

# Schuyler County Office for the Aging Annual Plan/Four Year Plan Summary April 1, 2012 – March 31, 2016

For  
The Older Americans Act (OAA)  
The New York State Community Services for the Elderly (CSE) Program  
The Expanded In Home Services for the Elderly Program (EISEP)  
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)  
Congregate Initiative Program (CSI)  
Health Insurance Information Counseling and Assistance Program (HIICAP)  
State Transportation Program  
New York Connects

**September 2011**

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## OVERVIEW

The Schuyler County Office for the Aging (SCOFA) is pleased to present our annual/four year plan for April 1, 2012- March 31, 2016. This plan provides the opportunity to share our goals, mission and vision for the coming years. As part of the planning process, SCOFA hosts an annual public hearing to solicit input into the plan. Outreach to the senior population, caregivers, agencies serving seniors, decision makers within the county and interested parties are invited to share their suggestions for moving forward as well as share feedback on the current services offered through SCOFA.

In the past, a number of public hearings have been held at varying locations throughout the county, but due to limited participation, only one hearing is being offered this year. You are cordially invited to join us on October 4, 2011 at 3:00pm at the Silver Spoon Café located at the Human Services Building, 323 Owego Street in Montour Falls. If you are unable to attend, please feel free to submit written comments via e-mail or postal mail.

Comments can be addressed to:

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SCOFA welcomes your input and values your expertise. All comments will be carefully considered. We look forward to learning from you as you share your insights and ideas.

## INTRODUCTION

The Schuyler County Office for the Aging (SCOFA) is a local government agency that was established in December of 1979 to represent and address the needs of aging residents in Schuyler County. SCOFA not only provides services directly to the aging population but subcontracts services through individuals and agencies specializing in specific areas. SCOFA also interfaces with other service agencies to provide referrals and assistance in related areas. Additionally, SCOFA serves as an advocate on issues concerning the population served.

In general, clients age 60 and over are the target population, although a few of the services allow for serving individuals under the age of 60.

## MISSION

To advocate for, educate and assist the senior population of Schuyler County to live in the most independent and integrated setting through community collaboration providing for well-being/health, security, dignity, autonomy and choice through innovative home and community-based services.

## PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE ANNUAL PLAN SUMMARY (APS)

- The Older Americans Act (OAA), Section 306(a)(6)(D) requires Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) to develop an area plan. (Older Americans Act)
- New York State requires AAAs to submit an Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) to the New York State Office for the Aging (NYSOFA) on programs funded through federal and state resources. (11-PI-16)
- The Annual Plan Summary is a synopsis of the AIP and presents SCOFA's program plans. The AIP itself outlines the long-term goals, and budget & service levels.
- The OAA authorizes a variety of services throughout the aging network and includes but is not limited to the following:
  - Home and Community-Based Supportive Services:** This provides grants based mainly on population of those age 60 and older. The goal of this funding is to enable seniors to remain in their homes for as long as possible. Specific services include:
    - Access services such as transportation, case management, and information and assistance;
    - In-home services such as personal care, chore, and homemaker assistance; and
    - Community services such as legal services, mental health services, and adult day care.

Also funded under this category are multi-purpose senior centers. Centers are utilized for coordinating services such as congregate meals, community education, health screenings, exercise/health promotion programs and transportation. Most importantly, the local AAA has the flexibility to utilize the funds to provide services that best meet the needs of seniors in that particular area. No two county programs are the same.

**Nutrition Program:** The goals of this category are to:

- Reduce hunger and food insecurity
- Promote socialization of older individuals

- Promote the health and well-being of older individuals and delay adverse health conditions through access to nutrition and other disease prevention and health promotion services.

Congregate Nutrition Sites and the Home-Delivered Meals program provide meals and related nutrition services to older individuals. Services are targeted to those in greatest social and economic need with particular attention to low income individuals, minority individuals, those in rural communities, those with limited English proficiency and those at risk of institutional care. Nutrition Services Programs help older individuals to remain independent and in their homes.

Grants for Congregate Nutrition Services and Home-Delivered Nutrition Services are allocated to States and Territories by a formula based on their share of the population aged 60 and over.

**The National Family Caregiver Support Program (NFCSP):** Funds a range of supports that assist family and informal caregivers to care for their loved ones at home for as long as possible.

The NFCSP offers a range of services to support family caregivers. Under this program, AAAs can provide the following types of services:

- information to caregivers about available services,
- assistance to caregivers in gaining access to the services,
- individual counseling, organization of support groups, and caregiver training,
- respite care, and
- supplemental services, on a limited basis

These services work in conjunction with other State and Community-Based Services to provide a coordinated set of supports. Studies have shown that these services can reduce caregiver depression, anxiety, and stress and enable them to provide care longer, thereby avoiding or delaying the need for costly institutional care.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

According to the 2000 census data, there were 3,708 seniors age 60 and older living within Schuyler County. (Schuyler County Annual Implementation Plan 2011-2012) The most recent data from the 2010 census shows a population of 4,386 or an 18% increase. (American FactFinder) The overall population for Schuyler County decreased by 5% from 19,224 in 2000 to 18,343 in 2010. (American FactFinder) The expectation is that we will continue to see a continual growth in the senior population as the life expectancy continues to increase and more and more Baby Boomers turn 60. According

to an AARP study, an average of 7,000 Americans are turning 65 every day during 2011. (Love, 2010) As this growth pattern continues, the needs of the aging population will ever increase, and furthermore, given the known expectations of the younger senior population, demands for services and choices will become a bigger challenge. The local AAA needs to plan accordingly for the shifting tides.

