

FORUM BRIEFING

Optimizing Services for Delaware's Seniors: Applying Delaware's Funding Formula



written by
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sponsored by the
Institute for Public Administration
College of Human Services, Education & Public Policy
University of Delaware

 *on-line at*
www.ipa.udel.edu

in cooperation with the
Joint Finance Committee
and the
Office of the Controller General

Introduction

This report presents information on the forum titled “Optimizing Services for Delaware’s Seniors: Applying Delaware’s Funding Formula” held on Wednesday, April 25, 2001. The forum was co-sponsored by the University of Delaware’s Institute for Public Administration, the state’s Joint Finance Committee, and the Office of the Controller General. The overall purpose of the forum was to educate Delaware’s senior center directors on the changing demographics that the country and the state will face, as well as to educate directors on the anatomy of the Senior Center Grant-In-Aid funding formula. In addition, the forum provided networking opportunities among other center directors, the Institute’s senior center project staff, legislators, and controller general staff.

Program Overview

The day began with three briefings on programs of interest to senior centers and the population that they serve. The programs were: the Delaware Prescription Assistance Program, the Automatic External Defibrillator Program, and the “Are You OK?” Program. Further information about each of these programs is available from the sponsoring organizations. See Appendix A for contact information for each program.

Following these presentations, Simon Condliffe, Economist, presented “The Aging of a Nation: The Changing Demographics of the United States and Delaware”. This presentation can be viewed on the World Wide Web at <http://www.cadsr.udel.edu/>. From there, click on the title of the presentation.

The first breakout group occurred after the presentation on demographics. The information gathered from both breakout groups is presented in Appendix B.

After the first breakout group, “The Anatomy of Delaware’s Senior Center Funding Formula” was presented by Eric Jacobson, Assistant Director, IPA; Director, MPA Program, and Stephanie Moody, Policy Specialist II. This presentation can also be viewed on the World Wide Web at www.ipa.udel.edu/healthcare/funding/.

In the afternoon, Rachelle Garten, Senior Center and Community Services Regional Manager, from the Baltimore County Department of Aging presented “Senior Centers in the 21st Century: Dynasty or Dinosaur?”. Contact information for Ms. Garten can also be found in Appendix A. Ms Garten started her presentation by congratulating the State of Delaware for being one of the few – if not the only – state that provides funding to senior centers through a Grant-in-Aid, formula-determined allocation process. She also discussed redefining what a senior center is and how to develop a mission statement. Mission statements should clearly summarize a center’s goals and objectives, and should answer the following questions.

- What are we (senior centers)?
- What do we do?

- What do we want to be?
- What can we be?
- When do we want to be it?

The presentation also included information on strategic planning and marketing. Ms. Garten believes that the key to successful marketing of programs is to focus on the 5 P's, which are outlined below.

- Product: Services should be continually evaluated and designed to meet the needs and wants of the target markets. Three things you can do about 'product': introduce new, modify old or drop them.
- Place: Place or location where the prospective consumer may obtain the product or service. How do you reach people?
- Price: What does it 'cost' people to be involved with you (time, energy, money)? Also consider competition from the private sector, social consequences of charging for public services, and the need to offer programming for client groups who may not be able to pay anything.
- Promotion: How do you get the message across? What image is conveyed through the promotion? Images are enhanced through appropriate titles; however, the product must be congruent with the image.
- People: Your employees are in continuous contact with the public and can create lasting impressions. A rude secretary answering the phone or an abrupt receptionist can create an "I don't care" image of your organization.

Next Steps

- Beginning in the fall of 2001, half of Delaware's senior centers will be visited by the University of Delaware's Institute Staff to update participation and service information. You can also utilize these visits as a time to offer suggestions and to describe programs that are unique to your center, which should be accounted for in the service level information that is obtained by Institute staff.
- At the end of the day, attendees were polled to determine if more of these forums should be held in the future. A majority of the attendees that were present at the forum requested that more forums be held, both on a statewide level and on the countywide/jurisdiction level. This may be possible in the future and is dependent upon available funds
- Reports submitted by the breakout groups suggested that services to Delaware's seniors could be enhanced through improved coordination of services and information exchange with other nonprofit and government agencies, especially the Division of Aging. Again, this may be possible in the future and is dependent upon available funds.

For a complete list of attendees, see Appendix C.

Appendix A

Contact Information

Delaware Prescription Assistance Program

For more information, contact customer assistance representatives:

Monday through Friday
From 8:00am to 4:30pm
1-800-996-9969 ext. 17

Automatic External Defibrillator Program

For more information, contact

“Are You OK?” Program

For more information, contact the Senior RollCall Lifeline:

302-239-5151

Senior Centers in the 21st Century: Dynasty or Dinosaur?

For more information, contact Rachelle Garten:

Baltimore County Department of Aging
611 Central Avenue
Towson, MD 21204
410-887-3654
410-887-3656 (fax)
rgarten@co.ba.md.us

Appendix B

2001 Senior Center Policy Forum Small Group A.M. (blue form)

The following information was based on ten completed forms.

