

# AGING ROADMAP ANNUAL UPDATE



2023



LIVE WELL  
SAN DIEGO



Learn more about the Aging Roadmap by visiting:  
**[WWW.AGING.SANDIEGOCOUNTY.GOV](http://WWW.AGING.SANDIEGOCOUNTY.GOV)**

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# INTRODUCTION

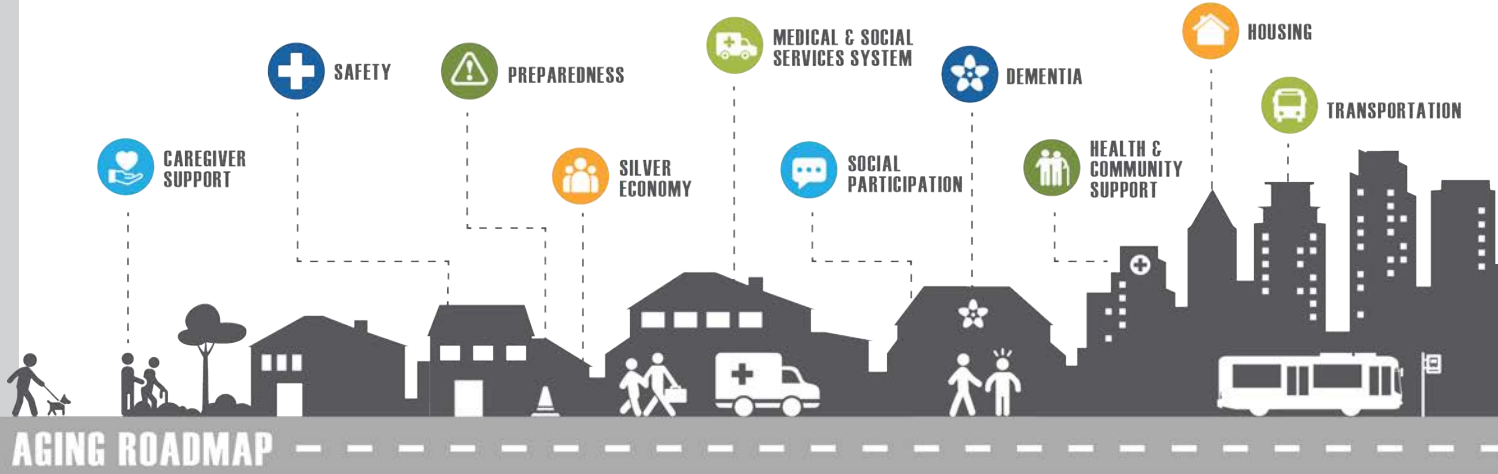
As the older adult population continues to grow, creating communities where people of all ages and abilities can thrive is more important than ever. Launched at the direction of the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) on September 24, 2019 (4), the Aging Roadmap is the County of San Diego’s (County) plan to ensure that the region has policies, programs, and initiatives that equitably support the needs and leverage the contributions of the growing population of older adults in communities throughout the San Diego region.

**This annual report provides an update on progress and accomplishments within the ten priority areas of the Aging Roadmap throughout Fiscal Year 2022-23:**

- Health & Community Support
- Housing

- Social Participation
- Transportation
- Dementia
- Caregiver Support
- Safety
- Preparedness
- Silver Economy
- Medical & Social Services System

While the Aging Roadmap is led by the County Health and Human Services Agency (HHS), Aging & Independence Services (AIS), the accomplishments presented represent the efforts of diverse County departments and community collaborations including Age Well San Diego, a community driven initiative for an age-friendly region. This report also highlights the County’s strategic approach and next steps towards reaching the vision for each of the ten priority areas.





# HISTORY OF THE AGING ROADMAP

The Aging Roadmap is the product of ongoing community input and collaboration that began in 2016 when the County joined the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities. After a two-year community input process, the Age Well San Diego Action Plan was created and approved by the Board on May 15, 2018 (6). Age Well San Diego identifies goals in five priority areas, each of which are driven forward by community teams led by AIS staff and made up of older adults, caregivers, County staff in relevant areas, and local service providers and experts.

In 2019, the Aging Roadmap was created as a broader framework to encompass Age Well San Diego and all other County programs for older adults and individuals with disabilities. Additional community input was garnered, and the remaining five priority areas were identified, completing the Aging Roadmap's ten priority areas.

The Aging Roadmap was developed to be adaptable and regularly incorporate community input. With the rise of COVID-19 in 2020, the Aging Roadmap's flexible framework allowed for nimble adjustments to be made so that emerging and critical needs could be addressed efficiently. To ensure AIS was abreast of community needs brought on by the pandemic, in mid-2020 another round of outreach was conducted, and community input was gathered from older adult food service providers, disability service providers, and older

adults and residents with disabilities in the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program. Throughout 2022, AIS offered additional opportunities for community input, including collaborative threading meetings across County departments, input sessions with key community stakeholders, and outreach to non-English-speaking older adults. The priorities voiced by the community informed the development of programs and initiatives in the Aging Roadmap Action Plan for Fiscal Year 2023-24 presented in Appendix A of this report.

## ***THE NEED FOR AN AGING ROADMAP: A BLUEPRINT FOR AN AGING POPULATION IS ESSENTIAL***

There are over 3.3 million people currently residing in San Diego County, with approximately 783,500 San Diegans over the age of 60. By 2030, the number of adults aged 60 and older in San Diego County is expected to increase to more than 910,000. It is estimated that older adults over the age of 60 will make up 26.3 percent of the San Diego County population by 2030, up from 20.4 percent in 2018. Additionally, the fastest growing age group in San Diego County, those 85 years and older, is expected to increase to nearly 98,000 by 2030.

# 2016 - PRESENT

2016: County joins AARP's Network of Age-Friendly Communities and Dementia Friendly America.

2016

2016-2018: County engages the community for input to create the Age Well San Diego Action Plan with goals in five priority areas: Health & Community Support, Housing, Social Participation, Transportation, and Dementia.

2017

2018

2019: The Aging Roadmap is created as a broader framework to encompass Age Well San Diego and all County programs for older adults and individuals with disabilities.

2019

Five additional focus areas are identified: Caregiver Support, Safety, Preparedness, Silver Economy, and Medical and Social Services System.

2020

2020: The State develops the California Master Plan for Aging (MPA), a "blueprint" for state government, local government, the private sector, and philanthropy to prepare the state for the coming demographic changes and continue California's leadership in aging, disability, and equity.

2021

2022-2023: Additional community input is gathered to inform future Aging Roadmap goals and priorities.

2022

2023



# COMMITMENT TO EQUITY, DIVERSE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, AND COLLABORATION

San Diego County is home to a growing population of diverse older adults who enrich our communities and present unique needs. Recognizing this diversity, the County is committed to ensuring that residents of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds have the opportunity to be fully engaged in their community as well as access any needed services to support healthy aging.

Principles of equity guide the County’s ongoing community engagement efforts and the programs and initiatives within the Aging Roadmap priority areas. In addition, over the last couple of years, AIS has hosted community conversations with older adults and service providers specifically focused on concepts of equity, belonging, inclusion, justice, and diversity. In February 2023, AIS hosted the Aging for All Workshop in partnership with the Sharp HealthCare Health Education Lecture Series. The event featured an interactive presentation focused on principles of equity, belonging, justice, diversity, and inclusion. This community conversation featured discussion regarding how to make aging an inclusive and positive experience for all. Looking ahead, AIS hopes to host more of these equity-centered discussions throughout the county.

Community engagement lies at the center of the County’s culture and operations. It is important that programs and services be created for, and

in partnership with, the communities served. Many of the priorities and goals within the Aging Roadmap are informed and supported by community coalitions made up of older adult service providers, non-profit agencies, businesses, individual residents, and professionals. AIS currently coordinates ten community coalitions that aim to improve our region’s system of care and support the creation of age-friendly communities that benefit all San Diegans. These community coalitions are open to anyone wishing to participate.



*Images: Top photo shows the group discussion at the February 2023 Aging for All Workshop; the bottom image shows community feedback when asked about inequities experienced by older adults.*

# SUPPORTING AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES

The County was the first jurisdiction in the region to become an Age-Friendly Community through AARP and the World Health Organization in 2016. Since then, more than six jurisdictions in San Diego County have become members of AARP's Network of Age-Friendly Communities. As the first, the County lends its experience to other local entities that are embarking on the

membership process or implementing age-friendly strategies. Since April 2022, AIS staff have provided technical support to the City of Solana Beach and the City of Imperial Beach as they gathered community input and created their Age-Friendly Action Plans. The City of Solana Beach's Age-Friendly Action Plan was officially approved by their city council in March 2023, and they have begun



*Image: Countywide map showing the Age-Friendly Communities and University*



the implementation process. The City of Imperial Beach is the seventh jurisdiction to embark on the process of becoming an age-friendly community.