## **NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

Each four year plan must include a needs assessment per New York State Office for the Aging (NYSOFA) requirements. A needs assessment and resource inventory must be completed as part of the process in determining priorities, targeting efforts and funding for the next four year cycle planning. Needs assessments can be based on interviews, focus groups, community forums, public hearings, reporting data and more. The needs assessment is focused on “conditions of elderly people in the area which limit their ability to remain in or return to their homes and to participate in family and community life.” (11-TAM-01) Also, the Older Americans Act (OAA) requires that each AAA determine "the extent of need for supportive services, nutrition services, and multipurpose senior centers" in its Planning and Service Area (PSA).

## **PROGRAM PLANS- 2012- 2016**

**Caregiver Program:** In-Home Respite, Overnight Nursing Home Respite, Support Group, Information & Assistance, Counseling, Training, Case Management, Loan Library with books and videos, and Supplemental Services including equipment, transportation and other needs as identified. Collaboration with Watkins Glen and Montour Falls libraries for Caregiver Corner housed within each library. This consists of books, videos and DVDs. Continue working on the Supervision component which would allow for use of volunteers and non-certified agencies to monitor, guide and oversee the senior’s actions and activities. This can be a form of respite for the informal caregiver. So far, we have been unsuccessful in recruiting volunteers to spend time with care receivers while care givers are offered some respite time. Caregiver retreats have proven successful, so will continue as part of the annual National Caregiver Recognition Month each November.

### **EISEP or Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program:**

Personal Care Level 1: Includes making and changing beds, dusting and vacuuming rooms the client uses, light cleaning of kitchen, bedroom and bathroom, dishwashing, shopping for the client, laundry, preparing meals, and other agreed upon activities as allowed.

Personal Care Level 2: Includes all tasks listed under Level 1 as well as bathing the client in bed, the tub or shower, dressing, grooming, toileting, transferring to and from bed, chair or

wheelchair, routine skin care and assisting the client with medical supplies and equipment such as walkers and wheelchairs.

Ancillary Services: OFA now has a policy in place for the use of ancillary services to include house cleaning, laundry, grocery shopping, shopping for other needed items and other essential errands, bill paying and other essential activities, providing meals, escort to appointments and other community activities, and supervision. A contract has been signed with Comfort Keepers in Ithaca for the provision of services. A contract with a second provider is being pursued at this time.

**Emergency/Disaster Preparedness:**

Free materials are available through FEMA for distribution to our seniors through the congregate meal sites, tabling events, HDM deliveries and other venues as scheduled. Plans are in place to secure grant funding or leveraged funding from local organizations to purchase emergency/disaster kit supplies. Once obtained, an event will be scheduled where seniors or their caregivers can come in and build a starter kit to have on hand in the event of a disaster or emergency event that may impact electric, water and access to food supplies. Educational articles in the Golden Glow will continue. Special events with a focus on disaster preparedness will take place in September 2012 during National Disaster Preparedness Month.

**PERS or Personal Emergency Response System:** OFA has a contract with Link-to-Life to provide an electronic device which will alert appropriate persons of the need for immediate assistance in the event of an emergency situation within the client's home. A button is pushed on the neck pendant or wrist band that is worn by the client. Help is then summoned by the dispatcher who receives the signal.

**Case Management:** Provides assistance by Case Manager to gain access to and coordinate appropriate services, benefits and entitlements.

**Driver Safety Program:** Provided by a volunteer as a NYS approved driver safety course. Upon successful completion of the course, the driver receives a certificate verifying the date and location where the course was completed. The driver then presents the certificate to their insurance carrier for a discount on their premium.

**CarFit:** This is in conjunction with the Driver Safety Program but can also be offered as a stand-alone program. This is an educational component that offers older adults the opportunity to have an evaluation to check on how their personal vehicle "fits" them. As needed, the individual may be referred for further information and education or training to enhance their driving safety and continued mobility.

**Golden Glow:** Newsletter for county residents who are identified as being 60 and over as well as their caregivers and for those providing services for the 60+ population. This is a joint effort by OFA and RSVP.

**Health & Wellness:** Includes presentations and articles on health related topics, devices and minor equipment for medication management, blood pressure clinics, diabetes management, hearing clinics and the Parkinson's Support Group. A walking club utilizing the Catherine Valley Trail during warmer months and the Watkins Glen High School during colder months is offered. A swim program at the Watkins Glen High School has been successful and continues. "A Matter of Balance" is being offered to teach techniques on fall reduction to those who are at risk or consider themselves at risk due to illness or disability.

