

HIGHLIGHTS PROGRAM YEAR 2006-07

Senior & Disabled Services *a division of* Lane Council of Governments

LCOG's Senior & Disabled Services Division mission:

To advocate for seniors and people with disabilities and provide to them quality services and information that promote dignity, independence, and choice.

Introduction:

The mission of Senior & Disabled Services represents more than just words on a poster. For the S&DS staff, these words are put into practice on a daily basis. As the general population ages, S&DS is preparing to meet the unique needs of our next generation of "elders". Our goal is to offer easy access to information and assistance, to help people connect with available resources to meet their needs or those of their loved one, and to lay the framework for an "elder-friendly" and "person with disability-friendly" community / state. During the program year 2006-07, S&DS focused on four areas to accomplish these goals:

- ❖ **Serving the Individual**
- ❖ **Serving the Community**
- ❖ **Pursuing Efficiency**
- ❖ **Pursuing Excellence**

Serving the Individual

I. Serving the Individual Through Programs Supporting Independent Living

Helping people live independently is a core function of S&DS. As an Area Agency on Aging, we receive funding through the Older Americans Act to offer services that support continued health and independence, and delay or prevent the need for more costly programs such as Medicaid. Using Older Americans Act funds, S&DS offers group dining, home delivered meals, assisted transportation, information, care coordination, respite for family caregivers, and friendly visitors. These services are by far the most cost effective means of helping people remain independent. The following sections summarize the number of individuals served through these important programs.

A. Senior Meals Program

- 1) During the 2006-07 Program Year, the Senior Meals Program operated with the equivalent of 8.5 paid full-time positions.

- 2) Group Dining Rooms
 - **60,771** meals served at **12** locations throughout the county
 - **1,304** participants
- 3) Home Delivered Meals
 - **85,552** meals delivered
 - **754** participants
- 4) Volunteer Power
 - **303** individuals volunteered to serve or deliver food
 - Contributing **31,457** hours of help
 - At a value of **\$476, 573** in the marketplace
- 5) Fund Raising
 - Older Americans Act funding does not adequately meet the need of the community; therefore fund raising is critical to the continued viability of the program.
 - Senior Meals Program received **\$211,382** in donations through several fund raising campaigns.
 - Donations constitute **20%** of the total budget for the Senior Meals Program.

B. *Senior Connections Program*

- 1) Last year, the Senior Connections Program operated with the equivalent of 5.3 paid full time positions.
- 2) Services provided through the Senior Connections Program
 - **1,718** individuals received information, assistance and care coordination
 - **855** individuals received help applying for energy assistance
 - **275** people received help with assisted transportation
 - **520** family caregivers received information, assistance and care coordination
 - **151** family caregivers received respite care
 - **5,432** hours of respite care was provided
 - **36,028** personal contacts made by Senior Connections staff.
- 3) Volunteer Power
 - **130** volunteers provided assisted transportation, friendly visits, help with shopping, mail, light housekeeping, etc.
 - **45,596** hours of volunteer assistance given
 - Valued at **\$690,810** in the marketplace.
- 4) Fund Raising
 - **\$15, 294** raised in donations last year for the Senior Connections Program
 - **\$98,385** received in special grants.

C. *Oregon Project Independence*

- 1) The Oregon Project Independence Program offers an important alternative to Medicaid for those with low to moderate income, who need a little help in order to remain in their own home. The program offers up to 20 hours of in-home help per

month, including personal care and housekeeping assistance. Participants pay on a sliding scale, according to their level of income. During 2006-07,

- **164** individuals received in-home help
- **18,269** hours of in-home help were delivered
- **11,365** meals were delivered to participants
- **1,988** hours of case management and care coordination offered.

2) The Oregon Project Independence is funded with State of Oregon dollars. The 2005 Legislature funded the program at \$12 million state-wide. This is less than the program received prior to the budget reductions of 2002. Needless to say, with a growing population of seniors, during the 2006-07 Program Year the demand exceeded our capacity. S&DS implemented a waiting list for OPI services in the fall of 2006, and intakes for new participants were limited to four per month. Effective July 1, 2007, the program opened again to new applicants. No waiting list is currently in force, however limited funding was authorized for the 2007-09 biennium. Unless additional funding is appropriated during the biennium, the need for another waiting list is quite likely.

