

Adult Services Policy Council 2011 – 2012 Annual Report

In April 1999, the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors established the Adult Services Policy Council (ASPC) as the countywide cooperative to improve and expand services for seniors and adults with disabilities.

The ASPC was tasked with providing planning, development and system design, and service integration to improve and expand services. The target populations are those seniors and adults with disabilities who utilize publicly funded health and human services.

Thirteen years later, the ASPC continues on the cooperative mission that characterized its founding through a diverse membership that is responsive to the dynamic range of challenges that face seniors and adults with disabilities in our county. A full membership list is appended to this 2011-2012 Annual Report.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF POPULATION SERVED:

Seniors and adults with disabilities who utilize publicly funded health and human services have needs that span the gamut from transportation and housing, to nutrition and physical and mental health. They face the challenges associated with vulnerable populations including fiscal and physical abuse and neglect.

- There are currently over 60,000 citizens aged 60 and older in San Luis Obispo County. This population has increased by 29% in the last 10 years. The tables below show the projected growth of this population. It's noted that San Luis Obispo has and will continue to have a higher percentage of residents over the age of 60 than the rest of California.

Department of Finance Projections San Luis Obispo County Seniors 60+, 2010-2050

Projected Population	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
60-64	17,090	20,443	14,795	16,661	18,943
65-69	12,251	19,437	18,480	14,284	18,157
70-74	9,681	16,321	19,331	14,727	16,595
75-79	8,182	10,771	16,683	16,305	13,250
80-84	6,557	7,018	11,914	14,565	11,745
85+	6,520	7,713	10,504	18,020	23,326
Seniors, 60-85+	60,281	81,703	91,707	94,562	102,016
TOTAL	269,734	293,540	316,613	338,760	364,748
% of Total	22%	28%	29%	28%	28%

Department of Finance Projections California Seniors 60+, 2010-2050

Projected Population	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050
Seniors, 60-85+	6,361,278	8,923,493	11,482,049	12,915,180	14,636,897
TOTAL	39,135,676	44,135,923	49,240,891	54,266,115	59,507,876
% of Total	16%	20%	23%	24%	25%

- The 2010 Census revealed that 13,180 San Luis Obispo County residents between the age of 18 and 64 have a disability. If their disability has not been verified by Social Security, they are not eligible to receive social service benefits utilized by our senior population, such as Medicare. In addition, it is expected that younger people living with significant disabilities will need a system of support for many years to come.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

During FY 2011-2012, members at the ASPC table continued ongoing outreach to seniors and adults with disabilities.

Good Neighbor Program.

The Good Neighbor Program in San Luis Obispo County was established in September 2010 as a result of ASPC Collaboration. Thereafter, the Wilshire Community Foundation accepted the responsibility of heading this program. The Good Neighbor Program continues to promote better individual health outcomes, contain public sector costs, ease the economic burden on senior and disabled adult residents, and promote emotional and physical well-being. It provides quality of life enhancing services that are not allowed under existing programs. Volunteer recruitment and training allow community members to contribute to needy people in their own neighborhood. The Good Neighbor Program grew significantly during 2011-2012. At the end of the 2010-2011 there were 48 volunteers who served 89 older clients. At this time, there are 43 volunteers (5 of whom are Cal Poly students and currently on leave) who have been fully trained to provide services to 329 older clients. Good Neighbor was awarded a two-year grant of \$25,000 per year to reimburse mileage to volunteer drivers. Obviously, recruiting more volunteers is a top priority for Good Neighbor Program.

Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment (POLST)

The Adult Services Policy Council is staying informed regarding the POLST (Physician Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatment) program. POLST is a form that identifies the specific kinds of medical treatment patients want toward the end of their lives. The Central Coast Coalition for Compassionate Care is the local group that has been meeting for the purposes of sharing how the POLST is used across a wide variety of care settings including hospitals, nursing facilities, residential care facilities, and the patient's own home. The group is part of the state coalition. All of the state updates, revisions and the implementation of POLST in San Luis Obispo county are disseminated during the ASPC monthly committee updates.

SUPPORT OF COMMUNITY PARTNERS

On May 8, 2012 the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors passed a resolution prepared by ASPC proclaiming May 2012 to be Older American's Month in San Luis Obispo. Kathleen Karle, ASPC co-chair attended the reading of the resolution and provided additional information for the benefit of the Board and the public.

