
COUNTY OF DELAWARE SERVICES FOR THE AGING

Four-Year Plan for the Period July 2020 – June 2024



COUNTY OF DELAWARE SERVICES FOR THE AGING
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Executive Summary

The County of Delaware, Services for the Aging (COSA) is the designated Area Agency on Aging for Delaware County, Pennsylvania. Founded as part of the County government, COSA has dual accountability to both the County and the Pennsylvania Department of Aging (PDA). COSA plans, coordinates and advocates on behalf of seniors, especially for those who are in the greatest economic and social need.

As a part of our mandate from the PDA and the federal Older Americans Act, COSA is required to develop a comprehensive four-year plan. The plan outlines how COSA will fulfill our mission to the seniors of Delaware County from 2020 – 2024.

The American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (2010 – 2014) indicate minimal growth in the overall population of Delaware County, less than 1%. However, the 60 and over population continues to grow at a rate of over 16% with one in every five County residents over the age of 60. Over one-third of the County residents over the age of 65 live with at least one disability. The largest number of seniors still live in the eastern section of the County.

The average consumer in our OPTIONS Program is a white female age 79, with an average of 2.5 Activity of Daily Living (ADL) problems; the average senior center participant is a white female between the ages of 65 – 79 and single by never being married, divorced or widowed and living alone.

Social isolation has been identified as a key concern for seniors. This has been heightened by the current COVID-19 pandemic which has left many seniors isolated without access to friends, family, activities and their senior center.

A survey was created and linked on COSA's website. The survey was sent to all COSA staff, service providers, senior centers and COSA Advisory Council members. A survey was also given to senior games participants, volunteers and sponsors during the summer of 2019. Survey responses helped guide development of the plan's goals, objectives, strategies and performance measures.

Based on the survey results and the demographics of the senior population, COSA developed four overarching goals to focus our efforts for the next four years

- Strengthen and expand programs and services thru increased public/private partnerships and collaborations.
- Establish and enhance efforts to support healthy living, active engagement and a sense of community for all older residents.
- Promote person centered decisions and planning by connecting seniors and their families to information and resources.
- Support and expand a multi-disciplinary collaboration to protect seniors and prevent abuse.

Agency Overview

Organizational Structure

Founded in 1789, Delaware County is situated in the southeastern section of the Commonwealth, bordered by Philadelphia to the east, Montgomery County to the North, Chester County to the west and the state of Delaware to the south. There are 49 municipalities within the county ranging from urban settings bordering Philadelphia to more suburban growing settings in the western part of the county. The county is very densely populated with 3,037 people per square mile.

In the early 1970's, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania was mandated by the federal Older Americans Act to create and designate Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs). At the same time the Home Rule Charter of Delaware County was developed and included a Department of Senior Citizens. As a result, the County Office of Services for the Aging (COSA) was created in January 1975 as both a department of county government and as the state designated Area Agency on Aging. COSA continues dual accountability to both the County of Delaware and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania through the Pennsylvania Department of Aging (PDA).

On the local level, the director of COSA reports to the County Executive Director and is appointed by and ultimately responsible to the Delaware County Council. The County of Delaware contracts with the Pennsylvania Department of Aging (PDA). The PDA serves as the conduit and the administrative department for most federal and all state funds contracted to COSA. The County also contracts federally with the Corporation for National and Community Service for the Foster Grandparent Program.

County Council appoints members to the COSA Advisory Council. Currently there are fifteen members on the Advisory Council representing the interests and needs of seniors throughout the county. The majority of the Advisory Council members are over age 60. Through quarterly meetings, the Advisory Council reviews COSA's programs and policies, advocates for the needs of the seniors in the County, and conveys unmet needs. With guidance from the Advisory Council, the following mission and vision statements were developed.

COSA's Mission: Connecting and empowering the County's older residents through services that support their health and well-being.

Our Vision is that, All older residents in Delaware County live with quality of life and dignity at the highest levels of independence.

The mission and vision of the organization are carried out daily through contracts with various profit and non-profit agencies to provide home and community-based care, adult day care, senior centers, OPTIONS care management, volunteer recruitment, APPRISE Health Insurance Counseling, Legal Assistance, Crime Victim Services, Caregiver Support Program, personal care, congregate and home delivered meals and

mental health counseling. An agency staff member is designated as the contract liaison for each contract to advocate for the providers and mediate between provider and consumer needs. We also monitor each contractor at least once a year for contract compliance with the standards of operation.