II. Serving the Individual Through Publicly Funded Programs such as Medicaid and Food Stamps

A. Phone Contact

The main reception line for Senior & Disabled Services serves as the “front door” to our services. Between July 1, 2006 and June 30, 2007, the S&DS main reception line received a total of

- **46,661** calls,
- which averages **3,888** calls per month, or
- **181** calls per work day.

Previously S&DS had implemented an automated system (a.k.a. a “phone tree”) that directed callers to push a number to connect with a specific program representative. In an effort to provide more personalized service, S&DS has recently discontinued the use of this automated system. Calls are now answered directly by a live person. S&DS staff plans to monitor the effect of this change on customer satisfaction and wait time. Adjustments and improvements will be made as appropriate.

B. Eligibility and Case Management Services: New Applicants

- More than **5,626** people inquired about Medicaid and/or Food Stamps during the 2006-07 Program Year.
 - On average, **469** inquiries were received each month, or **22** new requests per work day.
- Out of the 5,626 people that received information about available programs, **2,790** people actually made application for Medicaid and/or Food Stamps.

On average, **232** applications were received each month, or **11** new applicants for Medicaid and/or Food Stamps per work day.

C. Eligibility and Case Management Services: Ongoing Casework

- In June 2007, **12,078** residents of Lane County were receiving Food Stamp and/or Medicaid assistance through S&DS. This reflects an increase of **207** people over the number served in June 2006.
- Of the 12,078 served by our agency, **2,476** people were receiving Medicaid assistance with their long term care needs, as described below:
 - **42%** were living in their own home or apartment
 - **13%** were living in an adult foster home
 - **25%** were living in a community based facility (such as residential care or assisted living)
 - **20%** were living in a nursing home.
- Overall, the trend for 2006-07 indicates a reduction in the number of people who received assistance with long term care needs and an increase in the number of people who received assistance with medical coverage and food stamps only. In general, the number of people with disabilities increased while the number of seniors decreased. This is consistent with demographic data that suggests a decline in the population prior to the birth of the Baby-Boomer generation.

D. Assuring the Safety of the Individual

S&DS currently has six staff positions devoted to the investigation of potential abuse or neglect of a senior or person with disability. During the 2006-07 Program Year,

- **1,895** referrals were received, which is **159** more than received in 2005-06
- **845** of the 1,895 referrals resulted in full investigations by the S&DS Adult Protective Services unit, with the remainder referred elsewhere for specific follow-up and consultation
- **76%** of the potential victims were seniors, while **24%** were people with a disability.
- Of the **845** investigations completed,
 - 29%** were for potential neglect by caregiver
 - 27%** were for potential financial exploitation
 - 16%** were for potential self neglect
 - 14%** were for potential verbal abuse
 - 9%** were for potential physical abuse
 - 3%** were for potential sexual abuse
 - 2%** were for potential abandonment.
- The percentage of substantiated complaints by category were:
 - 39%** substantiated neglect by caregiver
 - 25%** substantiated financial exploitation
 - 40%** substantiated self neglect

37% substantiated verbal abuse
32% substantiated physical abuse
6% substantiated sexual abuse
33% substantiated abandonment.

- Through the Multi-Disciplinary Team, Adult Protective Staff worked closely with members of Law Enforcement to assure the safety and protection of our vulnerable citizens.

Serving the Community

I. Serving the Community through Collaboration

Consistent with our mission, S&DS staff worked diligently to collaborate with community members and agencies in order to assure comprehensive services for our customers.

- S&DS staff actively participated on the following local committees during 2006-07: Lane County Multi-Disciplinary Team (coordination with law enforcement agencies), IMPACT, Domestic Violence Council, LaneCare Board, Eugene Downtown Safety Committee, United Way Research and Evaluation Committee, United Way Personal Attendant Project, Lane Coalition of Senior Programs, 211Lane Advisory Board, Lane County Vulnerable Populations Emergency Preparedness Committee, LTD Accessible Transportation Committee, Lane County Human Services Network, LIPA Community Partner meetings, and the West Lane Operations Committee (disaster preparedness in West Lane County).
- Ethnic outreach activities included participation in the planning and delivery of the Native Caring Conference, tribal outreach to members of the Coquille Indian Tribe, participation in the Springfield Latino Family Conference, and translation of the S&DS website into Spanish.
- S&DS staff coordinated with several homeless outreach groups this year, including participation at the Project Homeless Connect held at the Lane County Fairgrounds in February 2007.

