



Area Agency on Aging: Programs and Services for Older Adults and Adults with Disabilities

Ashland Senior Advisory Committee

November 13, 2023

Constance Wilkerson, Senior and Disability Services Director

ROGUE VALLEY COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS AREA AGENCY ON AGING



A service area roughly the size of Delaware and Rhode Island combined.

An Area Agency on Aging serving Jackson and Josephine Counties in Southern Oregon

Jackson Co: Population of 223,734 – urban and rural

- Josephine Co: Population of 88,346 – predominately rural

A Council of Governments with 24 member jurisdictions

15 local governments

- 9 other entities – special districts and higher education institutions

An Area Agency on Aging: Rogue Valley Council of Governments Senior & Disability Services

What is Senior and Disability Services?

Senior and Disabilities Services is an Area Agency on Aging (AAA). Area Agencies on Aging are organizations designated by the state to address the needs and concerns of all older persons at the regional and local levels. AAAs may be part of a county or city government, a regional planning council, a council of governments or a private or nonprofit organization. There are 16 AAAs in Oregon.

Who do we serve?

We serve older adults and people with disabilities in Jackson and Josephine Counties.

AAAs coordinate and offer services that help older adults remain in their homes, if that is their preference, aided by services such as home-delivered meals, homemaker assistance, and whatever else it may take to make independent living a viable option. By making a range of supports available, AAAs make it possible for older individuals to choose the services and living arrangements that suit them best.

OUR MISSION-DRIVEN PURPOSE



We shall act as a catalyst to promote quality of life, effective and efficient services, and leadership in regional communication, cooperation, planning, and action in Southern Oregon.



Together, we promote the dignity, quality of life, and self-determination of seniors and people with disabilities.

Funding Sources

- **Federal:** Older Americans Act, Veterans Administration
- **State:** Oregon Department of Human Service's Aging and People with Disabilities, Mental Health Grant (State General Fund Dollars)
- **Local:** Anna May Foundation, Jewel Brooks Charitable Trust, Richard Smith Trust
- **Current Grants:** Aging and Disability Vaccination Collaborative Grant through USAging/Administration for Community Living, Oregon Health Authority's Public Health Modernization Grant for Emergency Preparedness, Oregon Department of Transportation Rural Access Transportation Grant, Jackson Care Connect Grant for Hearing Loop Installation
- **Donations**
- **Program Income:** Our programs are free to participants. Other agencies sometimes pay for trainings, and we are working on receiving reimbursements for some of our health promotion classes.

Five Core Older Americans Act Services All AAAs Offer

OAA CORE SERVICES



Our Programs & Supports

Information and Referral (ADRC)
In-home Services
Transportation
Case Management
Home Modification
Legal Services
Options Counseling

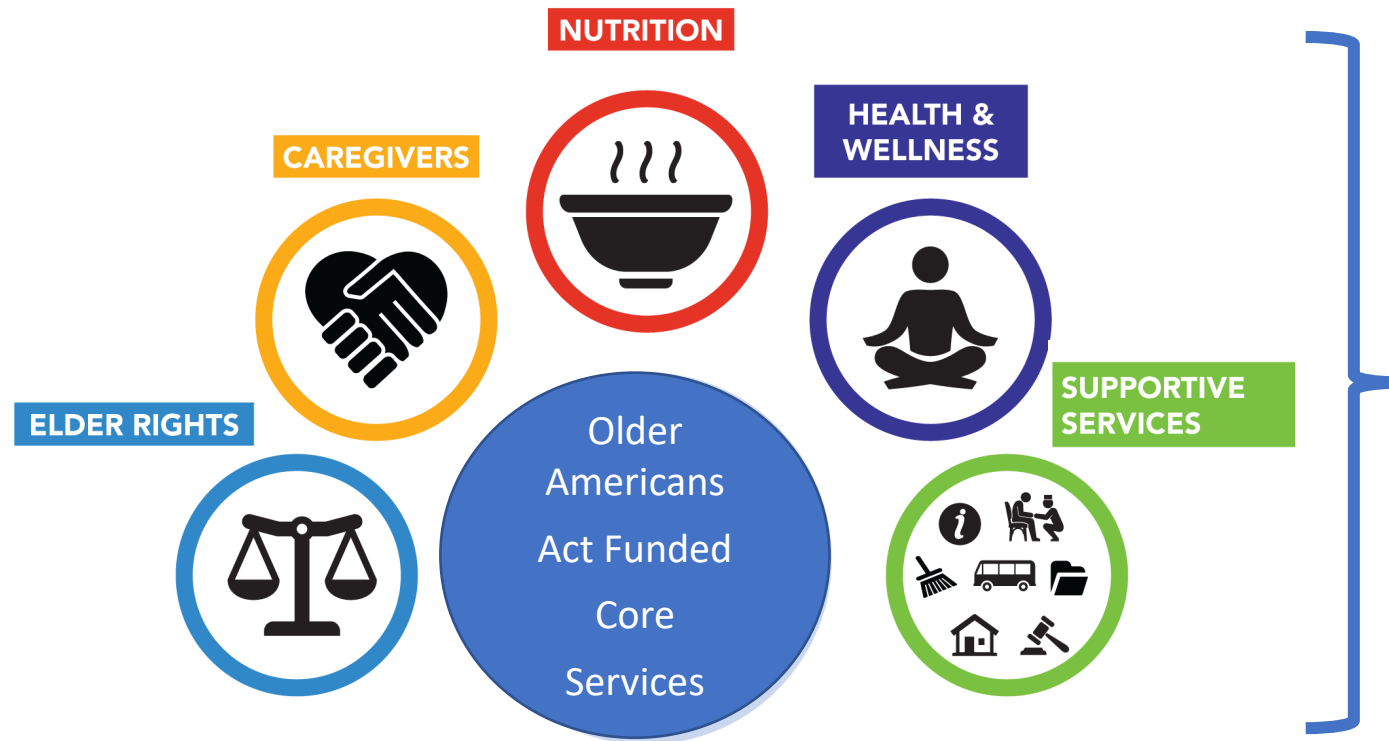
Food & Friends:
Congregate Meals &
Home-delivered Meals