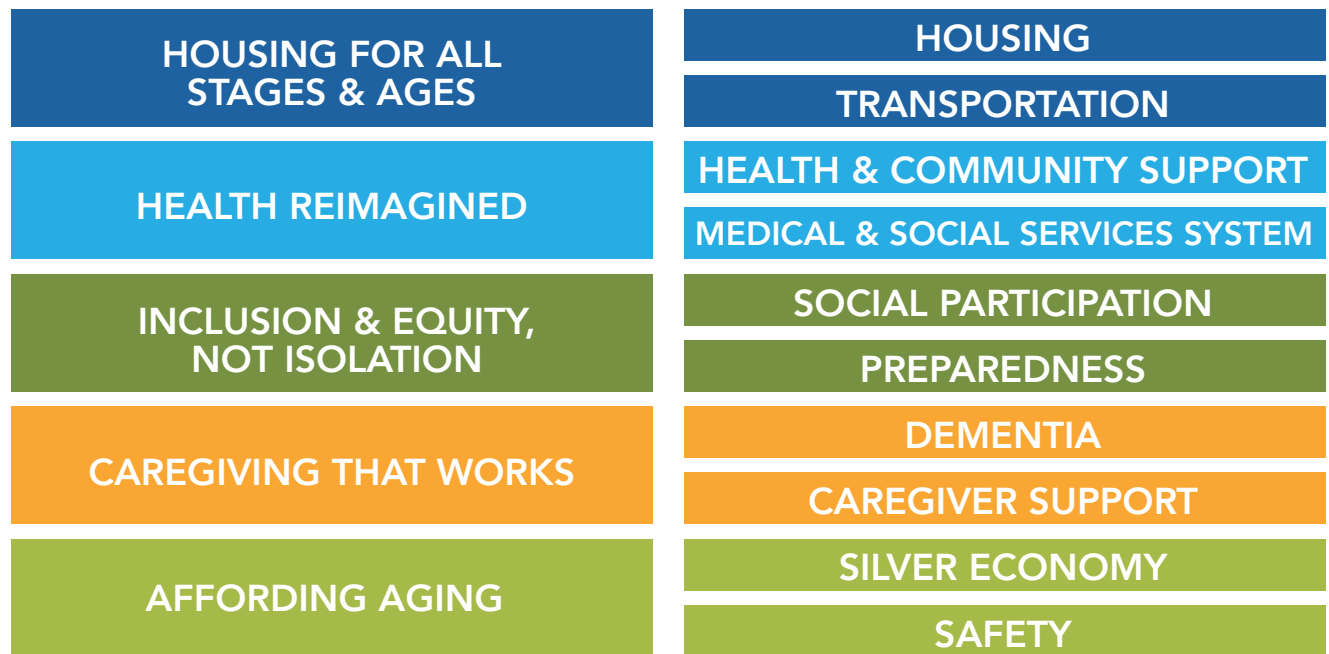
In Spring of 2023, the County was invited by San Diego Foundation to coordinate and facilitate Age-Friendly Roundtables. San Diego

Foundation’s Age-Friendly Communities Program collaborates with non-profit organizations and municipalities to invest in systems-level changes that create more livable environments for residents of all ages and abilities. AIS staff now regularly convene these partners to share best practices amongst the jurisdictions and organizations.

# ALIGNMENT WITH CALIFORNIA’S MASTER PLAN FOR AGING

The increasing population of older adults is not unique to San Diego County. This shift in demographics is occurring across the state and nation, as well as in many countries worldwide. In June 2019, California Governor Gavin Newsom called for the development of the Master Plan for Aging (MPA). This comprehensive plan was then

developed with significant community input from the public, stakeholders, and partners through robust outreach efforts, including the participation of San Diegans. With “Five Bold Goals,” the MPA serves as a multi-sector blueprint to prepare for the growing population of older adults across the state and create a California for all ages.



On January 20, 2023, the MPA released its Second Annual Report, highlighting progress across all Five Bold Goals, as well as legislative successes and local implementation highlights, including three highlights from San Diego County. Additionally, the MPA released 95 new initiatives for implementation in Fiscal Year 2023-24 through multi-sector partnerships. These initiatives build upon the work of the prior two years in advancing person-centered and equity-focused age- and disability-friendly policies, programs, services, and research.

The MPA goals align with Aging Roadmap priorities. Since the creation of the MPA, the California Department of Aging (CDA) has highlighted the County’s innovation and pointed to the Aging Roadmap as an example of a successful local MPA. In a recent MPA Progress Report, San Diego County was recognized under the Health Reimagined accomplishments for being the first county in the nation to earn a regionwide geriatric emergency department accreditation for all 18 eligible local hospitals. The report also recognized the County’s efforts to prevent older adult homelessness through the Pilot Shallow Rental Subsidy Program led by the Office of Homeless Solutions.

The Five Bold Goals include:

1. Housing for All Ages & Stages
2. Health Reimagined
3. Inclusion & Equity, Not Isolation
4. Caregiving That Works
5. Affording Aging



***Aging is changing and it’s changing California. California’s over-60 population is projected to diversify and grow faster than any other age group. By 2030, 10.8 million Californians will be an older adult, making up **one-quarter** of the state’s population.***

— California Department of Aging



# PROGRESS IN PRIORITY AREAS AND NEXT STEPS

The following section describes each of the ten Aging Roadmap priority areas and includes the accomplishments of Fiscal Year 2022-23 (July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023) and anticipated next steps that advance organizational and community goals.



**HEALTH & COMMUNITY SUPPORT**



**HOUSING**



**SOCIAL PARTICIPATION**



**TRANSPORTATION**



**DEMENTIA**



**CAREGIVER SUPPORT**



**SAFETY**



**PREPAREDNESS**



**SILVER ECONOMY**



**MEDICAL & SOCIAL SERVICES SYSTEM**



# HEALTH & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

## **Vision:**

When changes and challenges in health occur, older adults and their families are able to find and access relevant resources, support, and care in their community. The community promotes mental health and physical health, for people of all ages and abilities.

## **Current Landscape:**

San Diego County is home to a variety of social service organizations and programs focused on the needs of older adults, including senior and community centers and safety net programs that support older adults to age in place. Many HHSA program activities, including digital literacy and health promotion efforts, help to connect older adults to information and resources they can use to improve their health, mental wellbeing, and independence. However, many residents are unaware of existing resources. The AIS Call

Center provides information and assistance for people looking for resources. Call Center staff share information on both County programs and those offered by other community agencies. In addition, 211 San Diego is a 24-hour confidential phone service and searchable online database that connects residents to more than 6,000 services and resources. The AIS Outreach & Education Team provides educational presentations and attends community events to increase awareness and connect individuals to County services, as well as to information clearinghouses such as 211 San Diego and the AIS Call Center.

## **Accomplishment Highlights:**

In Fiscal Year 2022-23, accomplishments in the area of Health & Community Support helped to reduce the digital divide, leverage partnerships, promote physical and mental health, and provide equity-focused outreach.



### **Tech2Connect: IHSS Technology for Social Inclusion and Wellbeing**

In early 2023, the County launched the IHSS: Technology for Social Inclusion and Wellbeing program, also referred to as Tech2Connect. This program aims to reduce social isolation among isolated IHSS recipients and caregivers by providing eligible participants with a tablet and/or data, technology training, and support to connect with telehealth/mental health services and social engagement opportunities. This initiative was approved by the Board on June 8, 2021 (3) as part of the County’s American Rescue Plan Act framework. As of June 30, 2023, 161 participants were enrolled in the program. A total of 157 tablets had been distributed and 277 training classes had been held.

### **Community/Senior Center Collaboration**

Community and senior centers provide a variety of services and supports that can help older adults thrive. AIS operates several programs at community and senior centers throughout the county, including the Older Americans Act congregate meal program, Feeling Fit Club fitness classes, and occasional workshops and presentations. In the past year, AIS has partnered with the San Diego Seniors Community Foundation to convene meetings of the San Diego Senior Center Coalition and explore ways to work together to improve the lives of older adults. One project is the Elder and Dependent Adult Abuse Training Toolkit that is detailed in the Safety section of this report. In another project, AIS and

HHSA’s Self-Sufficiency Services collaborated to bring the “Live Well on Wheels” mobile outreach vehicle to various senior and community centers in the region. In this initiative, center participants gained information and access to a variety of County resources such as CalFresh food assistance, Medi-Cal, and more.

### **Health Promotion Programs**

AIS Health Promotion provides programs for older adults to manage chronic conditions, improve physical functioning, increase socialization, and remain as independent as possible. As the COVID-19 pandemic came to an end in Spring of 2023, many communities were eager to bring back in-person programs that were transitioned to a virtual format at the start of the pandemic. In Fiscal Year 2022-23, many programs resumed in person, and more than 2,200 older adults and caregivers participated in AIS health promotion programs such as Feeling Fit Club (group fitness classes), Tai Chi for fall prevention, and Healthier Living workshops.

**“ I wanted to thank the County for making our Tai Chi class available. I have enjoyed learning so many things beyond just the movements...This class has helped me stay planted and more strong, balanced, and confident on my walks, especially with my 100-pound dog.”**

**— Tai Chi Participant**

## **NEXT STEPS**

As the older adult population grows to be increasingly diverse, it is essential that individuals have awareness of and access to culturally appropriate resources, information, and services. With a focus on equity, AIS will continue outreach in multiple languages to reach underserved communities that may have less awareness of County and community resources. Existing partnerships with the region’s senior centers and community partners will be leveraged to ensure that the patrons are aware of and have access to all programs for which they may be eligible. Health promotion and technology programming will continue with the goal of bringing services to non-English-speaking participants.



# HOUSING

## **Vision:**

Older adults live in safe and affordable housing that is located near goods, services, and activities, all of which allows them to age in their community.

## **Current Landscape:**

Housing continues to be a significant societal challenge in many areas across California, including in San Diego County. A limited supply of affordable housing, inflation and high cost of living, and a growing number of unhoused individuals in need of shelter and services are some of the most pressing housing-related issues. Older adults, particularly those who do not own a home, are especially susceptible to the high cost of housing as many are living on fixed incomes. The 2023 WeAllCount Point-in-Time Count found no less than 10,264 San Diegans are experiencing homelessness. Of those, one-

quarter, or 2,670, are age 55 or over. As it is impossible to find every unhoused person for the annual count, this is an underestimate of the true unhoused population.

Several County departments address the multifaceted issue of housing for older adults:

- **Land Use and Environment Group, Planning and Development Services (PDS)** is responsible for long range land use planning for the unincorporated county. PDS addresses zoning and building requirements, including incentives for developers to build affordable housing, Accessory Dwelling Units (also known as ADUs), and other housing suitable for older adults.
- Four departments within **Health and Human Services Agency** that conduct housing-related work include:

*Image: Rendering of Nestor Senior Village*

- **Aging & Independence Services (AIS):** Provides the Home Safe program for clients of Adult Protective Services (APS) who are at risk of homelessness. AIS also provides some assistance to help older adults and caregivers make minor home modifications to help them age in place safely.
- **Behavioral Health Services (BHS):** Provides affordable permanent supportive housing, including some units specifically for older adults.
- **Housing & Community Development Services (HCDS):** Serves as one of six Housing Authorities for the county. A Housing Authority is responsible for the management and operation of its local public housing program, including the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher which serves over 4,600 older adults. In addition to managing Section 8 and other housing programs, HCDS provides funds for affordable housing development and maintains a housing resources directory.
- **Homeless Solutions & Equitable Communities includes the Office of Homeless Solutions (OHS):** Provides outreach and case management to individuals experiencing homelessness, and also provides Home Safe for older adults experiencing chronic homelessness.