II. Serving the Community through Partnerships

Within the social services arena, successful agencies cannot work in a vacuum. Partnering with others to accomplish the important work of keeping people independent and healthy is critical.

- During 2006-07, the two citizen Advisory Councils for Senior & Disabled Services – the Senior Services Advisory Council and Disability Services Advisory Council – met monthly to offer input and direction on the services provided by our agency. Members of the Standing Committees of each Advisory Council volunteered many hours to evaluate the quality of services and advocate for improved services.

- S&DS staff partnered with Lane County to conduct the Lane County Public Guardianship/Conservator Research Project, a feasibility study to review, analyze and recommend a public guardianship/conservatorship model for Lane County.
- S&DS partnered with two other Oregon Area Agencies on Aging in the Tri-Agency Consortium, which contracted for food preparation and in-home services in the three agency area.
- S&DS contracted with the following agencies / individuals for the provision of Older Americans Act funded services: Ombudsman Recruiting and Screening Committee (volunteer recruitment), Lane County Law and Advocacy Center (senior legal services), Cascade Health Solutions (caregiver support groups and training), Addus HealthCare (in-home services), Sue Maddron (Elder Help Volunteer Program), Carol Cookson (Money Management Program), Lane Transit District (transportation assistance), and Bateman Foods (meals for our Senior Meals Program).

Pursuing Efficiency

I. Pursuing Efficiency through Technology

A. Super Automated Scheduler of Intakes (SASI)

Finding ways to streamline and improve processes for greater efficiency is a priority for S&DS' System Developer. As mentioned previously, S&DS received 5,626 requests for service during 2006-07. Managing this number of calls requires the attention of several staff members and had proven to be very challenging, given the process consisted of a paper schedule and clipboard to track appointments. Access to the schedule was limited to one person at a time, and data tracking for reports was virtually non-existent. S&DS staff identified this as a critical area for improvement and, after extensive research and many hours of programming, the new Super Automated Scheduler of Intakes (SASI) was unveiled in Spring 2007.

SASI was received with rave reviews. Improved staff productivity, efficiency and satisfaction were evident immediately. SASI allows S&DS schedulers to simultaneously access available appointment slots, schedule appointments, prevent duplication of entry, easily locate the appointment date and time of an individual, and run various reports – all at their fingertips through their own desktop computer. Staff no longer waste important time searching for the paper schedule, and are able to spend more time focusing on helping those in need.

B. Adult Protective Services Modules

Across the State of Oregon, S&DS continues to be on the cutting edge of technology systems that produce positive results and save staff time. Our Adult Protective Services Module, which includes an application that helps staff track Protective Services referrals, consistently screen them for abuse or neglect, and complete the investigation reports, is by

far the most user-friendly and advanced in the state. Outside reviewers commend our system for its ability to efficiently and accurately track important information related to the field of adult protective services.

II. Pursuing Efficiency through Cost Effective Service Delivery

A. Medicaid Services

Participants who qualify for services through Medicaid have a choice of several care options and living situations, from in-home care to group living situations such as adult foster care, residential care and assisted living, to nursing home care. A review of a December 2006 report completed by the State of Oregon's Seniors and People with Disabilities unit indicates the following:

- The average cost of care for a person living in their own home was **\$1,054** per month
- The average cost of care for a person living in an Adult Foster Home, Residential Care Facility or Assisted Living Facility was **\$1724** per month
- The average cost of care for a person living in a Nursing Facility was **\$4,822** per month.

During the 2006-07 Program Year, S&DS staff assisted approximately **110** people to move out of a nursing home and into another living situation to receive their care. Assuming most people moved from the nursing home to a group living situation such as adult foster care, residential care or assisted living, the **savings to the taxpayer** was \$3,098 per month per individual, or **\$340,780 per month** for all 110 people, or an **annual savings of \$4,089,360**.

B. Non-Medicaid Services

Non-Medicaid programs such as the Oregon Project Independence, the Senior Connections Program, and the Senior Meals Program have all shown to provide a significant cost benefit. These programs effectively prevent the need for more expensive care by using volunteers, family supports, offering personal consultation and promoting education and healthy aging.