Health Promotions:
Diabetes Prevention Program, Chronic Disease Self Management
Behavioral Health:
OPAL
PEARLS
Buried in Treasures
Life Reflections

Caregiver Respite
Caregiver Classes
Caregiver Support Groups

Includes abuse prevention and long-term care ombudsman programs

Aging & Disability Resource Connection (ADRC): Gateway to AAA Programs and Community Resources



(541) 618-7572

www.ADRCoforegon.org

adrc@rvcog.org

ADRC: Gateway to Information, Referrals, & Assistance

Staff field over 300 calls per month



Staff provides referrals to community resources



Staff provides referrals to AAA programs and supports



Staff are trained to offer Options Counseling

Clients' Greatest Needs*

- Transportation
- Housing
- Mental Health

*Data gathered from last 5000 calls



MAINTAINING INDEPENDENCE




Senior and Disability Services’ Overarching Goal: Maintaining Clients’ Independence

Our goal is to provide supports and services for people to assist them in remaining independent for as long as safely possible.

- This not only meets the person-centered goal of remaining independent; it also saves state and federal funding that would be required for a higher level of care in a facility or with in-home services through Medicaid.
- We provide education, resources, and services that increase independence and promote healthier living.

HOME IS THE NICEST PLACE THERE IS



77% of people 50 and older report they wish to continue living in their current communities and/or residences.



That number rises to **86%** for respondents over 65.

SDS Fosters Independence with Support Services

Many people will eventually need some level of service or support to live safely and successfully in their home or community.

Fostering Independence through Education, Resources, and Services

In-home services: Oregon Project Independence (OPI) & Veteran Directed Care (VDC)

Support of Unpaid Family Caregivers: Caregiver Respite & Family Caregiver Trainings: Powerful Tools

Health Promotions Programs to Maintain Physical Health: Diabetes Prevention Program, Chronic Disease Self-Management Program

Behavioral Health Program to Address Mental Health Needs: Program to Encourage Active, Rewarding Lives (PEARLS), and Options for People to Address Loneliness (OPAL), Buried in Treasures

Free Options Counseling: Topics include Long Term Care Planning

Additional Resources

Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC)

Financial Assistance Grants (made possible by Anna May Foundation and Jewel Brooks Charitable Trust)

LifeLong Housing Certification to Age In Place

Disaster Registry

Elder Abuse Training and Prevention

Legal Services (through contracts with providers)

Response to Emerging Needs: Pandemic and Wildfire Responses

Equity Lens:
Cultural
Diversity
Awareness
Removing
Barriers to
Full
Participation*



*Service Equity and DEI Principles Integrated into all Senior and Disability Services Program



SDS Offers More than 15 Programs to Address:

In-Home Care Needs
 Health & Wellness
 Family Caregivers
 Options Counseling
 Behavioral Health
 Elder Rights Support
 Information & Referral & Assistance
 Elder Abuse Prevention
 Needs of Indigenous Elders

Programs Unique to SDS:

Disaster Registry
 Lifelong Housing Certification
 OPAL

TWO PROGRAMS UNIQUE TO SDS



BEHAVIORAL HEALTH
SUPPORT PROGRAM:
OPTIONS FOR PEOPLE TO
ADDRESS LONELINESS (OPAL)



EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS:
THE DISASTER REGISTRY

Behavioral Health Programming: Another Support to Assist Health & Maintain Independence

Pre-pandemic:

43% of older adults reported feeling lonely⁵ and

27% report feeling isolated from others.⁶



⁵ Carla M. Perissinotto, , Irena Stijacic Cenzer, Kenneth E. Covinsky, “Loneliness in Older Persons: A Predictor of Functional Decline and Death,” *Archives of Internal Medicine*, 172:14,2012, 1078–1083, doi:10.1001/archinternmed.2012.1993, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22710744>.

