

SERVICES PROVIDED BY THE AREA AGENCY ON AGING

Snohomish County Long Term Care & Aging funds many services that help people remain self-reliant in our community. These services help prevent premature institutionalization for older adults and adults with disabilities.

Adult Day Health

Adult Day Health provides health, social and support services to frail elders and disabled adults who have physical, mental or social problems associated with arthritis, diabetes, stroke, isolation, confusion, developmental disabilities, Alzheimer's disease and other conditions. The program offers licensed rehabilitative and skilled nursing services which partner with families and other in-home caregivers, helping avoid the premature or unnecessary placement of a family member into a nursing home.

Clinical staff, case managers and a social worker offer a coordinated, team approach. Registered nurses provide health monitoring, treatment and education. An occupational therapist implements rehab therapies to improve strength, balance and coordination. Recreational activities, discussion groups, snacks and a hot meal are part of the program. The program provides individual attention, therapeutic activities, modified exercises, crafts, health programs, short outings, and family support.

There are two Adult Day Health Programs in Snohomish County serving residents throughout the county, and providing service five-days per week.

Adult Day Service for Mentally Ill

Adult Day Service for the Mentally Ill is a special program connected to the Adult Day Health Program in Snohomish County. It provides day care, including individual and group treatments, to chronically mentally ill seniors. Services are targeted to persons who: 1) are under the care of a psychiatrist; 2) need help with activities of daily living due to cognitive or behavioral impairments; 3) can spend time safely in a structured group environment; 4) are at risk of institutionalization; and 5) would benefit from a program of therapeutic activities.

Case Management

The Case Management Program provides comprehensive assessments and service planning for frail older persons and adults with disabilities. Once services are in place, case managers provide monitoring and follow-up to ensure the clients' needs are met. The Snohomish County AAA Case Management Program serves approximately 9.5 percent of Washington State's population of older adults and individuals with disabilities who are eligible for Medicaid funded, community-based, long term care services. Most services are provided through COPES (Community Options Program Entry Service) or Medicaid Personal Care programs. In addition, the program serves some non-Medicaid eligible seniors who have multiple unmet needs and are unable to get the services they need without assistance, and lack friends or informal supports who are able and willing

to assist them to obtain the needed services. Staff are bilingual in six languages; interpreter services are also provided.

Client Specific Funds

Client Specific Funds are available to some older adults to help them stay in their own homes, increase safety and independence in their own homes, and enhance their quality of life. Applicants must be 60 years of age or older and reside in Snohomish County. Clients must have no other funding sources available to meet their need(s). Requests for assistance are for a limited duration and/or with a flexible lid on the amount of funds granted. A panel of representatives from county programs and community agencies review applications and recommend allocations.

Congregate Nutrition

The Congregate Nutrition Program is a dining program designed to help meet the nutritional needs of older persons who are mobile and may not eat adequately at home. It provides meals that supply one-third of the daily recommended dietary allowances. Other nutritional services include nutrition education as well as a setting for socialization. Meals are served in a group setting at twelve locations around the county including Arlington, Darrington, Edmonds, Everett (2 locations), Granite Falls, Lynnwood, Monroe, Mountlake Terrace, Snohomish and Stanwood. There are seven ethnic meal sites: Filipino, Korean, Chinese, Southeast Asian, Hispanic, Slavic and Tulalip Tribes. Any person 60 years of age and older and his or her spouse are eligible to eat at no fee. While donations are encouraged, no person is denied a meal because of inability or unwillingness to pay.

COPES – See Medicaid Personal Care & COPES Services

Ethnic Meal Site Transportation

The Ethnic Meal Site Transportation Program makes it possible for elders without transportation options to participate at the ethnic meal sites by providing door-to-door services. Services are targeted to those who are low-income, belong to an ethnic minority group, and have limited (or no) English-speaking skills. Currently, the populations being served are Chinese, Korean, Southeast Asian, Filipino, and Hispanic seniors. The Slavic meal site operates at a public housing complex with a high concentration of Slavic seniors. The Tulalip Tribes Seniors Program runs its own transportation service.

