



ARC Committee Meeting
Meeting Minutes – Microsoft Teams
September 22, 2021 | 1:00pm

ATTENDANCE:

MEMBERS

Rob Alexander	Romona Jackson-Jones	Lois Ricci
Karen Ashley	Darlene Kimes	Wayne Stokes
Tammi Brewer	Liane Levetan	Richard Sylvia Jr.
Lin Chao	Rosa Marroquin	Cynthia Tucker
		Herman Weil

STAFF

Mary Blumberg	Katie Perumbeti
Becky Kurtz	Megan Malasarte
	Kim Yawn

GUESTS

Tim Morris	Tori Strahler
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CALL TO ORDER by Co-Chair Romona Jackson-Jones at 1:02pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD There is no public commentary at this time.

MANAGER'S UPDATE Becky Kurtz says ARC has received funding from the Consolidated Appropriations Act, also called HDC-5. They are working actively with the Division of Aging Services to get some clarity on their policies and how the funding will work but should be able to disperse the additional nutrition services funding which is towards home-delivered meals.

There will soon be funding to expand outreach on getting the vaccine called VAC5. There is a large grant totaling \$13M, ARPA funds. It has already been allocated to Georgia but currently has not yet appropriated the state match. The Georgia Legislature will take up this issue in the spring. Congress is looking to remove the match entirely. Either way, we expect the funds will be utilized in early spring.

The \$3.5 trillion Reconciliation Package is the infrastructure bill that is not the roads and bridges, but the other infrastructure bill. There are several parts that will benefit ARC's work. It will increase the amount towards the Older Americans Act (OAA) – which is similar to CARES Act amount. There is a lot of discussion in the House centered on expanding Medicare dental, vision, and hearing benefits.

Both the President's budget and the House committees that have been looking at appropriations have provided significant increases in the Older Americans Act. If that holds when the federal appropriations goes through, then there should be more funds available.

ARC's Aging and Independence Services Group is currently doing a pilot to test office reopening and Becky is one of those participating by going into the office twice a week through the end of October. There is not a set date

when the office will open back up officially, but the work of providing services to older persons and onboarding new employees continues.

ARC has received three new non-COVID related grants. One is funding from the Retirement Research Foundation that was applied for by the Georgia Academy of Family Physicians. Their goal for us is to educate physicians in the Atlanta region regarding access to aging services. Kaiser Permanente has also funded ARC to support their information counseling. They have implemented a referral platform called, Unite Us, which helps ARC to receive referrals from them and other community partners. Lastly, an organization called, Map Habit, applied to the National Institute on Aging and received funding. They have asked ARC to recruit participants living with dementia and their caregivers to test technology to assist with daily activities such as taking a bath or cooking dinner.

Becky presents a graph of the number of people 60+ that have been affected by COVID-19 from the beginning to present day, county by county. There is additional data showing the percent of residents in the 10-county Atlanta region with at least one vaccine dose. For those 65+, it is up to one hundred percent in the region of those who have received at least one vaccine dose. The most requested services pre- and post-COVID-19 are home and community-based services along with home delivered meals (especially last year).

Tammi Brewer asks if Becky Kurtz can delineate the difference between personal care and the EDWP waivers. The EDWP waiver is access to the waiver, and it could include personal care as one of the services. It could also include a home-delivered meal; it's a whole array of services though it's not always personal care services but it usually is.

Karen Ashley asks what the procedure is for getting the COVID-19 vaccine for someone in their home. If anyone would like to call the Empowerline counselors, then they can be assisted there and be connected to their local public health department to facilitate an in-home vaccine visit. The caregivers can be vaccinated as well, in-home.

Co-Chair Romona Jackson Jones asks about the value of the non-COVID grants mentioned previously. The Retirement Research Foundation is receiving between \$45,000 to \$50,000. Kaiser Permanente grant is \$50,000. The National Institute on Aging is receiving \$75,000.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES Motion to approve July 28, 2021 Meeting Minutes made by Tammi Brewer. Wayne Stokes seconds the motion. The decision is unanimous.

LIVE BEYOND EXPECTATIONS PRESENTATION Mary Blumberg goes over the Live Beyond Expectations Plan: the connection between where you live and your life expectancy. The overall goal is to identify and address the inequities that create the disparities in location and life expectancy. The data revolves around county health rankings, looking into health factors and socio-economic factors that contribute to life expectancy. The long-term aspiration is to bring lower life expectancy areas up to the regional average life expectancy and improve quality of life along the way.