⁶ Erica Solway, John Piette, Jeffrey Kullgren et al., “Loneliness and Health. University of Michigan National Poll on Healthy Aging.” March 2019. Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/2027.42/148147>.

OPAL PROGRAM: Addressing Social Isolation and Loneliness

OPAL

Options for People to Address Loneliness

OPAL is a free program for individuals who are experiencing loneliness and/or isolation.

OPAL counselors partner with participants to address the problems and concerns they experience around loneliness and isolation.

Using behavioral activation, action planning and resource identification, OPAL counselors provide support and encouragement in order to reduce stress, anxiety, depression, and feelings of loneliness and isolation.

REFERRALS

OPAL serves seniors age 60 and older and adults with disabilities regardless of insurance coverage.

Referrals are eligible when they answer Yes to one of the following questions:

- Do you ever feel lonely or disconnected from others?
- Would you like to explore options to reduce that sense of loneliness or isolation?

OPAL is not appropriate for individuals with complex mental health conditions, or who have severe dementia or who experience significant alcohol and substance abuse.

OPAL SESSIONS

OPAL is offered over the course of 6 sessions.

OPAL counselors help with referrals to resources, including behavioral health treatment if needed.

Contact

To make a referral or for more information contact:

Susan Jay Rounds at
541.423.1363



SENIOR & DISABILITY
SERVICES
A Department of RVCOG



ADRC
Aging and Disability
Resource Connection
of OREGON

The Price of Loneliness and Social Isolation: Physical, Cognitive & Mental Health Impacts

- Social isolation and loneliness linked to **29% increased risk of heart disease.**
- Chronic loneliness and social isolation associated with **increasing risk of dementia by 50%.**
- Social isolation and loneliness associated with a **32% increased risk of stroke.**
- **developing depression in adults more than doubles** among those who report feeling lonely.

Source: Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on the Healing Effects of Social Connection and Community; pp. 26, 28-29.

HISTORY OF THE DISASTER REGISTRY



Ashland Creek roars through the Plaza during the 1997 New Year's Day flood in Ashland. [Mail Tribune file photo]

- ❖ The flood of 1997 in Ashland prompted the development of the Disaster Registry.
- ❖ The DR has been live and active in all major events since
- ❖ The “Vulnerable Populations” Committee in place at the time came up with this idea.
- ❖ GO | STAY | KIT





September 2020 Wildfire: Disaster Registry in Action!

Within hours of the fire's eruption, SDS staff and Disaster Registry volunteers contacted more than **220 vulnerable persons**, living in:

Phoenix

Talent

Cave Junction

Only **2** needed Emergency Management Services to evacuate. SDS arranged with EMO for safe evacuation.



A person should sign up if they.....

- Need outside help to safely leave their home during a disaster;
- Be in jeopardy if they stayed in their home, without assistance, for three days;
- Need special notification about the need for evacuation, due to impairment.

DISASTER REGISTRY APPLICATION



Date _____

Name: Last _____ First _____

Street # _____ St. Name _____ Street _____ St. Name _____ Apt/Sp. # _____

City _____ ZIP _____ County _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Cell Phone _____

Is House number visible from the Street? Y/N _____ Is this a Care Facility? Y/N _____

Apt/Mobile Park Name _____

Apt/Mobile Park St. Address _____

Gender _____ Birthdate _____

Special Needs that affect my ability to help myself in an emergency:

Mobility Impairment? Y/N _____ Describe _____

Hearing Limitations? Y/N _____ Describe _____

Vision Limitations? Y/N _____ Describe _____

Use Oxygen? Y/N _____ Describe _____

Speaking Difficulty? Y/N _____ Describe _____

Mental Health? Y/N _____ Describe _____

Medical Equip? Y/N _____ Describe _____

MC Needs (Electric)? Y/N _____ Describe _____

Dialysis? Y/N _____ Describe _____

Other Condition? Y/N _____ Describe _____

Speak English? Y/N _____ Language _____

Service Animal or Pet? Y/N _____ Type _____

Cooperative Under Stress? Y/N _____ Memory/ Concentration Problems? Y/N _____
I need to take medications with me. Y/N _____

