

# Division of Aging and Adult Services

April 2021 Newsletter



## A Message from the Director:

The 2021 General Session of the Utah State Legislature is in the books! Although the look and feel of this year's session was very different from past years, it was a very successful and smooth experience despite the limitations of the pandemic. There were both in-person and virtual options for participation in committee meetings, for the legislators themselves as well as for agencies and the public. The digital meeting spaces broadened the options for all participants to more easily and efficiently join in the process and to access the discussions taking place, without having to deal with the logistical challenges of parking, weather, different room locations, etc.

Another very positive element that came from the session was the reassurance that despite the challenges and setbacks of the past year, the state is in a surprisingly healthy economic position. The cuts that many anticipated did not materialize and on the whole the Legislature was able to fund a number of new programs and initiatives which were funded in the 2020 session, but which then were defunded in special sessions last year. Although Aging Services did not seek any new funding in this session, there were a number of positive bills passed that will benefit Utah's seniors:

- **HB218S3 - Reporting Requirements – Rep. King**
  - This bill clarifies the reporting requirements for abuse, neglect and exploitations of children, vulnerable adults and seniors in an effort to ensure these reports are sent to the responsible agencies.
- **HB226S1 – Long-term Care Patient and Consumer Rights Protection – Rep. Ballard**
  - This bill requires residential care facilities to declare to potential residents if their current providers are not able to provide services on-site, prior to residents signing contracts.
- **SB30 – Commission on Aging Amendments – Sen. Iwamoto**
  - This bill renews the Commission and makes changes to streamline the current appointee makeup.
- **SB63 – Caregiver Compensation Amendments – Sen. Harper**
  - This bill makes permanent a temporary provision for spouses of Medicaid patients to be paid for certain in-home care services.
- **SB83S3 – POLST Order Amendments – Sen. Iwamoto**
  - This bill provides an electronic option for making changes to legal documents which allow individuals to make end of life wishes known.
- **SB85S3 – Disinheritance Following Crimes Against Vulnerable Adults – Sen. Weiler**
  - This bill disqualifies individuals responsible for abuse, neglect or exploitation of a senior or vulnerable adult from subsequently inheriting from the victim.

**The State Agency Alignment HB365** was also approved. This bill creates the merger of the Department of Health and the Department of Human Services into the newly created single state agency, the Department of Health and Human Services. The goal of this realignment is to more efficiently and effectively manage state health and human services programs. Go to [HHSplan.utah.gov](https://HHSplan.utah.gov) to follow the transition planning and to offer input on the consolidation.

In addition to the positive outcome of the legislative session, we recently saw the passage of the fourth round of COVID-19 related relief by Congress. The funding package included a number of items that will benefit seniors here in Utah. Among the funded items are \$1.44B for senior service programs:

- \$750mm for Nutrition Services
- \$470mm for Support Services
- \$10mm for the Long-term Care Ombudsman Program
- \$44mm for Evidence-Based Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (Title III-D)
- \$145mm for the Caregiver Support Program
- \$276mm for Elder Justice efforts
- \$30mm for the National Senior Services Corps.

We will learn in the coming weeks how much of this funding will come to the state, at which point we will be able to determine the funds our Area Agencies on Aging will receive to serve seniors across the state. We are extremely grateful for our state and federal lawmakers who have worked so hard to provide services and supports to Utah's seniors!

Nels Holmgren,  
Division Director

## AAA Recognition

The Area Agencies on Aging have found creative ways to provide nutrition, health, and wellness to older adults, even with demanding situations of the continual COVID pandemic. Senior centers have been closed as a result of the pandemic so meals are picked up at the "drive- thru"; numbers being served have increased at all senior centers.

Mountainland Association of Government (MAG) Aging & Family Services increased Meals on Wheels routes by 12 (11 are volunteer and 1 staff) to deliver 90 - 100% more meals. All 17 congregate centers have "drive-thru" meals available to deliver 50 - 150% more meals. Deputy Jason Heidel's team at the Utah County Security Center has done an incredible job preparing double the number of meals during the pandemic.

In order to promote health, wellness, and socialization and to decrease isolation, activities have transitioned to conference calls, virtual training, Zoom, outside meetings, and more. Learn more at [mountainland.org/health](http://mountainland.org/health). Please visit each senior center's website to see what is available.



## Upcoming Events

- The 19th Annual Southern Utah Seniors Conference: May 7<sup>th</sup> 10-12am, held virtually. Registration and speaker information is available at [southernutahseniorsconference.org](http://southernutahseniorsconference.org).
- Utah Elder Justice Conference: May 13<sup>th</sup>. Conference will be held virtually, registration is free and will be open soon. More information is available at [utahelderjustice.org](http://utahelderjustice.org).
- World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEADD): June 15<sup>th</sup>. Mark your calendars, exciting events coming!