The Age Well Housing Team, convened by AIS, is comprised of representatives from all of the above departments as well as community agencies and stakeholders. This committee serves as a forum

to share information across the wide spectrum of housing issues, from increasing the housing supply, to encouraging age-friendly housing design, to supporting older adults experiencing housing insecurity. Age Well Housing Team projects include educating the community about affordable housing alternatives such as ADUs.

### **Accomplishment Highlights:**

In Fiscal Year 2022-23, several programs and services have addressed the housing crisis head-on by providing housing stability, preventing homelessness, and helping older adults age in place.

### **Homelessness Prevention and Intervention – Home Safe**

The Home Safe Program began in July 2019 with funding from the California Department of Social Services to support APS staff to identify clients at risk of homelessness and connect them with housing navigation services. Throughout Fiscal Year 2022-23, Home Safe helped more than 558 APS clients work through challenges related to housing insecurity. The State of California Budget Act of 2021 allocated additional funding to expand the original Home Safe program, as well as develop a new program component to serve chronically unhoused adults age 50 and over. In Fiscal Year 2022-23, AIS and OHS worked together and implemented this new program component, which launched in Spring 2023. The new component provides case management, flexible funding for expenses like housing deposits, and coordination to secure safe housing.

### **HOME SAFE PROGRAM SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT**

A husband, wife, and disabled dependent daughter were living in an old, broken-down trailer. The trailer had no usable bathroom, no hot water, and there were holes in the flooring. The trailer was unsafe and unlivable. This family, with the help of the Home Safe Case Manager, was able to successfully move into an apartment.



## **New Affordable Housing for Older Adults**

The County, along with the City of San Diego Housing Commission, and other public and private partners, completed the Harris Family Senior Residence in the community of City Heights. The project features 117 affordable housing units for adults 62 years of age and older. HCDS and BHS also unveiled several senior affordable housing projects, with three properties under construction that will add 192 units for older adults. Kettner Crossing in the city of San Diego will house 64 low-income older adults. Nestor Senior Village in the city of San Diego includes 73 units, including units for older adults with serious mental illness (SMI). Santa Fe Senior Village in the City of Vista includes 54 units, some of which are slated for low-income older adults with SMI. These housing units are for older adults living with SMI. Services available for them include mental health services, case management, recovery services, educational programs, employment opportunities or training, and social services that allow them to meet their behavioral health goals.

### **Pilot Shallow Rental Subsidy Program**

To help mitigate the financial burden older adults face and keep older adults from experiencing homelessness, the Board approved creation of a Pilot Shallow Rental Subsidy Program on September 27, 2022 (25). OHS launched the program with a call for program participants in early 2023. To be eligible for this program, individuals must be over 55, very low income (defined as below 50% of the Area Median Income) and be severely rent burdened. This program will serve 222 households by providing a \$500 monthly subsidy and light case management services over a period of 18 months. In alignment with the Board's value of implementing data-driven strategies, the program design includes an evaluation

component. Subsidy payments began in June 2023.

### **Home Repair for Age-Friendly Homes**

The HCDS Home Repair Program offers a loan program of up to \$25,000 for single-family homeowners and a non-repayable grant program of up to \$12,000 for mobile homeowners to make safety repairs and modifications to improve mobility and security at home. In Fiscal Year 2022-23, the Home Repair Program served 16 households with a household member over 62 years old and another 43 projects are underway in Fiscal Year 2023-24. In addition, AIS offers a minor home repair program that provided 628 households with modifications, such as installation of grab bars, that help support older adults to age in place.

### **Land Use Program for Increasing Age-Friendly Housing**


PDS began the process of creating several options to present to the Board for a new land use program to increase the development of, and reduce barriers for, new housing for older adults, including new affordable housing developments and assisted living facilities. One of the approaches is to make zoning modifications that would allow for more senior and assisted living units to be developed. Another approach is to identify additional incentives for builders to encourage new development. These approaches would be a supplement to the County's existing Density Bonus Program which allows for increased density for age-restricted senior housing developments. Using these approaches, PDS staff are currently in the process of developing draft program options and identifying funding and resource needs for each option. PDS anticipates releasing the draft options in late 2023 for public feedback and returning to the Board in 2024 with program recommendations.



### **Aging 101 Training**

After a successful pilot in June 2022, the “Aging 101: Training for Homeless Service Providers” was finalized and presented to several large groups of professionals. This training was developed by AIS, Serving Seniors, and the Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH) in response to service providers expressing a need for more thorough training on the unique needs of older adults. This first-of-its kind training includes an overview of the wide variety of

community resources available for older adults. It also includes guidance on how to approach and provide support for challenging issues, such as incontinence, that can be difficult to manage in a shelter environment. Since its launch in June 2022, the Aging 101 Training has been given to over 250 homeless service providers throughout the county. This is an area that has gained national interest, with more than 1,500 participants attending a 2023 national webinar in which AIS and RTFH described the project.



**Harris Family Senior Residence in City Heights has 117 affordable units and opened October 2022**

## **NEXT STEPS**

In response to community input, in Fiscal Year 2023-24, AIS, along with Serving Seniors and RTFH, will develop an “Aging 201: Training for Homeless Service Providers” curriculum to provide organizations with additional information and tools to support their work with older adults experiencing housing insecurity or homelessness. Additionally, the Pilot Shallow Rental Subsidy Program will continue in Fiscal Year 2023-24 with two million dollars approved by the Board to fund the project. The Pilot will be evaluated to assess its efficacy at preventing older adult homelessness by the County’s Office of Evaluation, Performance & Analytics.

Finally, the County will continue prioritizing the housing needs of older adults, which will include HCDS working on six housing developments that will provide 417 affordable units for older adults, as well as PDS going before the Board in 2024 with housing recommendations for older adults living in the unincorporated areas.



# SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

## **Vision:**

Older adults have access to a range of social and community engagement opportunities that promote active living, reduce isolation, and provide enriching experiences with others across age groups and generations.

## **Current Landscape:**

The San Diego region offers a plethora of options for people of all ages to be engaged in social activity, including programming at senior and community centers, libraries, service clubs, educational organizations, meetup groups, and more. There is also an increasing number of virtual options for those who may be homebound or lack transportation. Despite the many opportunities, not all older adults have equal access. Some are not aware of available options, while others have transportation, language, health, or other barriers that make in-person social connection difficult. Among those who are homebound, not everyone has

access to technology or has the digital literacy skills to navigate technology. Addressing these barriers to social connection is critical.

Feeling a sense of connection and belonging can positively impact health, especially for older adults. Conversely, research has demonstrated that social isolation and loneliness are associated with an increased risk of dementia, heart disease, depression, and even premature death. This research is helping to elevate the importance of addressing social isolation while reinforcing the value of existing programs and services offered to older adults.

To address this critical public health issue, CDA continues to invest in digital literacy and technology access through partnerships with local Area Agencies on Aging, including AIS, which now has a Digital Inclusion Program. In addition, the County and community partners regularly host events, provide volunteer



opportunities, and facilitate ongoing programs that can help older adults stay connected. AIS has an Intergenerational Coordinator staff person who provides technical assistance to organizations on how to implement intergenerational programs and assists with developing new engagement opportunities. AIS Outreach & Education staff share information with older adults about social engagement opportunities, as well as information about transportation options to access the activities. AIS also convenes the Age Well Social Participation & Inclusion Team, which is comprised of a variety of senior service providers including those that reach isolated older adults, researchers, and older adults. This team has created educational resources, such as the *Ways to Engage* and *Get Connected!* guides.

### **Accomplishment Highlights:**

Social Participation accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2022-23 focused on increasing intergenerational programming and bridging the digital divide.

### **Intergenerational Programs**

As the COVID-19 pandemic emergency phase came to an end in Spring 2023, many older adults voiced their need for opportunities to reconnect and engage. On May 18, 2023, the South County Intergenerational Games was hosted for the first time since before the pandemic. The mission of the Games is to increase mutual understanding and respect between generations and to promote healthy, active, life-long behaviors. At this event, older adults teamed up with third grade students from the Chula Vista Elementary School District for a half-day of fun educational and physical activities.

With funding from CDA, in May and June of 2023, AIS partnered with the County's Department of Parks & Recreation community centers to offer intergenerational recreational activities such as pickleball and cooking classes in Fallbrook and Spring Valley.



