per month previously). The interest among Black and Latinx older adults is higher than it has ever been. Once we get back to in-person programming the participant numbers will increase significantly. Now that I have two high quality staff I need to maintain competitive salaries to retain them. The \$22.67/hourly salary rate offered is no longer competitive for this type of position in Dane County, where the average rate is now \$30/hour. This increase being requested will maintain the foundation we have established to increase the impact of this program for older adults in Dane County.

Outcomes: Provide services for 250 Black and Latinx older adults (age 60 and older) in Dane County.

NUTRITION: Catered Meals –Increase catered meal funding by \$165,427 to cover an increase in catering costs due to a 5% increase in the number of older adults requiring meals and the rising food, fuel and supply costs to prepare and deliver meals to Dane County sites for serving and delivery of home-delivered meals.

History: Catering contracts with Dane County are put out for bid, generally every 5 years. The home delivered meal catering contract for the City of Madison home-delivered meal program had been waived from the bidding process for at least the last 15 years due to a unique buying opportunity that combined volunteer coordination, meal delivery and catering of the meals. Due to the size of this contract, it was put out for bid in 2022 for 2023. Since costs had not been previously adjusted every 3 years like with other catering contracts, the bid came back higher in cost per meal but in line with other catering operations.

Justification: There is continual increase in the food and supply costs associated with the meal program as well as steady increases in the older adults needing meals due to the rapid growth in our older adult population. Failure to increase this funding by 5% will result in the county-wide implementation of a waitlist for home delivered meals as the number needed will exceed available funding by 12,490 meals available. This ultimately means that 33 frail homebound older adults will need to come off of the meal program immediately in January of 2023 and no new older adults will be able to get meals until 17 additional folks come off of meals.

Outcomes: Continued ability to purchase and serve more than 249,790 meals to senior adults in the community and avoid a county-wide waitlist for older adults needing home delivered meals.

Summary

Ranked Priorities	Program	Requested
1	Case Management	\$117,323
2	Nutrition Catering	\$165,427
3	Cultural Diversity: Black/Latinx	\$31,930
TOTAL		\$ 314,680