The meal sites provide nutritious, culturally appropriate meals. They offer older adults the opportunity for positive social interaction and an informal support system with those who speak their language of origin. At these sites, bi-lingual social workers connect participants with services, transportation, housing and financial counseling.

Family Caregiver Programs

The Family Caregiver Program develops and delivers supportive services that assist caregivers to embrace and continue their caregiver roles and responsibilities with less stress and greater confidence. The program ensures that families and other informal

caregivers can receive information, training, support, personal/family counseling, and respite assistance.

Snohomish County's Family Caregiver Program brings together many service providers and coordinates how they assist families in our community. There is a dedicated family caregiver phone line, a website – www.snocare.org, a Family Caregiver Kit (new edition scheduled for 2011), educational events, lending library, and an internet-based client file management system. Direct services include assistance accessing services provided by professionals and trained volunteers. Program core services are structured for both group and individualized interventions. Group activities include support groups and training; counseling and consultation are the two individualized support activities.

A new, dynamic service was introduced statewide in July of 2009. In 2007, the legislature revised RCW 74.41.050 mandating development of an evidence-based caregiver assessment and referral tool that could be used to better tailor support and services to the unique needs of unpaid caregivers. There was also legislative intent to have greater consistency in the policies and services offered through the statewide Family Caregiver Support Program offices.

The Tailored Caregiver Assessment and Referral (TCARE®) model was found to best match the legislative mandate and intent. TCARE® combines a screening and assessment tool that identifies the sources and level of a caregiver's stress with one-on-one consultation and support with a specially trained TCARE® caregiver specialist. Using the screening and assessment's results, caregiver specialists help caregivers develop goals and strategies to reduce stress. Caregiver specialists also help caregivers navigate through the local service system and identify available resources that best meet the caregiver's unique needs.

A full complement of services is delivered through six local information and resource centers with two of them located in rural Snohomish County. Communities of faith, businesses, service organizations, hospitals/rehabilitation centers, retirement facilities, Adult Day Health / Day Care Programs, Home Health agencies and other organizations are also valuable partners serving as distribution points for information and promoting access via program sponsorships.

Family Caregiver Program – Kinship Caregivers

The Kinship Caregiver Support Program is designed to help kin-parents to sustain their caregiver role and gain confidence in their parenting efforts. Central to the success of the program are key deliverables shared by all of the service providers including a local kinship services guide published in the spring of 2011 entitled, *“Grandparents Raising Grandchildren: Resources in Snohomish County / A Companion to the Washington State's A Resource Guide for Relatives a Parents,”* educational events, and an internet-based client file management system. Support groups and Kinship Family Retreats are funded through the Older Americans Act. The State-funded Kinship Caregiver Support Program (KCSP) provides financial relief to kin-families by purchasing needed goods and services. The core value guiding the program is that healthy families are connected to the community. With this in mind, the program has recruited community advocates to

provide “front line” support. Key partners include the public school counselors, Family Support Centers, ECEAP counselors, Family Advocates, Veterans Services advocates, and other community organizations.

Geriatric Depression Screening

The Geriatric Depression Screening Program provides: outreach and early intervention for isolated individuals who may be suffering from depression; education relating to the identification and prevention of depression; health screening for depression; and advocacy to assist depressed individuals to communicate effectively with physicians; and referral to community resources as indicated. Additionally, the program provides the following services to older persons whose score on the Geriatric Depression Screen indicates moderate to severe depression: short-term individual mental health counseling; grief counseling; family mediation to improve support available to client; and advocacy with health care providers regarding medication, treatment and management issues. An assessment for potential medication problems and training to prevent incorrect medication use and adverse reactions is also provided. Communications training for family caregivers to reduce stress and improve service delivery is an additional component of the program.

Information & Assistance

The Senior Information & Assistance (I & A) Program serves as the publicly recognized access point for older persons into the Aging Network Services. The I & A Program provides comprehensive information on services, programs and benefits to enable older adults or their representatives to understand their options and make informed decisions about their needs or problems. I&A specialist staff also provide follow up and advocacy on the older adult’s behalf to ensure they receive available benefits and services. The program employs staff fluent in Spanish, Korean, Mandarin, Cantonese, Ukrainian, Russian, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.