For a detailed description of the organizational structure, identifying lines of authority please refer to the Organizational Chart at the end of this document, Attachment A

COSA's funds are provided through contracts between the County of Delaware and the Commonwealth. The Pennsylvania Department of Aging uses an allocation formula based on the number of low income, minority, rural and persons over age 75 in each county to determine funding percentages. This funding percentage then determines the amount of funds Delaware County receives from the PDA in our Aging Services Block Grant (ASBG). ASBG funds are generated by Pennsylvania Lottery proceeds and federal Older Americans Act funds. COSA receives additional funds from Aging Well PA LLC, the Corporation for National and Community Service, Delaware County, and fees and contributions.

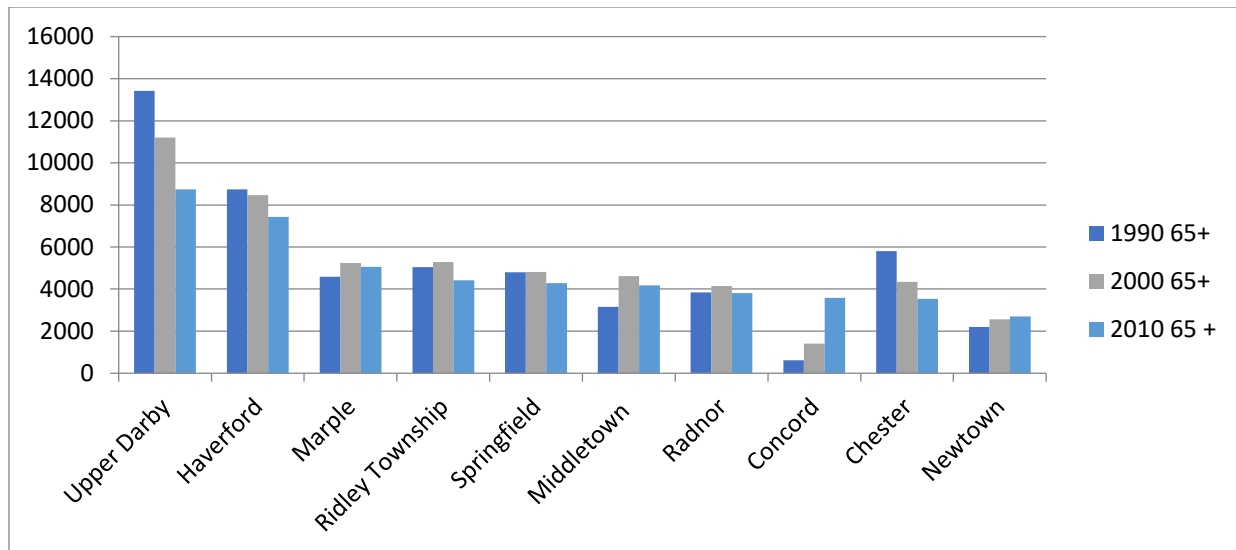
Demographics

Projections indicate that by 2030 there will be more than 70 million Americans over the age of 65, twice as many as there were in 2000. This is due in large part to the Baby Boomer population turning 60. The overall population growth rate in Pennsylvania is slow, less than 1% growth from 2010 – 2017. However, the 65 and older growth rate had an increase of 16.3% In Delaware County, 1 in 5 county residents are over the age of 60.

	1990	2000	2010	2014 Estimate
Total County Population	547,561	550,864	558,979	560,775
60+ Population	113,532	106,288	109,394	114,797
60+ pop % of total	20.70%	19.30%	19.60%	20.50%

Upper Darby Township continues to lead all municipalities with the most residents 65 and older. However, this number has dropped 35% in the past 20 years. In 1990 their 65+ population was 13,424 and today it is 8,739.