- *Regarding the information just shared about changing demographics in Delaware, how does this affect your senior center?*
 - The implication is that less funding will be available for smaller centers.
 - Confirms the need to change.
 - There will be a new younger population of seniors moving into the area.
 - May change a center's programs by targeting more "active" participants.
 - May affect funding allocations over the next 20 years.
 - May affect center staffing.
 - Potential loss of future funding as a result of population shifting.
 - Expect an increase in demand for services and programs.
- *How do you think centers in your county might respond to the changing demographics?*
 - Expand the center's services by changing operating hours in order to offer evening programs.
 - Look for innovative ways for attracting new members.
 - Provide more services and offer a wider variety of programs to meet the need of the younger seniors while still maintain services to the older senior population.
 - Partnering with other local organizations, universities, and businesses.
 - The need for possible consolidation of centers.
 - Staff might need to become multilingual to better serve population.
 - Change the image of a center from "senior" to "adult" activity.
 - Provide more social services (i.e., outreach).
 - Use this information to support the center's strategic planning processes and program development.
- *Besides increasing funding, what can the state do to help you respond to changing demographics?*
 - Fund and support Leadership groups for each county in order to develop a plan, which will benefit senior citizens.
 - Add a staff person with experience and "hands-on" years in gerontology.
 - Coordinate transportation between & to other local centers.
 - Provide assistance to ensure year-round transportation.

- Help with construction for a larger facility and infrastructure improvements.
- Assist senior centers in developing a marketing plan.
- Continue to sponsor research and workshops to educate senior center staff on planning issues.
- Provide information on alternative sources of funding.
- Support a closer connection between senior centers and the Division of Aging.
- Assist centers with recruiting and training new employees or volunteers.
- More involvement with the county in which the center resides in.
- Develop a web site to publicize information about all Delaware senior centers.

***Additional comments:* Hesitant to respond because of lack of time to absorb demographic information. Would have liked more time to consider information before responding.

2001 Senior Center Policy Forum Small Group P.M (orange form)

The following information was based on six completed forms.

- *What opportunities do you see for improving services to Delaware's seniors?*
 - Begin brainstorming/networking sessions with other centers.
 - Utilize more volunteers.
 - Establish a process for sharing successes and failures.
 - Share newsletters with other centers.
 - Coordinate program opportunities with other centers (i.e., trips, activities).
 - Partnering with other local agencies or groups (Delaware's business industry, police and radio).
 - There is a greater opportunity to service a wider variety of seniors.
 - Extend centers' operating hours.
 - Define target market and use promo to reach more seniors.
 - Use more marketing tools (i.e., Internet).
 - Encourage more interaction between centers to provide greater program diversity.
 - Equitable funding source
 - Annual "senior fest"

- *What obstacles do you see for improving services to Delaware's seniors?*
 - Transportation – establish to and from travel times (i.e., medical services).
 - There is increased competition for funding and less funding available.
 - There is increased competition for clients from the non-senior center market.
 - Spend more time fundraising in order to maintain existing programs.
 - There is no incentive to excel.
 - There is not enough accountability.
 - Centers are too territorial.
 - Overlapping of programs – (Consolidate centers in order to more efficiently distribute funding.)
 - Centers need to overcome food program's bad history in order to maintain participants.
 - There is inadequate staffing in community agencies.
 - Improving the senior center image.

- How might **your center** use this information?
 - To increase partnerships.
 - Share ideas and programs.

- Create a team of center personal to plan more inter-center collaboration.
 - Re-examine your center and recharge.
 - Demographic information will enable us to get better prepared for the future.
- *Besides increasing funding, what can the state do to help improve services to Delaware's seniors?*
- Provide centers with information on "hiring practices" in order to better locate and retain part-time workers and volunteers.
 - Provide more training.
 - Provide public service announcements.
 - There needs to be more involvement from the Division of Aging besides just the nutrition program.
 - More specific regulations are needed.
 - Have a senior center representative involved in all the different levels of senior center planning and funding allocation.
 - Involve the directors/seniors in a more adversarial capacity.
 - Reduce paperwork.

5. *What questions do you have that we didn't cover today?*

- What kinds of funding are in future for senior centers?
- What are new ways that centers can support exceptionally frail seniors?
- How can centers reduce paperwork?

