

## **Post-Event Summary Report**

**Name of Event:** What Policies Do We Need to Be Able to Stay in Our Own Homes as We Age?

**Date of Event:** Monday, April 11, 2004

**Location of Event:** University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, Little Rock, AR

**Number of Persons Attending:** 40

**Sponsoring Organization:** Arkansas Healthy Aging Coalition

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**Priority Issue #1:**

## Health and Long Term Living

- ❑ Access to Affordable, High Quality Services
- ❑ Healthy Lifestyles, Prevention and Disease Management
- ❑ Use of Information to Improve the Delivery, Administration, and Quality of Physical and Mental Health Care Services
- ❑ Affordable, Defined Health Benefits through Medicare, Medicaid, and other Federal and State Health Care Programs

**Barriers:** (list any barriers that may exist related to this issue)

- ❑ Funding provided for innovative and new programs, but not to help states with the start-up or integration costs to implement proven model programs
- ❑ Reimbursement systems that do not compensate for primary health prevention
- ❑ Decreasing numbers of medical students entering primary care

**Proposed Solutions:** (list suggested solutions to the challenges described above)

- ❑ Authorization of presumptive eligibility for Medicaid home and community services to expedite access to those services for a person who appears to be eligible, pending final eligibility determination
- ❑ Change the Medicare reimbursement system so that primary care physicians and other health care providers can get reimbursed for patient counseling and health education about health prevention (including physical activity, nutrition, smoking cessation, etc.) issues
- ❑ Increase Medicaid reimbursement rates for primary care physicians to assist them in care coordination for their chronically ill older adult patients
- ❑ Change federal Medicaid rules to make it a standard procedure that requires persons who need long term care to receive an un-biased, informed choice of services for long term care
- ❑ Integration of long-term care and health care to provide more effective and efficient care by:
  - use of model programs (i.e. PACE, SOURCE, etc.)
  - making it easier for states to integrate Medicare and Medicaid funding and services for dual eligibles

**Priority Issue #2:**

Marketplace

- ❑ Housing – Planning and developing the built environment
- ❑ Transportation

**Barriers:** (list any barriers that may exist related to this issue)

- ❑ Little funding or other incentives for transportation improvements related to non-automobile or non-private vehicle transportation systems
- ❑ Communities built for automobiles and not for pedestrians or bicycles
- ❑ Rural communities and small towns with zoning that prohibits placement of businesses within walking proximity to residences
- ❑ Inter-community transportation needed to access services

**Proposed Solutions:** (list suggested solutions to the challenges described above)

- ❑ A policy that encourages, or provides incentive, for developers or cities that develop mixed land use communities
- ❑ Provide incentives or subsidies for businesses that provide funding for public transportation in their community and/ or provide mass transportation subsidies to their employees (i.e. bus passes, etc.)
- ❑ Federal housing programs, such as the low income housing tax credit program, need to be revised to make financing more available for assisted living
- ❑ Preserve the flexibility of state and local governments to spend federal transportation funds on improving public transportation, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and other alternatives that will support the mobility needs of older adults
- ❑ Continue to fund the “Transportation Enhancements” program, which is the only federal source of support for pedestrian and bicycle safety projects and facilities
- ❑ Expand the Good Samaritan Law to provide protection from lawsuits for volunteers who provide transportation to older adults when public transportation is not an option
- ❑ Increase the investment in public transportation systems to expand and improve services to meet the needs of older adults in rural areas

### **Priority Issue #3:**

#### **Our Community**

- ❑ Coordinated social and health services that give the elderly the maximum opportunity to age in place
  - Best practices
  - Availability of community referral resources
- ❑ Promote support for both family and non-family caregivers that enables adequate quality and supply of services

#### **Barriers:** (list any barriers that may exist related to this issue)

- ❑ Restrictions, rules and processes that make it difficult to help community-based services make the connection between community programs and businesses, health care and others (i.e. nutrition requirements, use of government funded older workers, funding requirements, etc.)
- ❑ Administrative hurdles
- ❑ Current laws or policies
- ❑ Medicaid reimbursement and coverage limitations

#### **Proposed Solutions:** (list suggested solutions to the challenges described above)

- ❑ Medicaid should cover all equipment needed to perform activities of daily living (ADLs), which include basic tasks such as eating, dressing, bathing, transferring in and out of bed, and toileting
- ❑ Medicaid should cover equipment or services needed to perform the more crucial instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs), such as light housekeeping
- ❑ Home and community service options should include non-medical residential options, such as assisted living and adult foster care
- ❑ Federal housing programs, such as the low income housing tax credit program, need to be revised to make financing more available for assisted living
- ❑ Change federal Medicaid rules to make it a standard procedure that requires persons who need long term care to receive an un-biased, informed choice of services for long term care
- ❑ Make use of best practices, such as Meals-on-Wheels, SOURCE, PACE, etc.
- ❑ Institute a state-based resource system that provides people with enough information to make informed choices about the options available to them (i.e. options available after leaving the hospital besides long-term care, etc.)
- ❑ Expand current policies to provide assistance to family caregivers in terms of training, respite, information, referral, etc.
- ❑ Create an environment that supports and assists community-based services in partnering with the for-profit world to the benefit of both and those we serve, by loosening up restrictions, rules, and processes tied to funding, nutrition requirements and use of government funded older worker programs

**Priority Issue #4:**

The Workplace of the Future

- ❑ Opportunities for Older Workers

**Barriers:** (list any barriers that may exist related to this issue)

- ❑ Age-based discrimination against older workers and retirees
- ❑ Current policies or laws

**Proposed Solutions:** (list suggested solutions to the challenges described above)

- ❑ Provide subsidies or incentives for employers to provide flex-time, shared-time positions or phased retirement to retain older workers
- ❑ Older Adult Employment Act or Initiative to address laws or policies that provide disincentives to working longer or hinder employers from retaining older workers