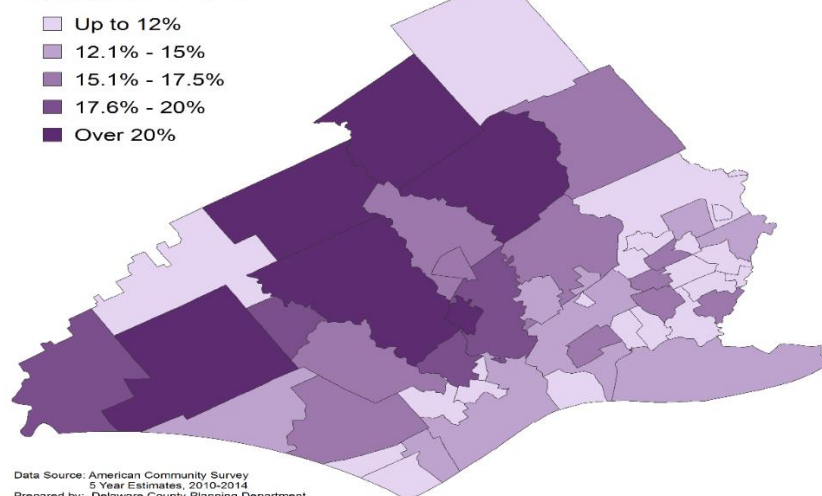
The table below illustrates the raw population numbers of those over age 65 by municipality.



As the population decreases around the Upper Darby and central parts of the county areas, the western part of the county continues to experience the most significant growth in older population. Much of the growth in the western section of the county is a result of the development of senior living and over 55 communities. The map below illustrates the percentage of those over age 65 by municipality.

It is important to note that as we are completing the 2020 Census, we have found that areas such as Upper Darby, Darby and Chester have a lower than average response rate. So, although the numbers indicate a decline in population in these areas, this may be due in some part to underreporting during the census. Our county, and most importantly our senior centers, have stepped up and organized to help remind and encourage seniors to respond to the census.

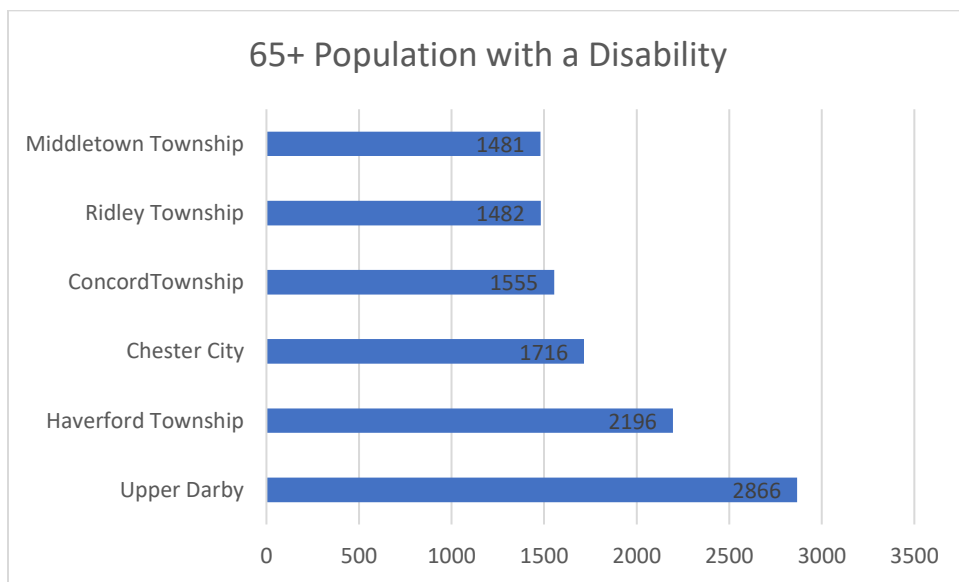
Population Over 65



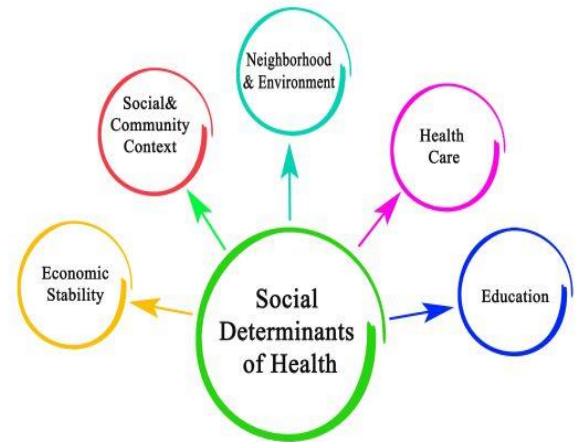
Our county remains largely white (69%) followed by African American (21%) and Asian (5.5%). However, as African American men and women age, they are more likely to live below poverty than their white counterparts. Over 10% of the County population is foreign-born. The current largest foreign-born populations in Delaware County come from India, Korea, Italy, United Kingdom, Vietnam, China and Ireland. There are also emerging African communities primarily in the eastern portion of the County. As an agency, we need to better understand the unique cultures and values associated with these groups and how seniors are viewed within the culture.