Medical and other Notes _____

Caregiver Information

Requires a Caregiver? Y/N _____

My needs are: _____

Caregiver _____ Relationship? _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone _____ Cell _____ E-mail _____

Emergency Contact Information: Guardian, Family Member

EC 1 Name _____ Relationship? _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone _____ Cell _____ E-mail _____

EC 2 Name _____ Relationship? _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone _____ Cell _____ E-mail _____

Mail To _____

Phone _____ Cell _____ E-mail _____

Do you use any of the following services? Please note all that apply

SDS Contact? Y/N _____ Contact _____ Phone _____

Medical Equip Co? Y/N _____ Name _____ Phone _____

DDS Contact? Y/N _____ Contact _____ Phone _____

DHG Contact? Y/N _____ Contact _____ Phone _____

Medical Doctor? Y/N _____ Doctor _____ Phone _____

Pharmacy Used? Y/N _____ Name _____ Phone _____

Mental Health Provider? Y/N _____ Name _____ Phone _____

Other Service? Y/N _____ Name _____ Phone _____

Miscellaneous Other Information _____

The information on this form is used in the event of an emergency to assist those with special needs who would need additional time to evacuate their home or need assistance from others. **This information is available only to Emergency Service workers, Emergency Planners and Emergency Operations Center staff!**

Do you wish to receive emergency preparedness information? Yes _____ No _____

I authorize this information to be used by Emergency Planners and Emergency Service workers in Jackson and Josephine Counties to assist me in the event of an emergency and in preparation for such event.

I understand that I will be contacted every quarter to make sure my information is current, and that failure to provide updated information may result in my record being dropped from the Disaster Registry.

Printed Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

Preparer's Name _____ Signature _____ Date _____

To download:
<https://rvcog.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Disaster-Registry-Application-Form-REVISED-07.21.2021.pdf>

3 LAYERS OF THE DISASTER REGISTRY

People Requiring
Additional
Assistance



Child Care
Facilities



Senior Facilities



The Process

Individual citizens complete an application

RVCOG staff enters information into our data base



Data base information is geocoded & uploaded to GIS

Phone volunteers make quarterly contact

Changes are updated into the data base



During an event RVCOG activates the Disaster Registry

Contact is made with those in a disaster levels set by
Emergency management

Direct line with community partners & EM

DURING A DISASTER

- Using the GIS system, RVCOG staff load the Disaster Registry Layers
- Gather data from multiple sources
- Apply Fire Perimeters, if applicable
- Make outbound calls to DR clients
- Ask about client's awareness of event
- Confirm their immediate needs
- Connect with Emergency Management if evacuation is necessary or there is a health crisis





COLLABORATIONS & ADVOCACY

Working Together to Meet Basic Needs



- Legal Services: Center for NonProfit Legal Services & Oregon Law Center
- Transportation: Community Volunteer Network's Call-a-Ride and Rogue River Community Center Services
- Mental Health: Community Volunteer Network – Age Wise, Age Well
- Health Promotion Programs: LaClinica – Diabetes Prevention and Chronic Disease Self-Management
- Home Repair and Modifications: Rebuilding Together Rogue Valley
- Farmers Markets in Rural Areas: Rogue Food Unites
- Wildfire Survivors' Support: Firebrand Collective

**Working
Together to
Meet Basic
Needs through
Advocacy**

LOCAL: Senior Advisory Council
Disability Services Advisory Council
Joint SAC/DSAC Advisory Committee

STATE: Oregon Association of Area Agencies on
Aging and Disabilities (O4AD)

FEDERAL: USAging (Formerly the National
Association of Area Agencies on Aging
(n4a))

Ongoing Needs for Legislative Support

- Continued support services and housing for the 1,700 seniors identified as losing their homes in manufactured/RV Parks/low-income apartments during the September 2020 wildfires
- Creative solutions for the workforce shortage of homecare workers and personal care workers, without whom people lose their independence
- Promotion of LifeLong Housing Initiative and future Visitability Bills to promote aging in place and access
- State General Fund Dollars for Mental Health Programming
- Consistent Funding for Oregon Project Independence Programs – these are often on the legislative “chopping block”
- Implementation of SB99 “Bill of Rights for LGBTQ+ Long-term Care Residents and HIV+ Individuals” (2023 Legislative Session)

Contact Information

Constance Wilkerson

Senior & Disability Services Director

Rogue Valley Council of Governments

cwilkerson@rvcog.org

(541) 423-1384

The background features a vertical gradient from light grey at the top to dark grey at the bottom. On the right side, there is a dense cluster of thin, light-colored lines connecting various sized circles. The circles transition in color from light orange at the top to dark purple at the bottom. A solid orange horizontal bar is positioned at the bottom of the page.

QUESTIONS?