Appendix C

PARTICIPATION LIST

*ABRAMS, Carolyn J.
Kingswood/Jimmy Jenkins Senior Center*

*ANKENMAN, Mary
Frederica Adult Center*

*BARTON, Maxine
M.O.T. Senior Center*

*BELL, E. Kathlene
West Center City Adult Center, Inc.*

*BONNIWELL, Robert A.
The Modern Maturity Center, Inc.*

*BONVILLE, Linda
Cape Henlopen Senior Center*

*BRATHWAITE, Ann
Peoples Settlement Association
Senior Center*

*BROWN, Debra
Mamie A. Warren Senior Center*

*BROWN, Patsy Bennett
Roxana CHEER Senior Center*

*CAIN, Vester
Kingswood/Jimmy Jenkins Senior Center*

*CARTER, Patrick
Graham Senior Center*

*CHRISTIANSEN, Lori
Office of the Controller General*

*CICCARONE, Carolyn
Sellers Senior Center*

*COLLINS, John P.
St. Patrick's Center*

*CONDLIFFE, Simon
CADSR/University of Delaware*

*COOK, Nancy W.
Senator, Joint Finance Committee*

*DiPINTO, Joseph
Representative, Co-Chair of the Joint
Finance Committee*

*DITOLVO, Diane
Indian River Senior Center*

*DUNCAN, Penelope
Laurel Senior Center, Inc.*

*ELLIOTT, Barbara
Nanticoke Senior Center*

*FALLON, Tina
Representative, Joint Finance Committee*

*FOLEY, Linda A.
St. Thomas Senior Center*

*FRANCKOWIAK, Susan
Nanticoke Senior Center*

*GALBRAITH, Birdie
Lewes Senior Center*

*GARTEN, Rachelle
Baltimore County Department of Aging*

*GERARDI, Angel
Greenwood CHEER Center*

*GETMAN, Sue
Wilmington Senior Center*

*GLAND, Kathleen M.
Oak Grove Senior Center*

*GREEN, Robin
Georgetown CHEER Senior Center*

*GROSS, Christie
IPA/University of Delaware*

*HAMPTON, Anne
New Castle County – Community Services*

*HANSEN, Frank
Mamie A. Warren Senior Center*

*HARMON, Beckett
Sussex County Senior Services, Inc.*

*HARPER, Rich
Sussex County Senior Services, Inc.*

*HOLDEN, Sylvia
The Salvation Army Senior Center*

*HOLLOWAY-DRYDEN, Marlene
South Wilmington Senior Center
Adult Program, Inc.*

*HOLTON, John T.
Claymont Community Center*

*IAVARONE, Candace
Huling Cove CHEER Senior Center*

*JACKSON, Marguerite
Peoples Settlement Association
Senior Center*

*JACOBSON, Eric
IPA/University of Delaware*

*JALIS, Judith
Claymont Community Center*

*JONES, Lillian
West Center City Adult Center, Inc.*

*JOYCE, Harriett
Laurel Senior Center, Inc.*

*KEEGAN, James
Graham Senior Center, Inc.*

*KOOSER, William J.
St. Patrick's Center*

*KRETT, Sandra S.
Howard Weston Community Senior Center*

*LARSON, Russell T.
Controller General*

*LATHAM, Eileen
New Castle County – Community Services*

*LITTLETON, Arlene S.
Sussex County Senior Services, Inc.*

*LUISE, Mary Ellen
Clarence Fraim Senior Center*

*MANSURE, Donna J.
Claymore Senior Center, Inc.*

*MASON, Florence
Sussex County Senior Services, Inc.*

*McBRIDE, David B.
Senator, Joint Finance Committee*

*McCOOL, Beverly
Claymore Senior Center, Inc.*

*MOODY, Stephanie
IPA/University of Delaware*

*MORCH, Juanita J.
Cape Henlopen Senior Center*

*MORRIS, Gerald
Mid-County, Center, Inc.*

*NELSON, Mary
Indian River Senior Center*

*NESTLERODE, Evelyn
Office of the Controller General*

*OEHLER, Fred
New Castle County Police Department*

*PERKINS, Lee
Newark Senior Center*

*PRICE, Gene
Harrington Senior Center*

*RIDGELY, Peter T.
Milford Senior Center, Inc.*

*SAWYER, Susan F.
Graham Senior Center, Inc.*

*SCHIEFFERT, Lisa
IPA/University of Delaware*

*SEIBERT, Shirley
Sellers Senior Center*

*SHAW, Gladys
Lewes Senior Center*

*SHOCKLEY, Francine
Slaughter Neck CHEER Senior Center*

*SOULE', Philip Sr.
Department of Health and Social Services*

*STEPHENS, Sheree
Ocean View Leisure CHEER Senior Center*

*STEWART, Gloria
South Wilmington Senior
Adult Program, Inc.*

*TRAVIS, John D.
Howard Weston Community Senior Center*

*ULBRICH, Stephanie
Representative, Joint Finance Committee*

*VAUGHN, James T.
Senator, Co-Chair of the Joint Finance
Committee*

*WALLACH, Orly
Jewish Community Center*

*WIAN, Kathy
IPA/University of Delaware*

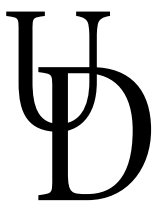
*WILLIAMS, Jean
Newark Senior Center*

*WILLIAMS, Sally
Mid-County Center, Inc.*

*WIRT, Debra A.
St. Anthony's Community Center*

*WOODHOUSE, Jennifer
Centro Los Abuelos, Methodist Action
Program*

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