Assuring that seniors have access to information from foreign language groups is also important. Nearly 2% of the population in the County reports not being proficient in English.

One in seven Pennsylvanians lives with at least one disability. This increases by age. Of the over 65 population in the County, over 26,000 (33.3%) residents live with some kind of disability. The municipalities with the largest reported number of residents with at least one disability are reported below,



Social determinants of health are economic and social conditions that influence individual and group differences in health status. A PwC Research Institute Report from September 24, 2019, reported that 57% of those surveyed indicated that their doctor never discussed the important social factors affecting their health. Over 90% of physicians see the need to discuss social determinants of health, but 80% report not knowing how to connect seniors to community resources.



There is a need to invest earlier in social determinant strategies that help people with housing, exercise, mental health, and the ability to afford medications. Access to healthcare is vitally important for everyone but especially true for seniors. The adult diabetes rate for Delaware County is 8.5% and the adult obesity rate is 25.7%, both slightly lower than the state rates of 9.1% and 27.2% respectively. Programs that address social determinants of health include transportation, nutrition, caregiver support, disease prevention, health promotion, person-centered care management and senior centers.

Additionally, social isolation has been identified as a key concern for seniors. This has been heightened by the current COVID-19 pandemic which has left many seniors isolated without access to friends, family, activities and their senior center. One in four seniors lives alone. In addition to feeling isolated, this often has an effect on nutrition as many seniors don't eat as much when they are alone. Additional strains include reduced mobility, declining health and increased financial strain. It is also a financial strain on the healthcare system.

Women are living longer and have significantly less money saved and face ever increasing costs, especially for healthcare. They face greater economic insecurity and are 80% more likely to be impoverished past age 65 than men. Women of color face even deeper disparities as they age. The United States Department of Labor indicates that African American women and Latinas earn less from social security, have less assets and pensions and therefore need to rely more on their social security to live. In Delaware County older women outnumber older men 3:2. Additionally older women are more likely to live alone, 35% compared to 19% of men.

The National Institute on Aging estimates that one in every 10 adults over age 60 are abused, neglected or financially exploited. Older adults experience many types of abuse to include physical, emotional, sexual, financial, neglect and abandonment.

As the senior population continues to grow, so will the demand for financial, health and social supports. COSA will work to identify and bridge gaps in healthcare, behavioral health services and long-term services and supports.

The Journal of the American Geriatric Society has found that 6% of seniors living at home are malnourished, often these seniors simply forget to eat or do not eat because they are alone. Fourteen percent of the adult population report a lack of adequate access to food. By attending a senior center for any of the reasons listed above, a senior will get at least one nutritious meal during the day. Food is a basic need for everyone as is being around others and communicating.

COSA supports eight senior centers strategically located in neighborhoods of high percentages of seniors in low income areas. As seniors are migrating to other parts of the county, the current senior centers are offering expanded programs off-site to assure they are meeting the needs of seniors throughout the county. Senior centers programs offer health and wellness, lifelong learning, information and assistance, cognitive stimulation, volunteer opportunities and meals.

Housing remains a high priority of seniors wanting to remain living independently in the community. Seventy percent of the houses in Delaware County were built before 1950. In some of the lower income neighborhoods, these older homes have had significant deterioration. At the same time, there is an increased demand for age and dementia friendly communities to help keep seniors at home, where they want to be, longer. This is a collaborative effort with municipalities, healthcare providers, business and banking partners, legal and financial institutes, faith communities to assure communities are friendly and supportive places for seniors and especially those with memory loss and their caregivers.

More and more people are identifying as LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender). Our aging services could spend more time and effort in understanding the specific needs of this population group especially as they age. The CDC offers that people age 50 and older account for 45% of Americans living and diagnosed with HIV. Growing older with HIV presents potential health problems. Not only will this have an impact on long term services and supports in the community but will impact how the Ombudsman will advocate on behalf of residents of nursing homes. Recognizing the importance of understanding the needs of the LGBT community, the COSA staff have all participated in SAGE (Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders) training and COSA has become a SAGE certified agency. Staff will continue to be trained annually to better meet the needs of seniors who identify as LGBT.