**HEAP:** OFA provides information and referral to DSS for the HEAP application process as well as handling the intake process for those unable or unwilling to go to DSS, including the homebound receiving services via OFA. DSS HEAP staff will be on-site at OFA every Wednesday from the opening of the HEAP season through the beginning of January. Part of the HEAP process is to evaluate individual needs for the Weatherization Referral and Packaging Program. This will continue until funds are exhausted.

**HIICAP or Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Program:** In the past this has been provided by trained volunteer counselors to assist with billing disputes, Medicare issues, Part D, EPIC, Medicare Advantage plans, Private insurance, Retiree Coverage, Employer Insurance, Medicare Savings program and Medicaid eligibility. Long Term Care Insurance education and counseling is addressed through the HIICAP program. Over the past few years, the volunteers have retired from this task as it has become rather overwhelming with the constant changes. Recruitment of new volunteers has not been successful for the same reason. Advocacy efforts at the state level have been ongoing this past year in an attempt to attain additional funding under the HIICAP program for more paid staff to assist with the significantly increasing demands for counseling by seniors and/or their caregivers or family members.

**Information & Assistance:** OFA staff answer questions about issues for individuals age 60 and over. This may involve the individual directly or a family member, guardian or another agency calling on behalf of the individual. I&A also provides assistance in linking clients to services as needed.

**Legal Services:** Provision of legal advice, counseling and representation by an attorney as needed and approved under the guidelines of the program. May include but is not limited to simple wills, landlord-tenant disputes, Medicaid and other long-term care issues as well as benefit issues. This is a subcontracted service.

**Nutrition Services:** Includes the following:

Congregate Meal Sites in Montour Falls, Monterey, Tyrone Burdett and Hector. The Montour site is open Mon- Fri while the other sites are all open one day per week. Currently there is a requested \$2.50 donation for those age 60 and over and a cost of \$5.00 per meal for guests under the age of 60.

Home Delivered Meals: For individuals age 60 and over who meet certain criteria as established by the Older Americans Act and New York State Office for the Aging. This includes the inability to prepare one's own meals, inability to shop for groceries and/or inability to leave the home.

Emergency Food Supplies: Provided to seniors at risk to ensure that in an event of a disaster or wide-spread emergency, food would be available in the home or evacuation kit.

Nutrition Counseling and Education: A Registered Dietitian provides individual counseling as needed for clients involved in any of the meal programs. Educational topics are presented at the meal sites and in written format for the Home Delivered Meal clients. This is a subcontracted service.

Farmer's Market Coupons: Coupon booklets are distributed annually, usually in July, and are dispersed until booklets have run out. Each household must meet income guidelines and receive 1 booklet per household. Coupons can be used to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at the local Farmer's Markets.

**Senior Center Recreation and Education:** Programs include line dancing, special events, speakers on senior related topics, cards, and social outings. There is beautiful space available for various activities in the Human Services Complex, so it is a continued desire to find programming suitable to the 60+ population in the county.

**Transportation:** Provides rides, via an OFA van, to meal sites, social outings, local stores for shopping, stationary and mobile food pantries, pharmacy, bank, hair appointments and more. The van service, other than social outings, is intended for individuals who do not have transportation or who can no longer drive. Transportation services are also provided through RSVP volunteers who drive individuals to medical appointments, the pharmacy, therapy, and non-emergency hospital appointments. Wheelchair transportation can be accommodated via the public transit system. Seniors are encouraged to utilize the public transit system when and where able. OFA will provide bus passes for those who are unable to afford it or need some assistance. Seniors are referred to the Mobility Manager at Schuyler Arc for education and training on use of the public system. 1:1 and group trainings are available.

**Shopping Assistance:** Can provide an individual to shop on behalf of seniors who cannot do this for themselves. This is being done via recruitment of RSVP volunteers. An OFA Service Aide can also assist clients by escorting them through the grocery store and assisting with reaching, bending and pushing the grocery cart as needed. The Aide can carry the groceries into the home for the client as well.

**Phone Pal Program:** RSVP volunteers are linked with OFA clients who agree to and would benefit from telephone calls. The purpose is to promote socialization while simultaneously providing a check system to ensure the client's safety and well-being.

**Voter Registration:** Clients are offered the opportunity to register to vote while receiving other services through OFA. OFA will mail the registration form to the Department of Voter Registration. Clients may also request a mail-in voter registration form that they will handle independently.

**WRAP or Weatherization Referral and Packaging Program:** Services provided for HEAP eligible individuals for home repair including roof replacement, some window replacement, insulation, caulking, weather stripping, furnace repair and health and safety issues. Services include the use of a volunteer handyman to resolve simple home repairs related to energy needs, assisting with the application process for grant funding from Bishop Sheen, USDA or Community Progress and leveraging resources to pay for repair.

*The WRAP program is being eliminated at the end of the program year, March 31, 2012. WRAP dollars come directly from the HEAP program. Due to the reduction in HEAP funding, all HEAP dollars will be utilized for heating homes and none of the funding for repairs and weatherization measures.*

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