A presentation by Pearl Munak, Transitional Food and Shelter, was made at the November 2011 ASPC meeting. Those in attendance at the meeting agreed that all would bring donations to the December meeting of funds, food and household goods to support this volunteer organization.

ASPC's collective expertise was a valuable asset in table discussions, plenary presentations, and educational workshops held during the 2025 Senior Symposium held in October 2011 and sponsored by Wilshire Health & Community Services and the San Luis Obispo County Community Foundation. The final report from the Symposium indicated that 39% of the participants were professionals from the non-profit/human services field and 13% of the attendees represented public agency staff/leaders. Many of those professionals who attended the Symposium are also members of the Adult Services Policy Council.

Monthly meetings enhance communication and assist members in avoiding unnecessary duplication of services. Networking and information sharing ensures that appropriate referrals can be made to member agencies. Regular e-mail updates on available resources and budgetary concerns have aided agencies to plan and strategize around the provision of services in the upcoming year in a way they would not have been able to otherwise accomplish. The e-mail updates and posting of synopses on-line ensure that agencies and individuals who are unable to attend meetings remain informed about ASPC's activities and concerns.

Economic Challenges

ASPC has a continuing concern around economic conditions. Individuals living on a fixed income or on Social Security Disability are increasingly unable to afford the basics of food and shelter and many have no way to pay for needed services or medical care. At the same time, there have been ongoing cuts in funding to agencies involved with the provision of health and human services to low-income seniors and adults with disabilities.

The ASPC has been fortunate to have ongoing participation and support of many of the local, State and Federal legislators who express an awareness of the needs and services that are represented by this collaborative. In February, 2012, Assemblyman Katcho Achadjian spoke to the group on the state of the California State Budget. San Luis Obispo County Supervisor Adam Hill spoke to the group in May, 2012 regarding local issues of interest. Other regular attendees include Hans Poschman, representative for Senator Sam Blakeslee, Kevin Drabinski, representative for Assemblyman Katcho Achadjian, and representatives from the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors.

ASPC Collaborations

During a tumultuous year of ongoing funding losses and increased need, the Adult Services Policy Council has continued to be a clearinghouse of ever changing information. At each ASPC meeting large parts of their agenda is dedicated to discussion of the activities of individual member organizations. The clear and consistent transfer of information between members meant that throughout the County there was very little duplication of efforts to serve seniors and adults with disabilities.

In addition, presentations on specific topics of interest are made at the monthly meetings.

Speakers and topics presented to ASPC members this last year included:

Month	Presentation	# of Attendees
July 2011	Report on State Budget: Jeff Snyder, representative for Senator Sam Blakeslee and Kevin Drabinski, representative for Assemblyman Katcho Achadjian.	20
August 2011	No meeting	
September 2011	Kathleen Karle, SLO County Health Agency "Why Climate Change is a Health Issue."	20
October 2011	Rideshare, Morgen Marshall "Criminal Justice Realignment," Robert Reyes, Chief Deputy Probation Officer; Dan Hilford, Assistant District Attorney; Cindy Marie Absey, Victim/Witness Director/ District Attorney's Office; and Michelle Cole, Correctional Lieutenant/Sheriff's Office	39
November 2011	Transitional Food & Shelter, Pearl Munak GALA, Silent Elders. Providing Culturally-Competent Services to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Seniors, Mike Hughes	40
December 2011	Hospice of San Luis Obispo County, Kris Kington-Barker.	46
January 2012	Expanding Transportations Options in SLO – Fred Munroe, Ridership Development Consultants	43
February 2012	Sacramento Budgetary Talks, Assemblyman Katcho Achadjian AIDS Support Network/SLO Hep C Project, Edie Kahn "Our Personal Journeys Mental Health Awareness on Campus" Shannon McQuat, Transitions-Mental Health	48
March 2012	San Luis Obispo County Community Foundation (SLOCCF), Janice Fong Wolf	47
April 2012	LGBT Update, John Alongi, GALA "Hearing Friendly Community" Kathleen Bellefontaine, Commission on Aging and Paul Mortola, Central Coast Assistive Technology Center	40
May 2012	SLO County Budget, Supervisor Adam Hill	30
June 2012	Homeless Not Hopeless Documentary Project, Jason Reed and Christine Bearce	18

Concerns

The ASPC has identified critical needs for low income seniors and adults with disabilities in San Luis Obispo County. These include:

Shelter

There is an ongoing lack of affordable housing in the County, especially for very low income individuals. As economic challenges intensify, many seniors and adults with disabilities are losing their ability to afford the rent or mortgage. The high cost of assisted living in San Luis Obispo County means that some people must relocate to other areas when their ability to live independently declines. For seniors, complicated reverse mortgages can result in the loss of their homes. Homelessness remains a significant issue in the County.

