

Community Participation Team Forum Presentation Brief

Topic: Senior Services

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The Senior Services Coalition is a membership organization dedicated to identifying and addressing issues pertinent to seniors living in JCC, the City of Williamsburg and York County. This is accomplished through collaboration and partnering with our members, participating agencies and organizations, and the local community. We endeavor to improve services to seniors by identifying duplication and gaps in service and developing the means to address identified issues through the cooperative efforts of our members and partners. We seek to promote a healthier and safer community for seniors and to promote the independence of seniors by building, integrating, sustaining and supporting a comprehensive senior services system in the Historic Triangle. We do not provide direct client services, but facilitate planning, program development, and collaboration between senior service providers. The Peninsula Agency on Aging is fiscal sponsor

The Senior Services Coalition is a coalition of 39 member organizations plus additional partner organizations and individuals. Members include:

- not for profit and for profit organizations
- local governments
- individuals.

JCC is a member, Barbara Watson is the representative and our Board of Directors Vice Chairperson. Other members of the Board of Directors represent: Olde Towne Medical, Greater Williamsburg United Way, Eastern State Hospital, PAA, the Funders Forum, Sentara Williamsburg Regional Medical Center, Riverside Health System, AARP, Colonial Services Board, CEAGH, Historic Triangle Senior Center, York County, the City of Williamsburg and other local organizations.

Issues that face seniors and the community include:

Increase in senior population:

2000 US census bureau & VA Employment Commission predict a 94% increase in the over 60 population by 2020 with a 117% increase in the over 85 population for James City County.

Reason: Desirable location to retire, aging of local population

Result: Increasing demand upon community services

PAA identified five major challenges compiled from community assessments:

1. demographic trends
2. seniors increasing longevity and the impact on health and disabilities
3. lack of awareness of community services
4. increased incidence of dementia, memory loss and Alzheimer's Disease
5. challenges of care givers

Other concerns identified from community assessments

1. transportation
2. change in financial circumstances for seniors
3. significant growth in the overall population of Greater Williamsburg causing strain on resources

SCC conducted a review and identified three critical issues

Health Care

Emerging issues:

1. Older adult addiction
2. The Long Term Care Liaison Group identified need for additional geriatric psychiatric beds
3. Need for personal care providers

Housing

Issues:

1. Lack of affordable housing for senior in this area

Employment

2. Need a strategy to keep seniors living in their own homes

Employment

Emerging issues:

1. Seniors on a fixed income are negatively impacted by inflation and are increasingly seeking employment

2. Need job matching opportunities to maximize utilization of seniors' job skills with available employment

Past Accomplishments of the Senior Services Coalition

The Senior Services Coalition Transportation Committee planned and developed the Rides program, a non emergent medical transportation system. Since SSC does not provide direct services, this program was turned over to the Historic Triangle Senior Center for operation.

Future Goals of the Senior Services Coalition

1. Development and implementation of a Community Action Plan on Aging utilizing a grant received from the Williamsburg Community Health Foundation. Several community assessments have been completed, including a 2003 assessment by the Center for Excellence in Aging and Geriatric Health and a 2006 assessment by the Historic Triangle Funders Forum. While these assessments were valuable in identifying issues faced by seniors, no action plan was developed to address these issues. It is the purpose of the current grant to develop a plan and initiate implementation, using existing data and data obtained from community forums that will be conducted. This will be a collaborative effort between SSC, CEAGH, other community agencies and organizations and the community at large using the JABA 230/20 Plan as a best practice model.
2. Developing and initiating action plans to address the critical issues identified above.