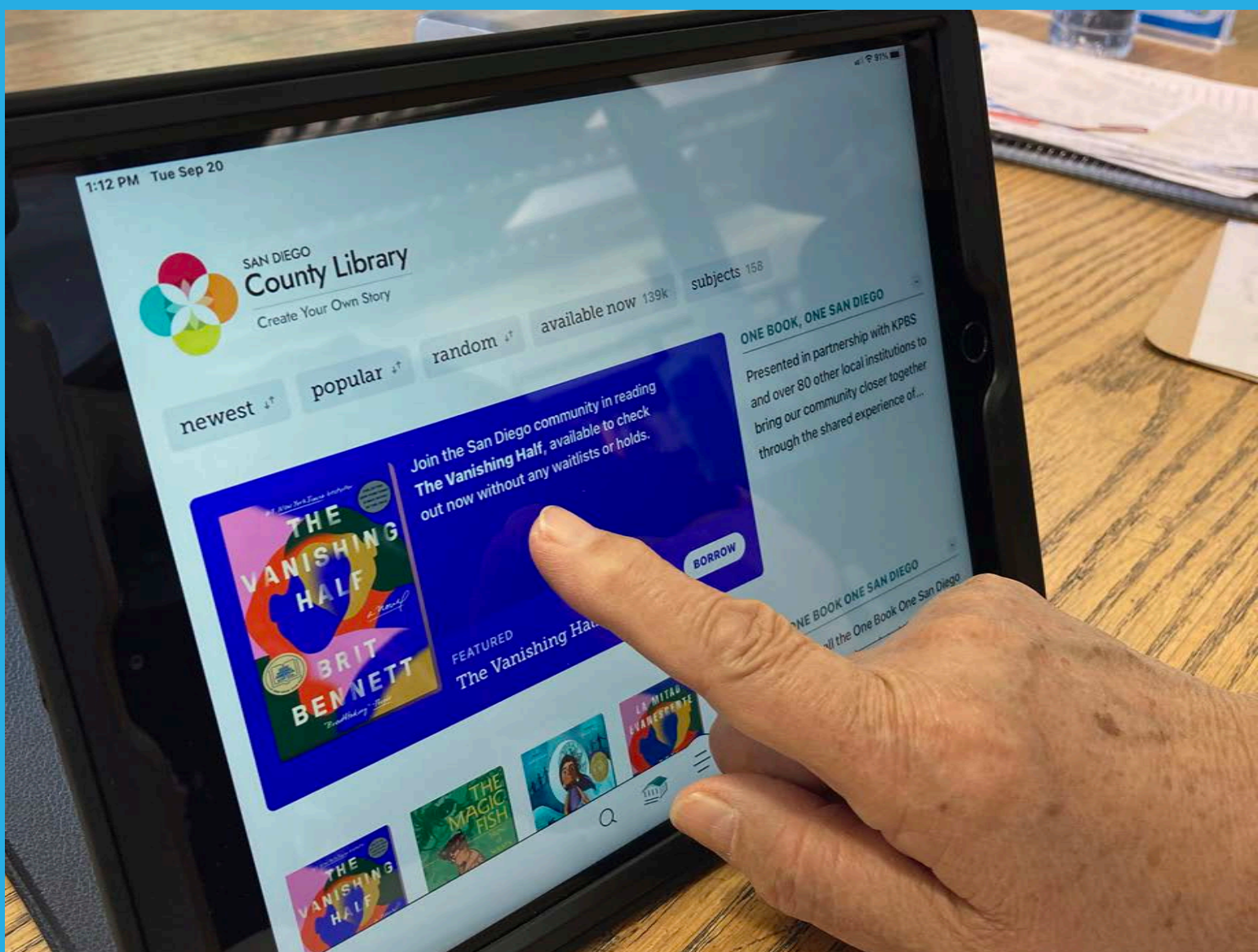
Age-friendly fun during the Intergenerational (IG) Games



### **Digital Inclusion Programs**

The AIS Digital Inclusion Program began in early 2022 when CDA provided AIS with tablet devices through their Connections, Health, Aging & Technology (CHAT) pilot project. Through CHAT, eligible older adults received an iPad, a data plan, digital literacy training, and technical support to facilitate socialization and participation in activities from the older adult's home. In Fiscal Year 2022-23, AIS was able to expand the Digital Inclusion

Program with additional funding and devices from CDA's Digital Connections program and Access to Technology Initiative. In addition to tablet devices, AIS connects program participants to digital literacy training services and resources for low or no-cost broadband internet. Since the program began, more than half of the tablet devices have been distributed along with digital literacy training and resources to access no or low-cost internet.



*Image: Digital Inclusion Program participant checks out a book on their iPad, Linda Vista Library, September 2022*





“

*This class has been great. I came into the class with some computer skills but with confusion on how to operate the iPad. Both instructors were kind and informative. I learned many things in this class, thank you so much for this opportunity.”*

— Linda, Digital Inclusion Program Participant

## NEXT STEPS

The Age Well Social Participation & Inclusion Team will continue to promote opportunities for engagement that are cross-cultural, intergenerational, and appropriate for individuals of all backgrounds and abilities, as well as transportation options to access social engagement activities. With additional funding from CDA, AIS will expand the Digital Inclusion Program to reach 1,000 additional older adults and individuals with disabilities so they may become more engaged and learn how to access needed services available online. The County’s Office of Equitable Communities will provide resources and assist with enrolling individuals in the Affordable Connectivity Program. AIS and the County’s Department of Parks and Recreation will support intergenerational connection through several programs at community and senior centers. These programs will bring youth and older adults together for weekly activities such as pickleball, cooking classes, and gardening. By engaging in programs that meet regularly, participants will have an opportunity to experience enriching connections with each other. In addition to the above programs, AIS will provide information and technical assistance to community organizations that want to develop their own intergenerational programs.



# TRANSPORTATION

## **Vision:**

Older adults have access to safe and affordable transportation options that are accessible for all ages and abilities.

## **Current Landscape:**

Transportation is a crucial component of maintaining independence, accessing needed services, staying socially engaged, and sustaining connections to community life. Access to transportation options that are safe, affordable, accessible, and reliable is especially important for non-drivers.

Public transportation providers in the county include the Metropolitan Transit System (serving the central, eastern, and southern portions of the county) and the North County Transit District. Both entities provide light rail, bus, and paratransit services. Residents who live in urban and some suburban communities

are more likely to have good access to public transit services that run frequently and connect to a variety of routes. However, those living in rural and some suburban communities may have minimal or essentially no access to public transportation.

Beyond public transportation, transportation options for older adults include private driving services, which include rideshare operators like Uber and Lyft, and non-profit transportation services. For example, organizations such as Jewish Family Service of San Diego and ElderHelp of San Diego provide volunteer-based ride programs for older adults in need of transportation assistance.

There are several organizations that provide transportation information to help older adults and others learn about available options. One such non-profit organization serving

*Image: Transportation Training Field Trip in Arabic to Old Town San Diego, April 2023*

older adults, persons with disabilities, and other populations in need is Facilitating Access to Coordinated Transportation (FACT). FACT is designated as our region's Consolidated Transportation Services Agency and offers a variety of services, such as telephone and web referrals to transportation providers and assistance scheduling low-cost rides. 211 San Diego is another helpful resource that informs residents in need of transportation about public transportation, senior ride programs, paratransit programs, and specialized transit information providers. The San Diego Association of Governments (known as SANDAG) also offers 511 San Diego which is a free phone and web service that provides up-to-the-minute information on traffic conditions; schedule, route, and fare information for public transportation; carpool and vanpool referrals; bicycling information; and more.

Some older adult residents do not know how to access available transportation options or know of a trusted information source to assist them with transportation-related questions. The Age Well Transportation & Community Connections Team works to increase mobility independence by sharing information about transportation options and collaborating with community partners to support transportation initiatives. The Team created the *Ride Well to Age Well Guide*, a resource updated annually to provide regional transportation information and options specific to older adults.

AIS also provides outreach regarding available transportation options and information clearinghouses, such as 211 San Diego and FACT, through community events and presentations. AIS is also currently administering a no-cost senior transportation program with funding from the American Rescue Plan Act.

### **Accomplishment Highlights:**

In Fiscal Year 2022-23, the implementation of educational trainings and providing new no-

cost transportation services, has helped address community priorities and create age-friendly environments. Strategies have focused on equity by providing services to rural and non-English-speaking communities, those who are economically disadvantaged, and communities most impacted by COVID-19. Services also increased access to social engagement opportunities in an effort to reduce social isolation.

### **San Diego County No-Cost Transportation Program for Older Adults**

In October 2022, enrollment began for the San Diego County No-Cost Transportation Program for Older Adults, which provides up to 80 miles of transportation per month to eligible older adults who reside in one of the 39 Health Equity Zip Codes, at no cost to the rider. The program is provided through a contract with Jewish Family Service of San Diego and operated by their *On the Go* program. Funded by COVID-19 relief funding through the American Rescue Plan Act, this program is assisting older adults over a two-year period to retain their mobility independence and stay connected to community life by providing transportation assistance for a variety of activities including medical appointments, errands, and social activities. Eligible participants can request a ride online or by calling a live agent. Without this program, many of these participants would not have the ability to leave their homes due to the financial burden of transportation services and limited access to alternative travel options. As of June 2023, the program has enrolled 129 older adults and provided over 2,120 one-way trips, totaling over 14,330 miles of rides.

**“ I live alone, and I’m doing chemo on my own. It’s nice to be able to talk to someone, even if it is just to schedule a ride.”**

**— Rodney, Transportation Program Participant**





# FREE RIDES FOR SENIORS!

Living in San Diego?  
You may qualify for **free rides**.



## **Transportation Trainings for Older Adults**

Since November 2022, the County has served as a technical assistance provider to the El Cajon Collaborative to assist with the creation and deployment of transportation training classes and field trips to older adult residents and community partners. These trainings have focused on content featured in the *Ride Well to Age Well Guide*. The El Cajon Collaborative has hosted trainings in English, Arabic, and Tagalog, and has shared this training with over 100 participants. After a participant completes

a class, they are invited to attend a field trip and practice what they learned by taking a trip to a local destination using the public transportation system. This practical experience reinforces information gained in the class setting and has led to new social connections and experiences for many of the participants. On April 28, 2023, the County assisted the El Cajon Collaborative with a six-hour Train-the-Trainer Workshop where 30 attendees, representing organizations and agencies from around the region, were trained on how to give their own trainings, assisting with the sustainability of this program and the community's access to this information.



***The biggest realization for me was that people enjoy getting together, but they tend to not go out without a reason. The transportation training classes gave us a reason to get out with each other and after we did it once, we've continued. Isolation is diminishing. Socialization is increasing. And public transportation is giving us a reason to get out of the house.***

**— Carol, Transportation Training participant and community champion of the Friendship Field Trips**

*Image: Example of the Senior Transportation Program promotional material  
Images on Page 23:*

*Top: Friendship Field Trip in June 2023. Friendship fieldtrips were created by transportation training participants to get together, socialize, and take public transit adventures together.*

*Bottom Left: Classroom transportation training, March 2023*

*Bottom Right: Transportation field trip following March 2023 classroom training*





## NEXT STEPS

The County and its partners will continue to advance the vision of the Transportation priority area in several ways, including connecting older adults to their community by providing another year of no-cost transportation for older adults in Health Equity Zip Codes through the No-Cost Transportation Program for Older Adults. AIS will also seek to expand the Transit Training program to North County so that service providers and transportation champions can teach older adults they work with about available transportation options throughout the county.