Healthcare Services

Despite state, federal and local budget cuts, Community Health Centers has worked diligently to keep medical, dental and mental health services accessible to as many clients as possible. Clients have not reported any issues in obtaining services this past year. While the departments of Public Health, Mental Health and Drug and Alcohol Services have also experienced budget cuts in recent years, staff are working hard to maintain services for those most in need. While the County decided not to move forward with the Low Income Health Program (LIHP), the most significant positive impact on healthcare will be the roll out of the Affordable Care Act in 2014. The law strengthens Medicare and provides access to preventive services and prescription drug discounts for seniors. The law will also provide greater choices and enhanced protections for people with disabilities, as well as new options for long-term supports and services.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) remains deeply controversial among the American public more than two years after becoming law. Much of the public still has a relatively poor understanding what reforms are in the ACA including seniors, or those eligible for MediCare. To enable seniors to both take advantage of the opportunities and to understand their responsibilities under the law, it will be critical for them to understand the effects. The most significant changes for MediCare-eligible seniors will be reduced costs (and/or cost-sharing) to Medicare Part D - the prescription drug coverage. Currently, under ACA, Part D plans must offer medication therapy management (MTM) to enrollees with multiple chronic conditions for whom drug spending is above a specified threshold (\$3,144 for 2013). Other changes include elimination of co-payments for preventive services and coverage for annual wellness visits that include a health risk assessment and health advice, as well as referrals to appropriate health education or preventive counseling services.

The difficulty in sorting out Medicare and supplemental insurance programs and procedures poses a direct threat to seniors. Because of the complexity of Medicare regulations and the increased utilization of Medicare as one ages, the seniors frequently find themselves in a very difficult and unmanageable situation. This leads to a high level of stress when they can least afford it. Fortunately, the Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP) is a great education resource for San Luis Obispo County seniors and adults with disabilities.

Our senior population is projected to increase markedly over the next 10 years. It is for this reason that we must improve and increase seniors' understanding of Medicare and supplemental insurances available to them and how they are designed to complement one another.

Food

ASPC continues to be concerned with food insecurity for seniors and disabled adults in San Luis Obispo County. The availability of healthy, nutritious food is critical to the wellbeing of all humans; no one should have to choose between buying food or healthcare services. ASPC encourages the Board to support the efforts of food distribution agencies.

Senior Nutrition Program is a long-time member of the ASPC. Senior Nutrition Program provides meals to seniors 60 years and older. Meals are served at 10 dining sites for those who can get out and enjoy hot lunch in the company of other seniors. Seniors who are homebound receive hot lunches through a network of dedicated volunteers during weekdays and frozen meals on weekends and holidays. The Senior Nutrition Program volunteers, many of whom are seniors themselves, play a huge role not only by providing needed nutrition, but also daily human interaction and a watchful eye to protect seniors' safety from accident or abuse. The Senior Nutrition Program served 173,000 meals in FY 2011/12.

The San Luis Obispo Food Bank is a valuable resource for food insecure low-income seniors and adults with disabilities. The Food Bank works with more than 225 non-profit agencies including: church pantries, recovery programs, after school programs, homeless shelters, soup kitchens and more. According to their website, they distribute 5.5 million pounds of food each year, 46% of which is fresh produce. During the first six months of 2012, The Food Bank's GleanSLO effort gathered more than 20,000 pounds of fresh produce from local farmers and backyard gardeners that would otherwise have been lost.

Approximately 15% of the people served by the Food Bank Coalition are seniors, 60 years of age or older. These 7,000 persons can be described as food insecure, meaning that they don't always know where their next meal is coming from, or usually eat unhealthy food because it is cheaper than fresh, nutritious food. From our 51 sites around the county, they receive healthy food, including 44% fresh produce. And approximately 500 seniors find a meaningful way to serve the community by being volunteers at our sites.