Information & Assistance is also the entry point for the Case Management Program. I & A is responsible for both publicizing case management to the general community and providing intake and screening of individuals to determine whether they meet the eligibility criteria for these services. I & A also provides information regarding state-funded long-term care services to older adults and their families, and is able to assist with initial screening and referrals to DSHS Home & Community Services.

Information & Assistance maintains a computerized database available at the central I & A office and is available to the public on-line through the Senior Services website, www.sssc.org. The Resource Directory has detailed descriptions of over 1,100 services available to older adults and their family caregivers. This depth of information allows social workers and other professionals to provide comprehensive assistance to older persons relative to the complex eligibility and financial requirements that may make access to assistance difficult. I & A coordinates and collaborates with North Sound 211 services in Snohomish County.

In-Home Nutrition

The In-Home Nutrition Program, also known as Meals on Wheels, provides nutritious meals and other nutrition services to older persons who are homebound by reason of illness, an incapacitating disability, or are otherwise isolated and unable to prepare a nutritious meal on their own. Participants choose weekly deliveries of frozen meals from a menu of 35 meals. Meals must provide one-third of the daily Dietary Reference Intakes. No fee is charged; donations are encouraged. No person is denied a meal because of inability or unwillingness to pay.

Legal Services

This program assists older persons in advocating for their rights, benefits and entitlements by providing legal counseling, advocacy and/or representation for limited types of legal problems. Priority is given to legal problems involving: financial assistance (such as Supplemental Security Income or food stamps); health care (including Medicare, Medicaid, nursing home and community-based long term care issues); housing (especially home foreclosures and evictions from subsidized housing); and protective services (especially services to stop or prevent ongoing abuse or exploitation). An additional emphasis is given to provide legal services and to assist other service providers to serve older persons with behavioral or mental health problems that may result in premature institutionalization or that may endanger the client's own health and safety. Educational presentations are also given to service providers and the community at-large. The County is served through an office in Everett.

Long Term Care Ombudsman

The Long Term Care Ombudsman Program's mission is to improve the quality of life for people who live in nursing homes, boarding homes (assisted living facilities), and adult family homes. Certified volunteer ombudsmen work with long-term care residents as advocates to obtain answers to their questions, responses to their concerns, and to inform them of their rights. Volunteer ombudsmen receive four days of free training toward becoming certified ombudsmen and are asked to volunteer four hours a week.

Medicaid Personal Care & COPES Services

The Medicaid Personal Care & COPES Programs provide assistance with daily living tasks such as bathing, eating, dressing, and shopping. The initial assessment for financial and functional eligibility is conducted by the State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). After the initial eligibility determination by DSHS, on-going case management is provided by the Snohomish County Case Management Program. Some staff members are registered nurses who provide consultation and case management services for clients with more intense medical issues. Personal care services are provided by trained agency home care workers and individual providers. An array of additional services is also available through the COPES Program including personal emergency response systems, home delivered meals, environmental modifications and adult day care.

Medication Management

Medication Management through the Geriatric Depression Screening Program can assist vulnerable older adults in resolving medication issues. This includes advocacy with health care providers regarding medication treatment and management issues, an assessment for potential medication problems, and training to prevent incorrect medication use and adverse reactions.

Multipurpose Senior Centers

Multipurpose Senior Centers are community facilities where Snohomish County older adults can meet, receive services, participate in activities that enhance their dignity, and help them remain active in the community. Senior Centers provide an array of social, health, nutrition, training, education and personal growth services. The centers also promote community awareness of the needs of older people and support the development of community resources serving older individuals. Senior Centers are serving an increasingly frail population and are often providing services for individuals who might otherwise fall through the cracks. They provide social and health services which enable seniors to remain active and live independently. They provide a valuable resource for the individual and a critical service to the community. There are multipurpose Senior Centers in Stanwood, Arlington/Smokey Point, Everett, Monroe, Bothell and Edmonds. Smaller senior centers are located in Darrington, Granite Falls, Lake Stevens, Lynnwood, Marysville, Mill Creek, Mountlake Terrace, Mukilteo, Snohomish and the Tulalip Tribes reservation. Senior Services of Snohomish County also operates a Multicultural Senior Center in Everett that serves seniors from diverse ethnicities.