Local, Political and Economic Factors

We are fortunate in Delaware County to have the support of the County Executive Director and the County Council members. COSA has been voted best senior service organization in Delaware County since 2013, extending our reputation as experts in the field of aging and as the agency to turn to for help with aging services in Delaware County.

December 31, 2019 marked the end of COSA being a service coordination agency for the Community Health Choices program. We have transitioned out of this service, moving staff into different job opportunities.

During 2019, the COSA Administrative Team worked with strategic planners to develop a comprehensive three-year strategic plan. This strategic plan has built a foundation for the organization to move forward in the on the following five strategic goal areas:

1. Consistently deliver services and programs that exemplify excellence in customer service.
2. Leverage funding for maximum mission impact and long-term financial sustainability.
3. Create a positive, engaged culture that empowers staff and volunteers to fulfill COSA's mission.
4. Build COSA's public recognition as the leader and resource in supporting the County's older and disabled residents.
5. Evolve COSA for long-term organizational resilience and success.

2020 brought a different type of planning as COVID-19 has had a significant impact on both COSA the agency as well as seniors in Delaware County. Within 2 weeks we were able to mobilize our staff and have everyone working remotely while still being able to provide on-going services and support to seniors during the pandemic. All face to face consumer contact stopped, however, we continued to conduct assessments, care management, information and referral and protective services investigations telephonically.

Our senior centers have offered grab and go meals daily for those seniors able to get to the center to pick them up. For those unable to get to the centers, meals have been delivered. Additionally, all home delivered meal recipients have received their meals as scheduled. Senior center staff have become creative in providing virtual programming and connecting with seniors through Zoom, Facebook Live and telephone calls. We have identified those most in need and socially isolated and offered additional contact support.

COSA partnered with our 203 shared-ride provider, Community Transit to provide grocery delivery for those seniors feeling the need to shelter at home and not venture out. This creative solution has served nearly 200 seniors who would have either gone without groceries or risked going to the grocery store during the pandemic.

Most of all, our Ombudsman team has worked non-stop with families and residents in long term care facilities. The nursing home population in Delaware County accounts for nearly 70% of the COVID-19 deaths in our county. We have been working to assure residents' rights are not being violated at a time when visitors are not being permitted into the facilities. We have also worked with the Chester County Health Department (overseeing Delaware County during the pandemic) to reach out to the facilities to let them know available resources such as PPE and supports for their staff.

Although the current pandemic has created a change in our normal routine, any type of change also brings opportunity. We have had the opportunity for staff to increase their use of technology. We also have the opportunity to shift the culture of the organization. One major piece of this culture shift is to begin using the Six Sigma DMAIC way of looking at processes and data. DMAIC stands for Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve and Control and allows for constant improvement. A shift can also help COSA look at data and use data for data informed decisions about our programs and services. Moving forward, the use of technology and data will be at the forefront of what we do.

Needs Assessment

To gather public input for this four-year plan, a survey was created and shared with over 500 senior games participants, volunteers and sponsors in the summer of 2019. Over 80% of the respondents indicated they are aware of COSA and our services. However, only 68% reported that they would likely contact COSA if needed. When asking this group to identify their needs or those of seniors in the next 5 years, the top four answers were:

- 64% Health care related needs
- 53% Information on aging services and programs
- 47% Senior Centers
- 44% In-Home care and support

A second survey was created and linked on the COSA website in March 2020. Due to the pandemic, we did not receive many responses. However, from the responses we did receive, friends, neighbors, social service agencies and senior centers are the way most seniors hear about our services. And most respondents are familiar with all of our programs and services. The programs most familiar to everyone however are senior centers and home delivered meals.

The average consumer in our OPTIONS Program is a white female age 79, with an average of 2.5 Activity of Daily Living (ADL) problems.

The average senior center participant is a white female between the ages of 65 – 79 and single by never being married, divorced or widowed. Mostly living alone. However, African American women also make up a large portion of our senior center participants. The numbers of men attending senior centers are also growing.