# DEMENTIA

## **Vision:**

San Diegans have the information they need to reduce their risk of Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias (ARD); residents with ARD receive the highest standard of clinical care; individuals with ARD are well cared for and supported by “Dementia-Friendly” communities to be as independent as possible; and family members have the support they need to care for their loved ones.

## **Current Landscape:**

Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias continue to impact more individuals and families in our region every year, leading to a growing need for services and programs to support those living with ARD and their caregivers. According to the County’s epidemiologists, nearly 102,000 individuals in our region are living with ARD. In recognition of this growing problem, on May 6,

2014 (5), the Board approved The Alzheimer’s Project, an unprecedented regional initiative to address the toll of the disease on families, communities, and our healthcare systems. Since then, the County and its partners have made significant improvements with innovative approaches to addressing the impacts of ARD in the region. While the research and medical community continues to work on advancing treatments, there are many County and community services that can support people living with ARD. Many of these services are provided by non-profit organizations such as Alzheimer’s Association of San Diego/Imperial County, Alzheimer’s San Diego, Jewish Family Service of San Diego, and Southern Caregiver Resource Center. AIS coordinates the Age Well Dementia & Brain Health Team, which brings together organizations such as these to foster the development of dementia-friendly communities.



In 2020, the County was one of seven municipalities in California that were granted funding to implement national Healthy Brain Initiative (HBI) strategies locally. With an emphasis on integrating brain health into public health efforts and supporting people living with dementia, the efforts of the HBI support the advancement of the Dementia priority area of the Aging Roadmap. In 2023, the California Department of Public Health notified the County that funding will continue in Fiscal Year 2023-24 for two additional years to further advance HBI strategies.

### **Accomplishment Highlights:**

Over the past year, the County and its partners have provided community and clinical education and implemented strategies for long-term improvements in clinical protocols and dementia-friendly environments. A more detailed update on The Alzheimer's Project is presented in the 2023 Alzheimer's Project Annual Report which can be found in Appendix B of this document. Highlights of the report include:

#### **Clinical Roundtable**

Due to a shortage of specialists, primary care physicians are on the front lines of dementia care, but they have not historically had the tools or information to provide the highest standard of care. The Clinical Roundtable, comprised of medical specialists from each of our region's health systems, developed the *Physician Guidelines for the Screening, Evaluation, and*

*Management of Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (Guidelines)*. In Fiscal Year 2022-23, a total of 774 local clinicians were trained on the *Guidelines*. The *Guidelines* continue to garner interest across the nation, with more than 1,460 practitioners outside San Diego County receiving training either in person or online in the past year. This brings the total number of clinicians trained to more than 7,000 over the life of The Alzheimer's Project.

Clinical Roundtable physicians have identified a need to embed certain aspects of the *Guidelines* into their organizations' electronic medical record (EMR) systems, such as the algorithm decision tree, smart phrases for the screening and evaluation instruments, and patient scores on cognitive evaluations, which have – for other diseases – been shown to increase early diagnosis, reduce treatment errors, and improve patient outcomes. In Fiscal Year 2021-22, several local health systems had committed to integrating screening instruments and evaluation score fields into their respective EMR systems. By June 2023, the goals for information and fields to include were expanded and several health systems made progress in implementing some of them. For instance, Kaiser Permanente implemented smart phrases and distinct fields for ADRD information. UC San Diego Health is implementing the fields as well as a study to evaluate how selected *Guidelines* protocols impact clinical care. TrueCare, a primary care Federally Qualified Health Center, has implemented similar fields.



**Dementia Friends  
Champion Training,  
November 2022**

Other health systems such as Scripps Health are in the process of determining the specifics of what will work best for their system. To support the implementation of these EMR changes, in March 2023, each health system committed to designating a primary care physician to serve as a “Champion” to work with the Clinical Roundtable on identifying specific protocols that will integrate smoothly into the health system’s current systems.

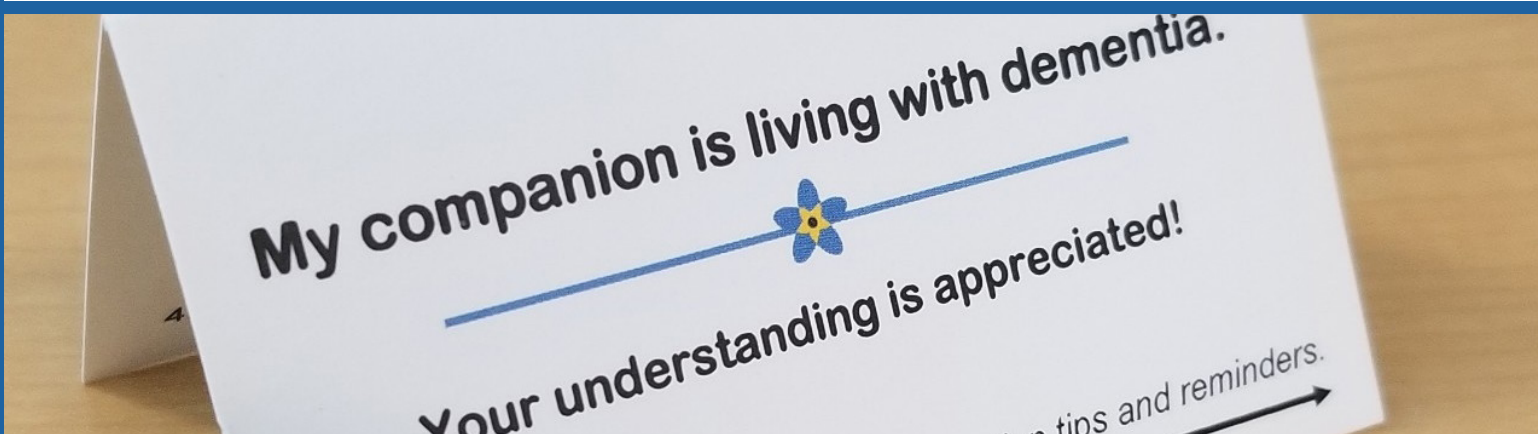
### **ADRD Caregiver and Patient Support**

County epidemiologists estimate that there are more than 290,000 San Diegans currently caring for someone with ADRD. Through County and other caregiver programs, over 80,000 hours of respite care were provided to caregivers. AIS’ Alzheimer’s Response Team (ART) provided support to more than 960 households to people living with ADRD and their families. ART social workers educated these residents on addressing challenges associated with dementia and provided care coordination and linkages to other community resources.

### **Public Awareness and Education**

In a dementia-friendly community, people and organizations are well-informed and can recognize and respond effectively to the needs of individuals living with dementia. Over the past fiscal year, the Age Well Dementia & Brain Health Team engaged community sectors such as libraries and churches to support their ability to successfully create a dementia-friendly community. These include:

- Over 120 community members participated in virtual and in-person trainings on dementia, the role the public can take to make our communities more dementia-friendly, and information and tools to support those living with dementia. Among the tools distributed as part of these trainings was the Dementia Communication Card, a card for caregivers to give to community members to help facilitate compassionate interactions with individuals living with dementia.
- Sector-specific brochures on Dementia-Friendly Tips and Elder Abuse Prevention have been published online in multiple languages. The Dementia Communication Card for families to use while out in the community has also been made available online in multiple languages.
- 1,018 mandated reporters received elder and dependent adult abuse training with enhanced education on dementia to better equip them to recognize ADRD and respond to incidents of abuse.



*Image: The Dementia Communication Card shown in English*





## Dementia-Friendly Tips and Elder Abuse Prevention for **Faith-Based Communities**

For more resources and information on programs for older adults, visit [www.aging.sandiegocounty.gov](http://www.aging.sandiegocounty.gov) or call (800) 339-4661.



## Dementia-Friendly Tips and Elder Abuse Prevention for **Banks and Financial Institutions**

For more resources and information on programs for older adults, visit [www.aging.sandiegocounty.gov](http://www.aging.sandiegocounty.gov) or call (800) 339-4661.



## Examples of Sector-Specific Brochures on Dementia-Friendly Tips and Elder Abuse Prevention

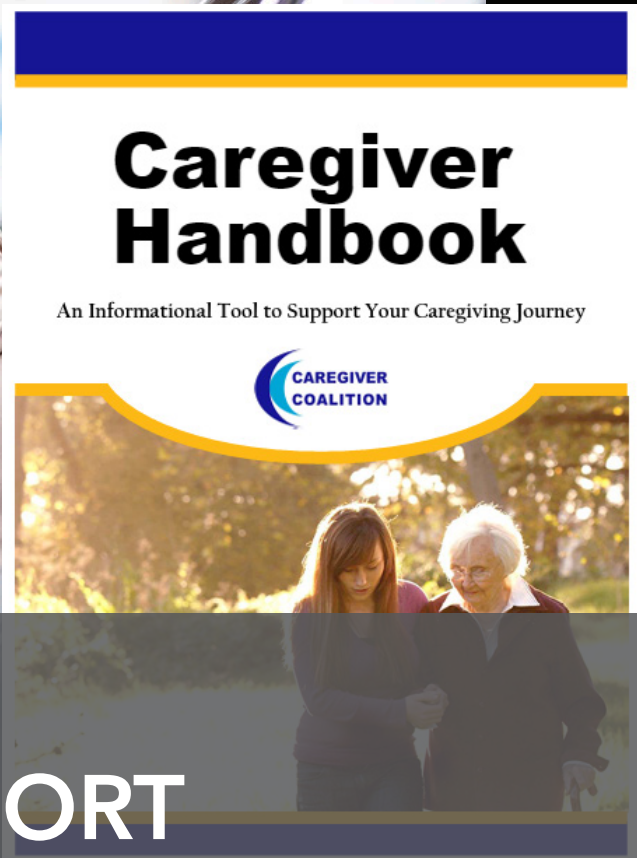
## Dementia-Friendly Tips and Elder Abuse Prevention for **Libraries**

For more resources and information on programs for older adults, visit [www.aging.sandiegocounty.gov](http://www.aging.sandiegocounty.gov) or call (800) 339-4661.