The Senior Peer Counseling Program

The Senior Peer Counseling Program offers confidential, no-cost counseling services to seniors age 60 and older, who are experiencing problems that may be associated with aging. Trained volunteer peer counselors meet with individuals in their own homes on a weekly basis to offer support for issues such as caregiver stress, loss of a loved one, coping with chronic pain or illness, managing depression, or other life changes or losses - all of which may jeopardize the person's ability to live independently. Core activities of the program include establishing a supportive relationship; assisting in clarification of issues and problem-solving; reaffirming dignity and self-esteem; decreasing social isolation; establishing new networks of supportive friendships; coordinating other services as needed; and assisting in seeking help from a geriatric mental health specialist when issues become too complex for the skill level of the paraprofessional volunteer.

People who want to receive peer counseling may reside in assisted living facilities or adult family homes. The Senior Peer Counseling Program trains and supervises volunteers over the age of 55 to provide this individual support to residents of Snohomish County.

Respite Care

Being a caregiver is a full-time job. It requires hard work, patience and good health. The Snohomish County Respite Care Program provides a much needed break to unpaid caregivers who are providing continuous care to an adult family member or friend with a disability, 18 years or older, who resides in the County. Respite care is arranged through a case manager and may include supervision, companionship, personal care and medically-related tasks. Different types of Respite Care services are available depending on the needs of the caregiver and the individual with a disability. Services may be provided at home, out-of-home at Adult Day Health Programs, or overnight in a residential care facility. Workers are trained to provide companionship, supervision, and assistance with daily activities so the caregivers can rest, run errands, or go to medical appointments. Like any job, caregiving requires time for rest and relaxation.

A caregiver's access to Respite Care is now directly linked to the TCARE® process described briefly in the Family Caregiver Program section. Access to this service includes meeting Respite eligibility requirements that include sufficient stress burden scores on the TCARE screen that would warrant a full TCARE® Assessment.

Retired Senior Volunteer Program

The Retired Senior Volunteer Program provides meaningful opportunities for volunteers age 55 and over to serve on a regular basis at over 90 public or private non-profit organizations.

Senior Drug Education

The Senior Drug Education program is provided to non-institutionalized, Snohomish County residents. The program informs and trains people 65 years of age and older in the safe and appropriate use of prescription and nonprescription medications. Classes are offered in a group setting and informational materials are given to participants.

Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Program

The Senior Farmer' Market Nutrition Program provides fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables to low income seniors to improve nutritional status; support local farmers; and expand farmers markets, roadside stands, and community supported agriculture. A voucher for fresh produce is given to persons 60 years or older who live in Snohomish County and fall within 185% of the Federal Poverty Level. Vouchers may be used at approved Farmers' Markets or roadside stands. Services are intended to maintain or improve the health status of people using the vouchers, support their independence, and prevent premature institutionalization.

Stabilized Housing for Vulnerable Seniors

The Stabilized Housing Program promotes stable housing and independent living for vulnerable seniors with mental health or behavioral issues. The program's goal is to prevent premature or inappropriate institutionalization of frail older adults by providing housing assistance and supportive services that help seniors maintain an independent lifestyle.

The program works to stabilize housing for vulnerable seniors by:

- 1) Collaborating with the mental health service network;
- 2) Adding mental health professionals to staff;
- 3) Increasing housing opportunities through the provision of 40 Section 8 vouchers; and
- 4) Strengthening partnerships with other agencies that provide housing-related services.

Services are available to Snohomish County residents 60 years of age and older who meet specific vulnerability criteria.

Volunteer Transportation

The Volunteer Transportation program provides volunteer drivers who transport older persons to medical and health care services, meal programs, senior centers, shopping assistance and recreational activities within and outside Snohomish County. Services are accessible to older persons who have no other means of transportation. Appropriate personal assistance for those with limited physical mobility is also provided.

To learn more about the services described above, please contact:

Senior Information & Assistance
(425) 513-1900 or 1-800-422-2024
8221 - 44th Avenue W., Suite E
Mukilteo, WA 98275
www.sssc.org