Resource Development

COSA has a long history of collaborating with community agencies to pool ideas, services and resources. Heading into this next four-year cycle, COSA will continue to take the lead in collaborating with community organizations who work with now or will work with seniors in any capacity.

One way this can be accomplished includes expanded collaborations with the hospital systems operating the hospitals within our boundaries. We are fortunate to have six hospitals operating within our county boundaries part of Crozer Keystone Health System, Mercy Health System and Main Line Health System.

Our relationship with the Delaware County District Attorney's office is strengthening through our work with their Senior Exploitation Unit and their Senior Victims Services program by sharing resources, information and programs.

The Delaware County LINK partners with 27 various community agencies to share information, resources and training.

We have several colleges and universities within the County. Our plan includes reaching out to these schools of higher education to leverage their skills and that of their students to improve our programs and services. Additionally, staff from COSA serve as mentors to students, particularly in the social work programs of these schools. Student internships are not only essential to the student's learning but also provide additional support to COSA in areas such as research, planning and direct service.

For the past 17 years we have celebrated Older Americans Month with several activities. In recent years we have combined our Older Americans Month and Senior Games sponsor opportunities to attract more sponsors for these events. Revenue generated from these events in turn is used to support seniors with utility assistance, hoarding clean-outs and additional supports to the senior centers. We look forward to continued growth and partnerships with community agencies while supporting the seniors in Delaware County.

COSA's ability to respond to community needs has grown increasingly important especially during times of crisis. We have experienced a loss of staff and revenue streams with Community Health Choices/Waiver and Nursing Home Transition no longer a service we provide and the possibility of the loss of assessment/enrollment has made it essential that COSA explore opportunities for resource diversification. The dependence solely on federal and state funding limits our ability to continue meeting community need while the seniors and their needs continues to grow. One area of exploration will be the development of a non-profit arm of COSA. This will offer COSA the opportunity to pursue grant opportunities often limited to non-profit organizations as well as grow sponsorships and business opportunities not presently met by other aging service providers.

Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Goal #1 Strengthen and expand programs and services thru increased public/private partnerships and collaborations.

Objective – Broaden collaborative efforts to assure programs and services are reaching a diverse spectrum of the county's seniors including those who are socially isolated, non/limited-English speaking, immigrants and the LGBT community.

Strategies	Performance Measures	Target Date
Outreach to the LGBT community to recruit providers who understand the unique needs and can provide training when working with this population.	Increase the number of SAGE trained community providers and partners.	2021 and continue
Create a task force of senior center representatives focused on combatting social isolation using increased technology, marketing and outreach.	Increase senior connectedness through the use of technology, number of new technology-based connections (such as cell phone, tablet, computer)	Fall 2020
Work with local community leaders to identify neighborhoods where there are high concentrations of immigrants and non/limited-English speaking residents. Outreach to the established network of immigrant service providers serving the non-English speaking and immigrant populations.	Increase participation in COSA programs and services from immigrant and non-English speaking seniors	Summer 2021

Objective – Identify and Develop community partnerships with other organizations and businesses pooling resources and information to create new programs and opportunities.

Strategies	Performance Measures	Target Date
Identify other county departments and community-based organizations interested in Shared Housing and developing a business case for implementing a shared housing program.	Determine feasibility to develop a shared housing program based on feedback from group based on funding and liability.	Summer 2023
Identify internal and external stakeholders to complete an analysis of COSA program areas to identify potential community collaborations, partnerships and enhancements for program expansion.	Establish regular and on-going stakeholder meetings at least quarterly. New collaborations/partnerships that are identified.	Winter 2022
Establish working relationships with local colleges/universities to work with COSA to develop ongoing program outcome and evaluation tools.	Develop and test program evaluation tools. New relationships with colleges/schools are developed.	Winter 2022

Objective – Build a business case to launch a non-profit arm addressing unmet needs of seniors in the County.

Strategies	Performance Measures	Target Date
Write and develop the business strategy for a non-profit, and presenting to the County Executive Director, County Council and COSA Advisory Council.	Plan is presented to all parties.	January 2021
Assume sole ownership of a non-profit currently owned by Bucks, Chester, Delaware and Montgomery County AAA's	Sole ownership by COSA, if approved in steps above.	July 2021

Identify needed business acumen skills for senior COSA staff	Staff trained on business skills	Winter 2021 and going forward
Establish COSA non-profit arm	Non-profit is launched	Winter 2022

Goal #2 Establish and enhance efforts to support healthy living, active engagement and a sense of community for all older residents.