## NEXT STEPS

The Clinical Roundtable will revise and update the *Guidelines* with the latest information regarding screening and evaluation guidelines, and with information regarding new medications for ADRD. UC San Diego Health will continue implementation of the research study to assess effectiveness of the use of the *Guidelines* and their incorporation into the UC San Diego Health EMR system. The Age Well Dementia & Brain Health Team will continue to engage different community sectors to educate them on creating more dementia-friendly environments.



# CAREGIVER SUPPORT

## **Vision:**

Caregivers have access to the support and resources necessary to provide responsive and quality care to older adults, while also tending to their own well-being.

## **Current Landscape:**

Throughout San Diego County, there are an estimated 490,000 caregivers who care for a family member or loved one. There is a critical need for training, assistance, and relief for many caregivers who are in a role that can be rewarding but also may be challenging and last for many years. AIS operates a variety of programs that specifically support eligible families and caregivers. AIS administers the federally-funded Family Caregiver Support Program (FCSP) through several contracted organizations that provide education, caregiver

counseling, case management, support groups, legal aid, minor home modification, and respite care. In addition to County-funded services, local non-profit organizations provide caregiver education, support groups, and respite programs.

AIS coordinates the Caregiver Coalition of San Diego, a volunteer group of senior service providers that works to identify and address the needs of caregivers through education, support, advocacy, and member collaboration. Through interactive webinars, conferences, and community events, the Caregiver Coalition provides free information and resources, such as the *Caregiver Handbook*, to make caregiving less stressful.

The County provides a variety of services and support to grandparents raising grandchildren

*Image: Caregiver Handbook cover, available through the Caregiver Coalition of San Diego*



and other kinship family caregivers, including respite care, a fund for emergency needs, kinship family enrichment events, and educational resources including the *Handbook for Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children*.

### **Accomplishment Highlights:**

Caregiver Support accomplishments focus on providing educational opportunities to caregivers and connecting them to resources.

### **Caregiver Coalition of San Diego Webinars, Workshops, and Conference**

Throughout Fiscal Year 2022-23, the Caregiver Coalition and its member organizations have provided free virtual webinars and workshops on Parkinson’s Disease, Recognizing Elder Abuse, Alzheimer’s Disease Warning Signs, and Programs of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) with over 242 total attendees. To expand the reach of caregiver resources and tools, the Caregiver Coalition developed a YouTube channel where community members can view past webinars. The Caregiver Coalition also translated their *Caregiver Handbook* into Spanish, Vietnamese, Tagalog, and Arabic.



Outreach and engagement to caregivers



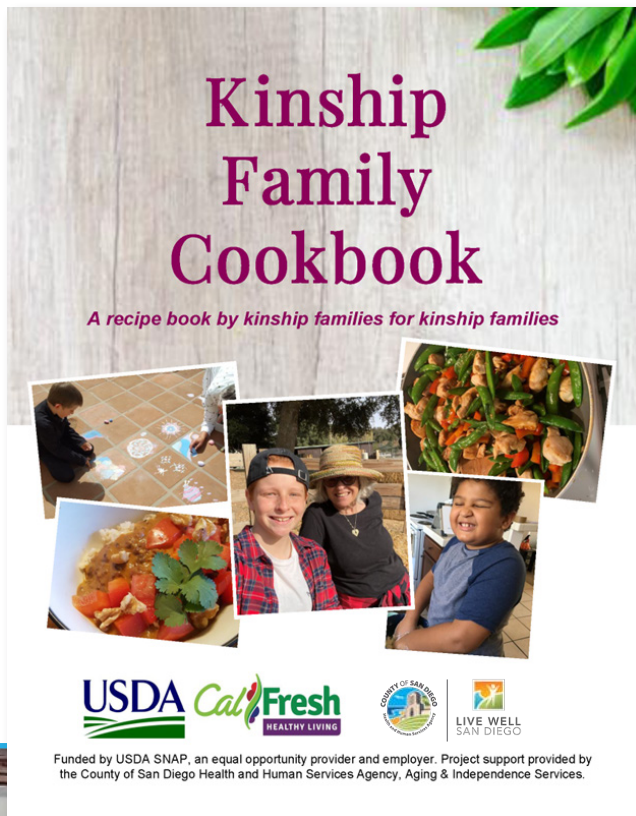
LIVE WELL  
SAN DIEGO  
LIVEWELLSD.ORG



To celebrate caregivers and their commitment, the Caregiver Coalition hosted the *We Love Caregivers Conference* on June 22, 2023 at the Mira Mesa Senior Center with over 80 older adults and caregivers in attendance. The event featured engaging presentations from experts in the fields of aging and caregiving, a resource fair, and mindfulness practice for attendees.

### **Support for Kinship Families**

In early 2022, the *Handbook for Grandparents and Other Relatives Raising Children* was updated. This comprehensive guide includes legal, mental health, and financial resources and other information that can support kinship families. Throughout Fiscal Year 2022-23, 1,233 copies



**Kinship family programs and cookbook**



of the handbook were distributed. A Spanish version of the handbook was also translated and published for distribution. In February 2023, several HHSA departments came together to host a Kinship Family Day at the San Diego Zoo and Safari Park. Over 350 older adults and kinship family caregivers and children participated in these events.

### **Respite Care**

In Fiscal Year 2022-23, 29,540 hours of respite were provided to caregivers through the FCSP, with an emphasis on caregivers who are 60 and older, those caring for someone living with ADRD, and kinship family caregivers.

To further augment the respite provided via the FCSP, since 2019, the County has provided a unique program specifically for caregivers of those living with ADRD. Through the County's Respite Voucher Program, families paid 50% of the respite cost and the County covered the remaining 50%. Two contracted organizations provided over 67,847 hours of cost-reduced respite to approximately 1,385 ADRD caregivers in Fiscal Year 2022-23. To date, more than 6,000 clients have been served, with the program ending in December 2023.



**Cargiver resources at the We Love Caregivers Conference, June 2023**

## **NEXT STEPS**

Caregiving resources will continue to be shared with the community with special attention to ensuring these resources are accessible to diverse audiences. The Caregiver Coalition of San Diego will collaborate to update the *Caregiver Handbook* and make it available in even more languages. In-person educational events, resource fairs, and conferences will be hosted to educate the community about existing local resources and will include focused information for diverse audiences such as non-English-speaking communities, older adult caregivers, and working caregivers. The Caregiver Coalition will also seek to partner with local organizations and businesses to ensure that their leadership is knowledgeable of existing supports and services that may benefit those who work for them. In partnership with other County departments, AIS will continue support for kinship caregivers in the form of community events, programming for kinship families, and resource distribution.





# SAFETY

**Vision:**

Older adults and persons with disabilities are safe in their homes and community.

**Current Landscape:**

Everyone should feel safe in their home and community. Safety is important at all ages, but older adults and persons with disabilities often face increased threats such as scams, abuse, and the risk of injury due to falls. The County provides a variety of supports and services that seek to improve and ensure safety among older adults.

Throughout the United States, it is estimated that nearly one in 10 older adults living in a community setting have experienced elder abuse in the prior year. Throughout Fiscal Year 2022-23, AIS Adult Protective Services (APS) investigated over 17,200 reports of elder abuse. Unfortunately, many cases go unreported,

especially when individuals are unaware of the various types of abuse and their signs and indicators. As reports of elder abuse and scams rise, the County and its partners continue to prioritize expanding public awareness of abuse and strengthening legal supports to prevent and address it. The San Diego County District Attorney coordinates the Elder Protection Council, a collaboration of APS, local law enforcement, government agencies, and other stakeholders.

To combat the rampant scams and financial abuse impacting so many older adults, the Federal Bureau of Investigations, the District Attorney’s Office, APS, the US Department of Justice, the Law Enforcement Coordination Center, and local law enforcement joined forces to create the Elder Justice Task Force (EJTF). In 2022, over 1,700 older adults in San Diego County fell victim to financial scams

resulting in over 49 million dollars lost. The District Attorney's Office continues to support EJTF efforts to bring these scammers to justice and is focusing on creative ways to pull hundreds of thousands of dollars back in order to return the stolen funds to victims.

While APS is responsible for the investigation of abuse allegations in the community, the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program within AIS is responsible for investigating reports of abuse in long-term care facilities through a combination of staff and the dedicated support of certified volunteers. The Public Guardian program within AIS ensures the safety and care of individuals who have been deemed by the court to be unable to care for themselves and for whom the Public Guardian is named as their conservator. The Public Guardian is responsible for ensuring a conservatee has proper food, clothing, shelter, and health care, as well as protecting conservatees' assets.

AIS also contributes to the safety of community-dwelling older adults by engaging in fall prevention efforts. Each year, over 100,000 older adults in the region experience falls that result in serious injuries. AIS coordinates the San Diego Fall Prevention Task Force, a community-based coalition comprised of healthcare professionals, senior service providers, and community advocates. The Task Force collaborates on developing resources, awareness campaigns, and programs to reduce falls and their devastating consequences in San Diego County. In addition, AIS offers evidence-based Tai Chi classes which have been shown to improve balance, strength, and flexibility and decrease the risk of falls.

### **Accomplishment Highlights:**

In Fiscal Year 2022-23, the Safety priority area accomplishments focused on ensuring older adults are protected and can live safely in their homes and in community.

### ***Dignity at Home***

The Dignity at Home Fall Prevention Program was developed to reduce the number of these debilitating falls by addressing common risk factors. To implement the program, AIS received grant funding from CDA to purchase, assemble, and distribute fall prevention kits to eligible older adults and persons with disabilities. Each kit includes home safety products, assistive devices, and educational materials. More than 200 kits have been distributed to date.