## Program Highlight: Utah's Nutrition, Health, and Wellness

Adequate nutrition is critical to health, physical ability, and quality of life and is an important component of home and community-based services for older people. The Older Americans Act (OAA) Nutrition Program, authorized under Title III of the OAA-Grants for States and Community Programs on Aging, is a federal program that supports the health and well-being of older adults through nutrition services.

The purpose of the OAA Nutrition Program is three-fold: 1) reduce hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition; 2) promote socialization; 3) promote the health and well-being of seniors through access to nutrition, nutrition related disease prevention, and health promotion services. The OAA Nutrition Program is available to adults age 60 years and older, with priority going towards seniors with the greatest social or economic need – including seniors who are low-income; are a racial or ethnic minority; live in a rural community; have limited English proficiency; and/or are at risk of institutionalization.

The OAA Nutrition Program consists of three sub-programs:

### **Congregate Nutrition Services**

This program authorizes meals and related nutrition services in congregate settings. In addition to serving healthy meals, the program presents opportunities for social engagement, information on healthy aging, and meaningful volunteer roles. The Congregate Nutrition program serves individuals age 60 and older, and in some cases, their caregivers, spouses, and/or persons with disabilities.

### **Home-Delivered Nutrition Services**

This program authorizes meals and related nutrition services for older individuals and their spouses of any age. The program often serves frail, homebound, and/or isolated individuals who are age 60 and over, and in some cases, their caregivers, and/or persons with disabilities. This service is a primary access point for other home and community-based services, and is also very helpful for individuals that are transitioning from a hospital or rehabilitation facility to home.

### **Nutrition Services incentive Program (NSIP)**

This program provides grants to states, territories, and eligible Tribal organizations to support the Congregate and Home-Delivered Nutrition Programs by providing an incentive to serve more meals. NSIP requirements a provider must follow are in the OAA, Section 311. Previous guidance provided by other federal agencies is no longer required.

DAAS also manages the **Health and Wellness Program**, Title III-D of the OAA. This program provides grants to states and territories for programs that support healthy lifestyles and promote healthy behaviors based on their share of the population aged 60 and older. Evidence-based disease prevention and health promotion programs reduce the need for more costly medical interventions. Priority is given to serving older adults living in medically underserved areas of the state and those who are of greatest economic need. During the COVID-19 pandemic programs are available by conference calls, virtual platforms, and other creative ways the AAA's have designed.

If you know an individual who needs assistance with nutrition, health, and/or wellness they can contact DAAS at 801-538-3910. Individuals are also able to contact Charlotte Vincent, Utah Program Manager - Nutrition, Health and Wellness with concerns or questions at [cvincent@utah.gov](mailto:cvincent@utah.gov).



## Community Partner Spotlight

The Utah Commission on Aging (UCOA) prepares older adults to engage and navigate the opportunities and challenges of aging by democratizing knowledge and empowering decision makers, fostering new ideas and research pathways, promoting effective policy, and applying best practice models for improving outcomes in our communities.

The advent of the COVID virus in the spring of 2020 changed the world. It continues to impact how the health and well-being of our older citizens is addressed, especially those with vulnerabilities amplified by the pandemic. UCOA hosts and manages a virtual resource center in support of Utah's area agencies on aging and other stakeholder coalitions, e.g. falls prevention, family caregiving and creative arts alliance. The virtual center is a statewide effort connecting existing programs and services, creating and promoting new talent and programming, and improving access through expanded internet and broadband services, equipment, and knowledge of safe utilization.

UCOA has been incredibly supportive of many DAAS initiatives, exemplifying the UCOA mission to facilitate the coordination of the functions of both public and private entities concerned with our aging population. Not only has UCOA been a terrific partner on issues that face Utah's seniors, but they also fill many roles that DAAS cannot. DAAS would like to thank UCOA for being a key partner to the Division and for extending the possibilities available to our great state. To learn more about UCOA, visit [ucoa.utah.edu](http://ucoa.utah.edu).



## Did You Know?

June 15<sup>th</sup> is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day (WEAAD). The International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse and the World Health Organization at the United Nations launched this initiative to provide an opportunity for communities around the world to promote a better understanding of abuse, neglect, and exploitation by raising awareness and building strong support for older adults.



The Utah Aging network, including DAAS, AARP, Alzheimer's Association, Utah Commission on Aging, and Utah 211, is planning events to promote awareness and education here in our great state. Mark your calendar and stay tuned for further details. If you have any questions, or would like to partner or contribute to the events, please contact Traci Lee at [tracilee@utah.gov](mailto:tracilee@utah.gov).

A national toolkit can also be found at [eldermistreatment.usc.edu/weaad-home/](http://eldermistreatment.usc.edu/weaad-home/). Here you will find outreach materials, sample social media posts, ideas for planning your own activities, a calendar to share your events, and more!

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To report abuse,  
neglect, or  
exploitation of a  
vulnerable adult:

### Report by Telephone

Monday - Friday  
8:00 am - 5:00 pm  
1-800-371-7897

### Report Online 24/7

[daas.utah.gov](http://daas.utah.gov)