Objective – Increase social connectedness, nutritional wellbeing and health and wellness opportunities.

Strategies	Performance Measures	Target Date
Increase seniors' connection to and understanding of technology	Establish a lending library of technology devices for seniors.	Winter 2021
Develop non-traditional activities, outside of senior centers in virtual or other settings.	Work with the community partners such as the Delaware County Library System to expand access to resources and programming increasing access to and use of virtual programs.	Summer 2021
Develop and market senior friendly nutritional information.	Increase in participation rates in senior center meals and nutritional programs.	Spring 2021

Objective – Develop Age and Dementia Friendly Communities

Strategies	Performance Measures	Target Date
Collaborate with the Delaware County Planning Department to identify and develop a work group comprised of aging and municipal stakeholders.	Work group members are identified and meetings are convened.	December 2021
Identify, create and launch the first “named” age friendly community in Delaware County.	Age/Dementia Friendly community is developed.	July 2023

Objective – Promote active engagement for seniors through expanded evidenced based health and wellness initiatives

Strategies	Performance Measures	Target Date
Promote evidence-based programming to the private pay market such as HMOs and Medicare Advantage plans.	Revenue generating programs are established and launched.	September 2021
Connect with retiree groups in the County to market programs.	Increased participation to a diversified group of seniors in the evidenced based health and wellness programs offered.	September 2021

Goal #3 Promote person centered decisions and planning by connecting seniors and their families to information and resources.

Objective – Increase outreach to underserved communities assuring all seniors have access to services and resources.

Strategies	Performance Measures	Target Date
Implement consistent marketing materials and information about COSA, translating information as needed to reach non-English speaking communities.	Most utilized COSA brochures/information will be available in the top 3 non-English languages used by seniors in the County.	Spring 2021
Information and Referral staff become AIRS (Alliance of Information and Referral Systems) certified; COSA becomes an agency designated as AIRS Certified.	COSA is an AIRS certified agency.	December 2023
Increase COSA representation at non-traditional local community events including medical practices, parades and holiday celebrations.	Increased in awareness of COSA. Calls into Information and Referral increase.	Winter 2021 and going forward

Objective – Develop marketing materials that are inclusive and available thru a variety of mediums.

Strategies	Performance Measures	Target Date
Expand Aging/Disabled stakeholder feedback on all COSA committees helping to inform policy and decisions.	Increased stakeholder representation on COSA committees.	Spring 2021
Utilize more social media such as Facebook and Twitter to share senior resource information.	Increased “hits” on our web page and developed social media.	2021 and moving forward
Assure advertising in all mediums occur regularly throughout the year.	Establish an annual marketing budget.	Fiscal year 2021-2022.

Objective – Ensure all staff are knowledgeable of person-centered care decision making and planning.

Strategies	Performance Measures	Target Date
Train staff on person centered care decision making and planning philosophy.	Staff will receive training annually	Training developed by Spring 2021 and then provided annually.
Develop person centered training to expand to all COSA service providers	Providers will be offered training annually	Beginning 2021 and going forward

Goal #4 Support and expand a multi-disciplinary collaboration to protect seniors and prevent abuse.

Objective – Expand outreach, collaborations and trainings to increase community awareness of elder abuse and prevention by Improving collaborative efforts amongst complimentary service organizations coordinating care.