- In Lane County, the average cost per case for in-home care through the **Oregon Project Independence** was **\$215** per month. Compared to Medicaid services, the Oregon Project Independence program offers the lowest cost per case for in-home care such as bathing assistance or housekeeping.
- The average cost per **home delivered meal** is \$6.82, or \$1,773 per year for an individual receiving 5 meals per week, or **\$148** per month.
- 151 people received **respite care** offered through the Family Caregiver Support Program (a non-Medicaid program), costing a total of \$80,224 for the year. This is \$531 per year per participant, or an average of **\$44** per month per participant.
- The **Senior Connections Program** (also a non-Medicaid program) served 1,718 people with information, consultation on care issues, and assistance accessing the needed help, at a total cost of \$392,506 for the year. This is \$228 per year per participant, or an average of **\$19** per month per participant.

- These programs offer an impressive return on investment, as they offer a little bit of help that prevents or postpones the need for more expensive care.

Pursuing Excellence

I. Pursuing Excellence through Care Provider Certification and Oversight

A. Licensing and Monitoring of Adult Foster Care Homes

- S&DS staff licensed 9 new commercial Adult Foster Care homes in 2006-07. As of June 2007, there were **106** licensed Adult Foster Care homes in Lane County, with 4 homes specializing in Mental Health conditions and 4 homes operating in the Florence area. This translates to **477** licensed beds, with approximately **30** vacancies.
- S&DS staff also worked with an average of **105** Relative Foster Care homes during the year.
- Monthly orientations and/or trainings are offered by S&DS staff for potential or current Adult Foster Care providers.

B. Criminal Records Checks

- All potential care providers are required to pass a criminal record check. S&DS' Criminal History Specialist completed **4,527** background checks on current or potential care providers and volunteers.

C. In-Home Care

- During the 2006-07 Program Year, S&DS staff received **604** applications from individuals interested in certification as a Home Care Worker for Medicaid recipients. Throughout the county, monthly orientations are held for potential Home Care Workers. As of June 2007, there were **1,280** Medicaid Home Care Workers in Lane County.
- S&DS staff are responsible for processing vouchers or timesheets of the Home Care Workers each month. For July 2006 – June 2007, a total of **\$8,206,582** was made in payment for in-home care provided by Home Care Workers.

II. Pursuing Excellence through Quality Assurance Activities

In the fall of 2006, a Quality Assurance Supervisor was hired to create and implement a formal Quality Assurance process for the agency. The Quality Assurance Activity Summary for 2006-07 is described below.

- **Program / Financial Eligibility**

Monthly internal audits of both financial and service eligibility were completed by Program Supervisors and Lead Workers. Additionally, approximately 75 Food Stamp cases were reviewed monthly. S&DS maintained a consistently high accuracy rate throughout the year, above **90%** and often up to **100%**.

- **Level of Care**

A process evaluation was completed for all Pre-Admission Screenings (an assessment completed by a S&DS RN prior to nursing home admission). Improvements were implemented which resulted in a reduced backlog of requests and insured appropriate levels of care for S&DS customers.

- **Service Planning**

Approximately **1,180** Customer Service Report Cards were received last year from our clients. **98.4%** had positive remarks about the service. The remaining **1.6%** included varied complaints or suggestions, and were addressed within the week of receiving the report card.

- **Client Health and Welfare**

Contract RNs are key contributors to the health and welfare of Medicaid recipients. Communication between the Contract RN and the case manager had been identified as problematic on occasion. A strategy was implemented to create a feedback loop and to support improved collaboration and communication.

- **Training**

Standardized training for new staff was established, including a combination of group and individual training sessions. A Management Training Series was launched to sharpen the skills of current and potential S&DS Management staff. Additionally, S&DS staff participated in several important trainings during the year, including a statewide training on proper decision notices.

III. Pursuing Excellence through Strategic Planning

To assist with planning for services in the Lane County area, S&DS staff completed a comprehensive needs assessment of seniors and people with disabilities in the fall of 2006. The document includes the following important information:

- Summaries of relevant research such as population characteristics and census data
- A summary of the needs identified by seven focus groups conducted by S&DS
- Information on other regional trends and community surveys
- Analysis, identification of needs, and recommendations.

This comprehensive study served as an important resource during the S&DS Planning and Budget Committee's (a Standing Committee of the Senior Services and Disability Services Advisory Councils) work to determine the programs to be delivered during FY2007-08, outlined in the 2008-11 Area Plan.

Both documents, the 2006 Needs Assessment of Lane County Seniors and People with Disabilities and the 2008-11 Area Plan for Seniors and People with Disabilities in Lane County can be found at our website, www.sdslane.org.