### ***Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program (LTCOP)***

The LTCOP advocates for residents in long-term care facilities, such as nursing homes, as well as investigates abuse in other licensed facilities. The program is mandated by the federal government under the Older Americans Act and serves residents living in the 1,348 facilities across the region. A team of certified volunteers and staff identify, investigate, and resolve complaints made by, or on behalf of, the residents. From July 2022 to June 2023, the LTCOP completed 2,257 facility visits and 48 Ombudsman volunteers donated a total of 2,521 hours.

### ***Adult Protective Services (APS)***

The increase in the older adult population, recently passed laws expanding APS eligibility, and increasing public awareness of APS have resulted in record increases in APS reports and services. In Fiscal Year 2022-23, APS received over 24,000 referrals, with over 21,600 investigations resulting in more than 17,600 cases. This is an increase in cases of 26% since the last fiscal year. APS continues to partner with local service and law enforcement agencies to collaboratively protect elders and dependent adults.



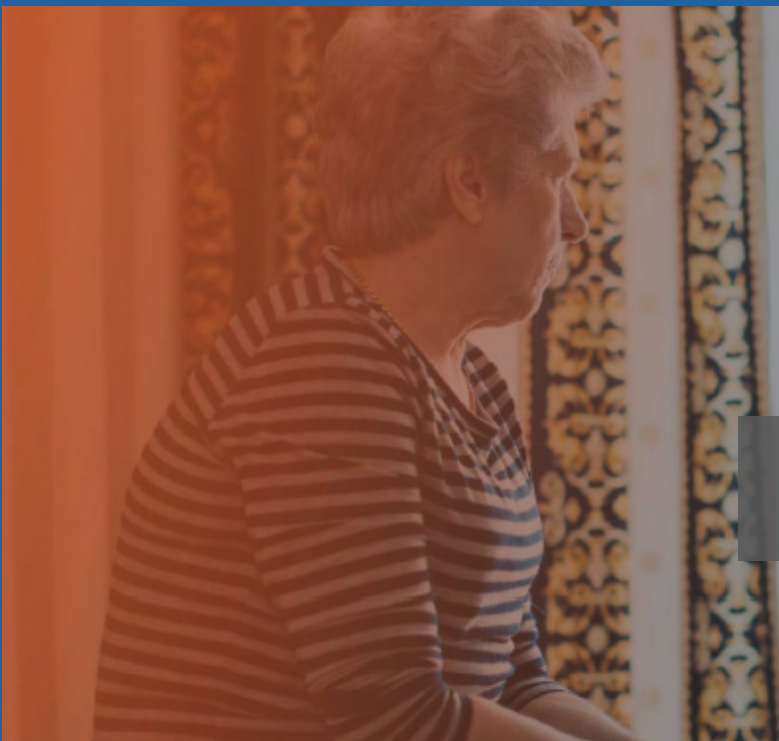
### **LTCOP SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT**

The commitment and effort of LTCOP volunteers was highlighted this year when the Board recognized an Ombudsman volunteer as one of the Volunteers of the Year. Laurie Michaels was acknowledged and honored for her proactive response to the needs of the residents and fierce advocacy for resident rights. Among Laurie's many accomplishments, she successfully advocated for a resident to remain in a facility until the entire discharge process was completed and met all regulation requirements. Laurie's knowledge, intervention, and advocacy assured the resident was successfully placed in a lower level of care to allow for more independence.

### **Increasing Public Awareness of Elder Abuse**

Elder abuse prevention and awareness have long been priorities of AIS, but over the past year AIS has placed an even greater emphasis on this critical work. In Fiscal Year 2022-23, AIS launched a media campaign with print and social media ads to increase public awareness regarding elder abuse prevention and reporting. A marketing consultant is currently working

with AIS to create additional public awareness materials to support the media campaign. It is especially important that mandated reporters of elder abuse know the signs of physical abuse, financial abuse, abandonment, isolation, abduction, and neglect. AIS Outreach & Education staff provide training to mandated reporters throughout the county. To enhance the reach of this education, AIS hosted collaborative meetings with senior centers to share information about elder abuse



**Cover of the Elder Abuse Campaign  
promotional and awareness resources**

and to ensure senior center staff and volunteers have the necessary tools to recognize and report signs of abuse. In this past fiscal year, 1,018 mandated reporters were trained, including 336 senior center staff and volunteers. In addition, AIS created a Digital Training Toolkit with a 35-minute video and several handouts for senior centers to use in training their incoming new staff, volunteers, and participants going forward.

### **Elder Justice Task Force (EJTF)**

In February 2023, the EJTF launched an asset recovery process to protect APS clients from wire fraud and assist them to recover lost funds. The process involves special handling by intake and investigatory staff and collaboration with the FBI's Internet Crime Complaint Center's

Recovery Asset Team, who can track and recover the money. This collaboration has resulted in over \$700,000 in victims' funds recovered so far.

### **ELDER JUSTICE TASK FORCE SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT**

An AIS Call Center Specialist received a report of a potential \$40,000 fraudulent wire transfer by an elderly scam victim. The worker quickly elevated the report to the EJTF, who were able to prevent the transfer from going through.

Elder Abuse Campaign  
digital ad example



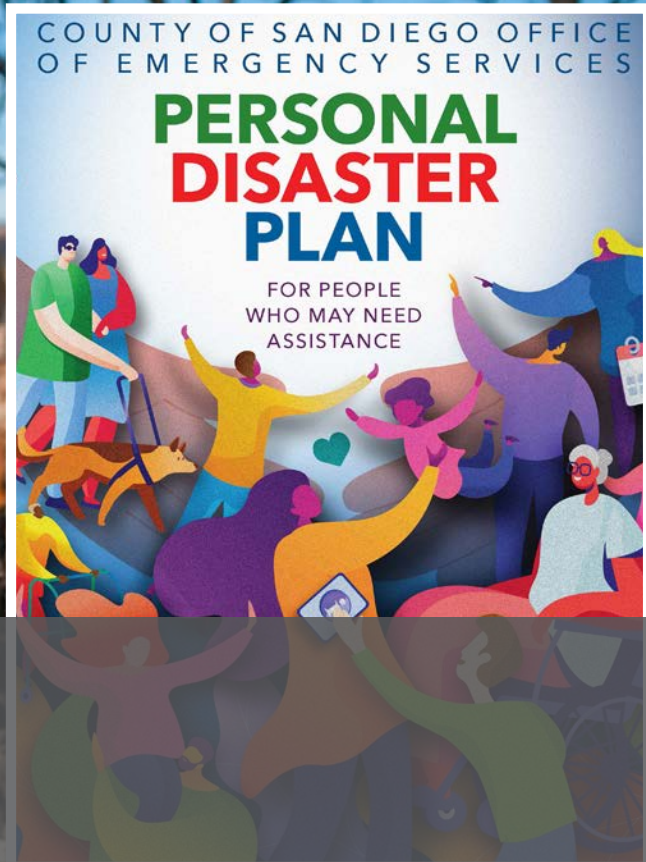
## **NEXT STEPS**

Combatting elder abuse and scams remains a top priority. County departments and community partners will continue to work on the expansion of programs to protect vulnerable older adults. AIS will continue the elder abuse prevention and awareness media campaign, as well as design a training for first responders. In addition, the District Attorney's Elder Abuse Unit will continue their efforts for raising awareness and reducing incidents of elder abuse by continuing to coordinate the Elder Protection Council, and providing regular outreach and education to community partners, organizations, and seniors and their caregivers.





# PREPAREDNESS



## **Vision:**

Older adults and caregivers are prepared to be safe during disasters.

## **Current Landscape:**

It is important for all residents, but especially those with unique needs, to be prepared for a disaster and aware of how to stay safe during a time of emergency. The Office of Emergency Services (OES) is responsible for disaster response planning and coordinates the countywide response to emergencies. OES's Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteer program provides training to community members about effective disaster response. The CERT program is designed to help individuals, including older adults, learn how to protect themselves, their

families, and neighbors in an emergency. OES also coordinates the Access and Functional Needs (AFN) Working Group, which is comprised of representatives from local aging and disability organizations. AIS participates in this workgroup and partners with OES on a variety of efforts to ensure older adults and individuals with disabilities have the resources they need to be prepared. In addition to overall disaster preparedness and response, the County coordinates the Cool Zone program so that residents may have safe respite from the hot weather during extreme heat events. The Cool Zone program is a network of free, air-conditioned settings such as libraries or community centers across the county that allow for anyone to escape the extreme heat during the summer.

*Image: Cover of the Personal Disaster Plan for People Who May Need Assistance guide in English*