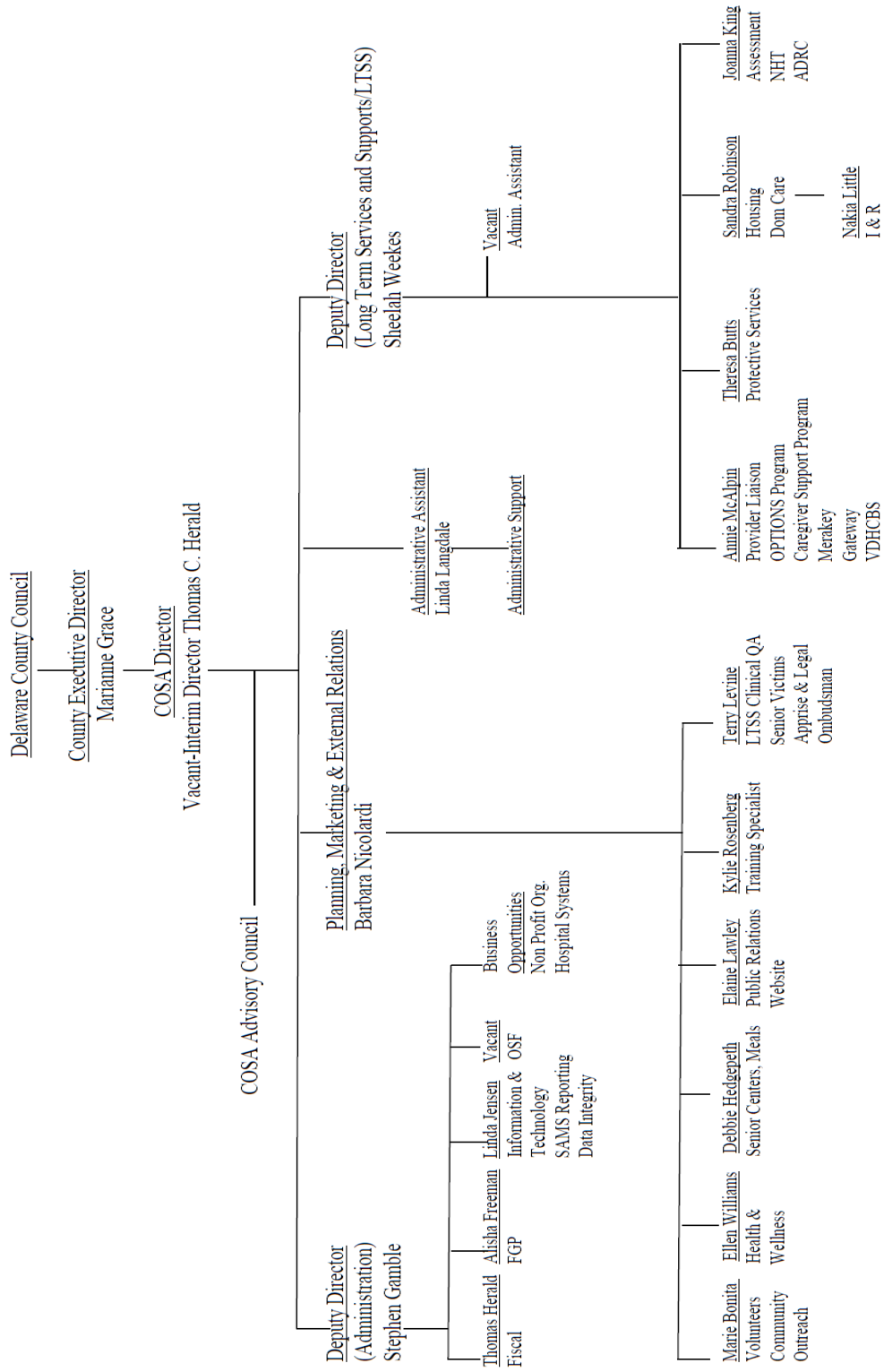
Strategies	Performance Measures	Target Date
Create and present training on reporting abuse, neglect, and exploitation to avoid delays, under reporting, inappropriate reporting by NHs, personal care homes, and assisted living facilities. Training done jointly with Information and Referral, Protective Services and Ombudsman.	Increased knowledge in the community and in congregate care settings about appropriate protective services and ombudsman referrals. Present the training annually.	Begin presentations Spring 2021 and ongoing after that.
Provide regular training to educate seniors and their caregivers about available resources and methods to prevent abuse, exploitation and neglect.	Increased knowledge among seniors about protective services and how to report any issues.	Begin presentations summer 2021 and ongoing after that.
Assure Protective Service representation on Delaware County's Elder Abuse Task Force.	Protective Services Unit Director will attend quarterly Elder Abuse Task Force Meetings	Fall 2020 and ongoing

Objective – Enhance capacity for identifying and investigating financial exploitation.

Strategies	Performance Measures	Target Date
Outreach to area banking institutions to provide training to identify and report when they suspect financial exploitation.	Increase in reports of need from financial institutions of suspected financial exploitation to the senior population.	Fall 2021

Attachment A

Delaware County Office of Services for the Aging Organizational Chart



5/2020