



Council on Aging
of Southwestern Ohio

Answers on Aging



**Council on Aging
of Southwestern Ohio**

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FACTS AT A GLANCE

We are Experts on Aging:

Whether you're a senior, a caregiver or anyone with questions about aging, your first call should be to your Area Agency on Aging. In our area, that's Council on Aging of Southwestern Ohio (COA). COA has nearly 40 years of compassionate, expert service to older adults, their caregivers and their families. We plan, coordinate and fund services to older adults in a five county region: Butler, Clermont, Clinton, Hamilton and Warren counties.

What we do:

To care and prepare for an aging America, Council on Aging:

- Helps older adults remain independent at home
- Provides information and community resources
- Saves public money
- Supports family caregivers
- Plans for the future needs of seniors
- Promotes the health, security and well-being of older adults

Our impact:

Annually:

- With our community partners, we provide nearly 18,000 people with home-care services. This includes 1.78 million hours of in-home care and 1.9 million home-delivered meals.
 - We fund community and senior center-based activities to nearly 43,000 people. Services include transportation, meals, recreation, education, health promotion, ombudsman services and legal assistance.
 - We help nearly 30,000 people gain access to information, programs and community resources.
 - We help caregivers through award-winning training and support programs, visiting more than 350 family caregivers in their homes and graduating about 150 professional home health aides.
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Our Mission and Vision:

Enhance the lives of older adults by assisting them to remain independent at home through a range of quality services. Every senior adult in our region shall have a choice and a range of services and programs that will assist them to remain independent in their chosen environment.

Programs, services and activities:

Programs and services administered by COA preserve dignity and choice for older adults. Through COA, older adults, their caregivers and families have access to unbiased information, assistance, consultation, and long-term care services. As the Area Agency on Aging for our five-county area, we serve no special interest or business other than our mission to improve the well-being of seniors.

Community Resources and Information: information, referrals and answers for questions on topics ranging from senior housing to Medicare and caregiving. Staff respond to nearly 30,000 calls per year, plan special events such as Senior Expo, and produce special publications such as Help4Seniors, a comprehensive resource directory.

In-home care: free and low-cost programs that help older adults remain safe and independent in their homes and communities. COA administers programs with services provided by contracted providers.

PASSPORT: allows low-income disabled adults to receive Medicaid-funded care within their own homes. A cost-effective alternative to institutional care. Serves more than 3,000 annually.

Elderly Services Program (ESP): serves nearly 14,000 annually with in-home services such as Meals on Wheels, house-keeping, home safety upgrades, personal care, and community services such as adult day centers. ESP supplements help family or friends may already provide. It is supported by county tax levies. This compassionate and cost-effective program can delay or prevent unnecessary nursing home placement.



Pre-admission Review: for anyone entering Medicaid-certified nursing facilities. We conduct more than 11,000 reviews annually.

Long-term Care Consultations: a free, home-based service to help people understand and plan for their long-term care needs. People are often unaware of the array of options available.

Assisted Living Waiver: Ohio's Medicaid program pays for low income elderly and disabled adults to receive care in assisted living facilities, which offer more independence and privacy than nursing homes.

Council on Aging Learning Advantages® (COALA): provides 1) training for Home Health Aides; 2) Caregiver Education and Support - free, award-winning, in-home service for caregivers; and 3) COALA Eldercare Plus, a program for employers and working caregivers.

Title III Services of the Older Americans Act: administration of federal funds to help provide many community-based services such as transportation, meals, health and wellness activities, legal assistance, help for caregivers, and guidance on making decisions about long-term care.

Advocacy: working with elected officials and community leaders to build support for issues of importance to older adults and caregivers.

Quality Assurance and Improvement: monitors, trains and provides technical assistance to contracted service providers.

History, governance, and funding:

In 1970 - five years after passage of the Older Americans Act - Council on Aging was founded to promote the interests of older adults. In 1974, the Ohio Department of Aging designated COA to be the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for Ohio's Planning and Service Area I, including Butler, Clermont, Clinton, Hamilton and Warren counties.

COA is part of the national aging services network which was established by the Older Americans Act of 1965. The network includes the U.S. Administration on Aging at the federal level and the Ohio Department of Aging at the state level. COA is one of 12 AAAs in Ohio and 660 nationwide. **AAAs work with the public and private sectors to shape how communities serve their older - often vulnerable - citizens.**

Council on Aging is overseen by a Board of Trustees, assisted by an Advisory Council. The five counties in the COA service area have elderly services programs that are funded by county tax levies. COA administers these programs under contracts with county commissioners in Butler, Clinton, Hamilton and Warren counties. Oversight is provided by citizens groups appointed by the commissioners. In Clermont County, the program is administered by Clermont Senior Services. County tax levies provide about 40 percent of Council on Aging funding. Medicaid programs provide another 40 percent. Additional state and federal funds, client contributions, donations and other supports provide the remaining revenue.



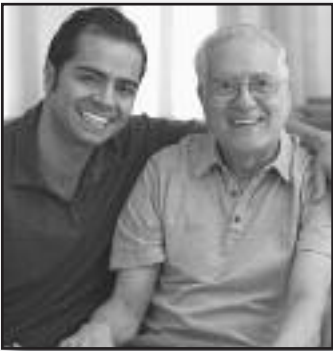
Leadership:

Suzanne Burke became Chief Executive Officer of Council on Aging in 2005. A graduate of Miami University, Ms. Burke minored in gerontology and held her first jobs in retirement communities. She later served Hamilton County government in several positions, including Director of Administrative Services, Director of the Department of Job and Family Services, and interim County Administrator. Ms. Burke leads a team of six senior managers.

Employees:

COA has 210 employees. Most are licensed social workers and registered nurses who provide intake, assessment and case management services for our programs.





Issues in Aging

Every aspect of American life is being affected by the aging of our population. The greatest effects are still to come now that the nation's 78 million baby boomers have begun turning 60. **The population of Americans over age 65 is expected to double to 72 million by 2030.** This so-called silver tsunami is happening in our own communities:

- **By 2020 in southwestern Ohio, people age 60 and older will number more than 350,000 – a 75 percent increase from 1980.** They are projected to be healthier and to live longer than their parents.
(Source: Scripps Gerontology Center at Miami University)
- **Between 1990 and 2000, the number of Ohioans age 85 and older (the group most likely to need care), grew by 28 percent.** By 2030, this age group will grow another 24 percent. (Source: Scripps Gerontology Center at Miami University)
- **While the aging population is growing, the number of potential caregivers is shrinking.** The ratio of available caregivers per elderly person is approaching 10 to one, about half what it was in 1970. It is projected to hit six to one within the next 25 years. (Source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation)

What are the implications? Clearly the aging of our society will place unprecedented pressures on our economy, health care system, transportation, housing, social services, emergency planning, and long-term care resources. Most directly, it will affect families who are being called upon in ever-increasing numbers to care for their elderly loved ones.

More than ever, we need a coordinated system of long-term care that offers people a choice of living arrangements, regardless of their economic means. **We need communities that are good places to grow up *and* grow old.** COA is a key leader and resource in this effort.



“We were going down the tubes with medical expenses and Maxine getting more and more disabled. Council on Aging and PASSPORT have been a God-send.”

PASSPORT supplements the care that Walter Hillman provides for his wife, Maxine. They also received a Caregiver Education and Support visit from Council on Aging Learning Advantages (COALA).