The Food Bank is an outlet for seniors to contribute to the community. Seniors serve by sorting food, driving trucks, distributing food at sites, and helping in the office. Without seniors, the Food Bank would be unable to function, and without the Food Bank, thousands of seniors in our county would have less access to nutritious food on a regular basis.

Fraud

Seniors are at greater risk for losses due to fraud than any other segment of our population. The downturn in the economy has added "relatives in need" to other better known frauds such as charity solicitations, foreign lotteries, home improvement, identity theft, internet fraud, investment fraud, and sweepstakes. Today's seniors were raised in an era where they were taught that most people were trustworthy, and sadly that is no longer the case. They are available during the day when the con artists do their best work. They are often lonely, and happy to have someone to converse with - all leading up to being easy prey for the unscrupulous. Just as education is the key to understanding the intricacies of Medicare and supplemental insurance, so is it in reducing vulnerability to fraud. Giving our seniors the necessary tools to be better consumers must be a focus for the coming year.

Background checks help in preventing the cruel financial and abuse of dependent adults and elders by potential caregivers who provide false information to families needing services. Changes at the County Court house have made it more difficult for family members who wish to conduct background checks on potential caregivers for their loved ones. In the past, there was a dedicated computer station where private citizens could conduct simple background checks.

Now individuals and businesses wanting to conduct background checks must go to Room 200 at the County Court House complete a form and pay \$15 for criminal background information. Having the same process for individuals as businesses has resulted in long lines. The fee is a monetary burden for many individuals.

Goals for 2012-2013

- Growth of membership and participation
- Completion of Continuum of Care
- Continued monitoring of effects of AB 109
- Support of agencies working in areas of concern as described earlier in this report
- Monitoring of Behavioral Issues/Mental Health and Addiction issues
- Support of culturally appropriate services to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender seniors and adults with disabilities
- Improved quality of life for seniors and adults with disabilities
- Continued monitoring and planning in expectation of legislative changes
- Monitoring and Planning for Implementation of the Affordable Care Act

Conclusion

As the countywide cooperative to improve and expand services for seniors and adults with disabilities, the ASPC has taken advantage of the collective experience of its members to meet present challenges and provide quality, unduplicated services.

Indeed, against a dampened economic picture, target populations have continued to be the beneficiaries of intentional service integration occasioned by the collaborative effort of ASPC members.

The ASPC is pleased to be supportive of the Board of Supervisors and their goal of enhancing the quality of life of all San Luis Obispo County residents. The ASPC looks forward to the continued practice of shared innovation and effort to the benefit of our seniors and adults with disabilities.

Adult Services Policy Council Members 2011-2012

Adult Abuse Prevention Council	SLO County
AIDS Support Network & SLO Hep C Project	Mariposa Music Therapy
Alzheimer's Association	Mental Health Advisory Board
*Area Agency on Aging	North County Connection
*Bates Care Management	Peoples' Self Help Housing / Supportive Housing Program
*Behavioral Health/Mental Health Services	Probation Department
*California State Assembly 33rd District	*Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)
California State Senate 15 th District	*Ride-On Transportation
*CenCal Health	San Luis Coastal Adult School
Client Care Consultants	San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors
Coast Caregiver Resource Center	SLO Supportive Housing Consortium
Community Action Partnership of SLO County (CAPSLO)	SLO County Commission on Aging
Community Health Centers of the Central Coast	Senior Legal Services Project
County Medical Services Program	Senior Living Consultants
*Department of Social Services/Adult Services	*Senior Nutrition Program
District Attorney- Victim/Witness Assistance	Sheriff's Office
Drug & Alcohol Advisory Board	Sierra Vista Regional Medical Center
French Hospital Medical Center/A Dignity Health Member	Transitional Food & Shelter
*Health Agency / Health Care Services Division	Transitions-Mental Health Association
Health Agency/Health Promotion Division	Transitions-Mental Health Association / SLO Hotline
*Health Commission	Tri-Counties Regional Center
Home Instead Senior Care	United Cerebral Palsy
Hospice of San Luis Obispo County	United Way of San Luis Obispo County
Independent Living Resource Center	*Wilshire Community Services
LifeSteps Foundation	Creative Mediation
Long Term Care Ombudsman Services of	Senior Peer Counseling
	Caring Callers
	Good Neighbor Program

*Contributors to 2011-2012 Annual Report