The approaches to reduce disparities are through practice, policy, and place. These will be implemented by providing services and programs that address unmet needs; work with governmental, philanthropic, educational, nonprofit, and business leaders to improve or amend policies that create inequities and advance policies that promote equity; lastly, focus on locations, within each county, where residents experience the most inequity.

Katie Perumbeti goes over the ways in which they have tracked progress with the LBE Plan. They have compiled county snapshots including their socio-economic factors, i.e., ages, race, Hispanic origin, household income, etc.

The four buckets to track outcomes are life expectancy, quality of life, financial stability, and healthcare access. There has been an effort to create a steering committee that has been established within each ARC group to establish outward action. Additionally, there is community engagement including regional outreach and communications to continue expanding research.

Herman Weil asks about the discrepancies influenced by violence or drug use and if they are contributors at all. Drug use and homicide do not reveal itself too much as discrepancies in life expectancy across the region. COVID-19 will have a bigger impact on the data above all.

If there are questions or ideas regarding LBE, please contact Mary Blumberg or Katie Perumbeti.

CHEROKEE SENIOR SERVICES PRESENTATION Tim Morris with Cherokee County Senior Services shares their offered services: case management, congregate meals, home delivered meals, homemaker, personal care, caregiver services, kinship care, senior recreation, transportation, and pilot meal program. They have around 85 client caseloads and 200 clients in their Meals on Wheels Program. Some of their new services are Mom's Meals, Assistive Devices Program, PAW Program to assist seniors with pet care, Book Program for Homebound Services, Cherokee County Senior Coalition, and Silver Roamers/Active Adult Program. They recently built a new building serving as storage for assistive devices.

The highest county need is affordable housing for low-income seniors. There is one subsidized senior housing in the county, but the waiting list is at least two years. Therefore, clients are sometimes directed to South Cherokee as they have more resources for affordable housing. Individual transportation is also urgent for Cherokee County as it's very limited. The homeless senior problem has become bigger during the pandemic. There are homeless groups they frequently distribute food to and donate gift cards for groceries and supplies. As for Cherokee County Senior Center, their staff is fully dedicated to the well-being and care of their clients.

If there are any questions regarding Cherokee County Senior Services, please contact Tim Morris for more information.

Tammi Brewer added that she learned Forsyth Senior Services has a dementia adult daycare program and that other counties should adopt the idea. In the instance that someone is not ready for assisted living, they could go to the dementia daycare for support.

CLAYTON COUNTY SENIOR SERVICES PRESENTATION Tori Strahler goes over the services offered through Clayton County Senior Services including case management, congregate meals, home delivered meals, homemaker, personal care, caregiver services, kinship care, senior recreation, and transportation. They provide 100 congregate meals though that number is going to increase since they have opened additional senior centers. They provide home delivered meals for about 180 to 200 seniors in the county with the help of their home delivered meals coordinator facilitating the distribution.

Additional new services are Claris Companion Tablets, COVID-19 Manual/National Council on Aging, Older Americans Mayfest Tailgate, COVID-19 Vaccination Event with Congressman David Scott, to name a few. The highest county need is transportation. They have about 150 clients that they address transportation needs such as medical transportation.

Clayton County has five senior centers and all five of them have swimming pools to encourage exercising regularly. They recently hosted the Georgia Golden Olympics Swim Meet where several of their seniors participated in the competition.

Claris Companion was recently integrated in Clayton County Senior Services providing seniors with tablets to stay connected with their family members, attend Zoom classes, and have access to all online classes/programs. These tablets are user-friendly and provide an easy way to stay in touch with family.

Clayton County Senior Services created a guide to assist other facilities on how to re-open safely during COVID-19. During the height of the pandemic, they did "Fitness Over COVID" which encouraged seniors to stay active through virtual classes led by staff.

There were two centers opened during the pandemic; one of them named after a former commissioner who recently passed a few months ago. The local fire department set up vaccination locations in all their senior centers having vaccinated over a thousand seniors in a four-week period.

Wayne Stokes asked the question regarding the male participant number in comparison to female participants in their programs. Tori said the participation numbers are higher amongst females, but they will soon be conducting a focus group spearheaded by a couple of the males that participate consistently.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Next ACA Committee Meeting – December 1, 2021 (may be in-person or virtual depending on office policy based on open meetings and in-person meetings around that time).

All of grantees will have opportunity to apply for service grants for FY23-24. The window is now opened to apply.

MEETING ADJOURNED The motion to adjourn was made at 2:36pm.