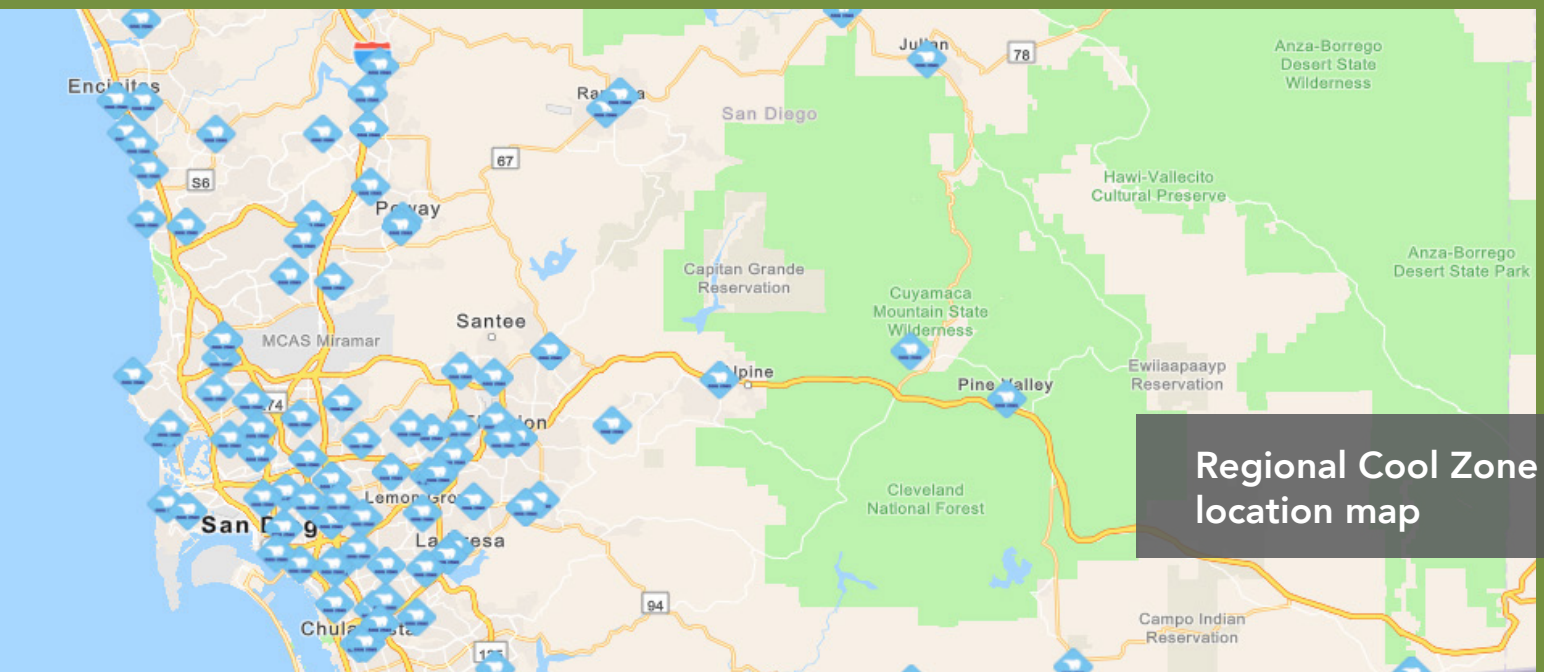
## Accomplishment Highlights:

In Fiscal Year 2022-23, the Preparedness and Response priority area accomplishments centered on expanding the use of the *Personal Disaster Plan for People Who May Need Assistance* guide.

### **Personal Disaster Plan for People Who May Need Assistance**

As reported in previous updates, AIS partnered with the OES to create the *Personal Disaster Plan for People Who May Need Assistance* guide. The guide is a tool for residents to make their own individualized plan for themselves and their family. Interested residents can access a digital copy of the guide or have a hard-copy guide mailed directly to their home by visiting the ReadySanDiego website ([readysandiego.org](http://readysandiego.org)). The guide is also available in audio format and in print in 12 different languages. In Fiscal Year 2022-23, more than 1,600 guides were distributed to residents and community organizations.

In early 2023, OES created a presentation to accompany the guide. The AFN Working Group created a plan to use the presentation along with the guide to Train-the-Trainer. Several organizations have committed to participating in this project, including AIS, CERT, County Fire, and several municipal emergency services departments.



## NEXT STEPS

OES, in partnership with AIS and the AFN Working Group, will implement the Train-the-Trainer program, so that individuals can be trained to teach residents with mobility limitations or other access and functional needs to prepare for emergencies and disasters. These Trainers will conduct workshops to support residents in developing a complete Personal Disaster Plan to take home.



# SILVER ECONOMY

## **Vision:**

There is a skilled and diverse workforce of caregivers to support the older adult population. Also, older adults have opportunities to stay engaged in the community through volunteering or paid work.

## **Current Landscape:**

Over the next 10 years, California will need approximately 500,000 more caregivers to meet the needs of the older adult population. The County of San Diego IHSS Public Authority, which is the employer of record for IHSS caregivers, is working on several initiatives to train caregivers and attract more people to this field.

Having opportunities for older adults to participate in volunteer or paid work can help them stay active in community life

and remain financially secure. AIS operates several programs that connect older adults to meaningful volunteer and engagement opportunities in the community. AIS also publicizes job opportunities from various community organizations to its email distribution list of older adult and community stakeholders.

## **Accomplishment Highlights: Volunteer Opportunities for Older Adults**

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) and Senior Volunteers in Action (SVA) seek to match older adults age 50 and older with meaningful volunteer opportunities serving community partners, non-profits, and public organizations. Over the past few years, these programs lost many volunteers due to limitations associated with the COVID-19

*Image: April 2023 Volunteers of the Month, Tom and Robin Paine*

pandemic. Throughout Fiscal Year 2022-23, AIS has worked to increase the recruitment of volunteers and has onboarded 140 new volunteers. In total, over 1,000 active volunteers have served 214,672 hours at 74 partner organizations throughout the county.

### **YOU ARE NOT ALONE PROGRAM (YANA) SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT**

The San Diego Sheriff Senior Volunteers support the You Are Not Alone Program (YANA) where volunteers make phone calls and visits to isolated older adults. In addition to the phone calls, volunteers provide companionship as well as offer resources as needed. In Fiscal Year 2022-23, volunteers conducted 4,231 visits and made over 28,469 phone calls.

### **IHSS Caregiver Recruitment**

The IHSS program provides homemaker and personal care assistance to over 39,300 eligible low-income individuals who need help in the home to remain independent. As described in previous Aging Roadmap reports, throughout California, there continues to be a shortage of professional caregivers for IHSS and private home care companies. Following direction of the Board on October 5, 2021 (9), the IHSS Public Authority has worked to address this care shortage by conducting community outreach and implementing other measures to make this critical job more appealing and accessible to potential caregivers.

For instance, in Fiscal Year 2022-23, the IHSS Public Authority provided individualized training on the Electronic Timesheet System to 1,053 individual providers (IPs). IHSS Public Authority also increased the speed at which they enrolled provider applicants and enrolled a

total of 8,903 IPs. Most of these new IP's were friends or family of IHSS recipients and 851 were "registry IPs" (a 72% increase over last year's registry IP recruits), thus increasing the number of caregivers available for IHSS recipients who do not have someone in their own circle to serve in the caregiver role.

In addition to outreach to recruit more caregivers, IHSS Public Authority is facilitating the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) funded Career Pathways Program. This program provides training for caregivers to increase their job skills and help them develop meaningful career advancement opportunities in the healthcare industry. This supplements other training provided by IHSS Public Authority and includes increasing knowledge in topic areas such as behavioral health, dementia, universal precautions, and more. In Fiscal Year 2022-23, more than 2,573 caregivers received training offered by IHSS Public Authority.

## **NEXT STEPS**

The IHSS Public Authority will continue to work with CDSS and will also begin a similar project with San Diego State University to provide training for caregivers. In addition, the Public Authority will increase efficiency and accessibility of provider enrollment by implementing a mobile unit that enrolls and trains prospective providers in the communities where they live. AIS will continue to work with local organizations to provide meaningful volunteer opportunities for older adults, and to publicize job opportunities that older adults may find of interest.





# MEDICAL & SOCIAL SERVICES SYSTEM

## **Vision:**

Care coordination among medical and social services provides proactive, seamless, prevention-focused, and person-centered support for older adults.

## **Current Landscape:**

Because the medical and social services system is rather large, fragmented, and based on multiple funding streams, it can be very hard for older adults and caregivers to navigate and even to know what is available. While almost all adults age 65 and older are covered by Medicare for their health care needs, Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) are not covered by Medicare. LTSS are the services that help people stay independent and avoid living in skilled nursing facilities, such as personal assistance with activities of daily living, assisted living, and home modifications. Some LTSS are covered

by Medi-Cal, California's Medicaid health insurance program for low-income residents. Medi-Cal is used by people without Medicare and also to supplement Medicare. Through California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM), California's Medi-Cal reform initiative, more LTSS are now offered via the Medi-Cal managed care plans. Medi-Cal funds are also used to support major California social service programs for older and disabled residents operated by HHSA. One of these programs is IHSS, which provides personal assistance with activities of daily living to more than 39,000 local recipients. Another Medi-Cal funded program offered by HHSA is the Multipurpose Senior Services Program (MSSP), which provides care coordination for more than 500 San Diegans with both Medicare and Medi-Cal. Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs) provide rehabilitative care after

*Image: UC San Diego's Geriatric Emergency Department*

hospitalizations and also “custodial care” for older adults who need a high level of daily assistance. SNF care is only covered in certain situations by Medicare and Medi-Cal. There are many challenges involved in ensuring that older adults have the care they need as they transition from home or hospital to facilities, or from a facility to another setting, and improving care transitions is one of the goals of CalAIM. HHSA’s Medical Care Services Division and AIS are actively involved in the roll-out of CalAIM with the goal of identifying and addressing gaps in care in this complex and changing Medi-Cal system and improving coordination across the different services.

HHSA’s Self-Sufficiency Services assists low-income residents (including older adults) with enrollment in programs such as Medi-Cal and CalFresh food assistance. Other HHSA programs for older adults include behavioral health services for serious mental illness; vaccinations and other public health services; and the federal Older Americans Act Senior Nutrition Program that provides home-delivered and congregate meals. The AIS Call Center handles over 73,000 calls each year to connect older adults to County and community programs.

### **Accomplishment Highlights:**

#### ***New Chief Geriatric Officer, Dr. Yourman***

In November 2022, Dr. Lindsey Yourman was hired by the County to become it’s first Chief Geriatric Officer. This position is one of the first of its kind in the state and nation for a local integrated health and human services system. Dr. Yourman joins the County from UC San Diego Health, where she worked as a Primary Care Geriatrician, served as the Medical Director of Geriatrics Quality Improvement, and launched their Age-Friendly Health Systems Initiative. Age-Friendly Health Systems is a framework for clinical care focused on the “4 M’s” including What Matters, Medications, the Mind, and Mobility. In her role with the County, Dr. Yourman has joined The Alzheimer’s Project Clinical Roundtable, and she is spearheading efforts to foster age-friendly



**Dr. Yourman,  
Chief Geriatric Officer,  
image from The San  
Diego Union Tribune,  
December 2022**





clinical services within the County’s array of direct services, as well as promoting these best practices for other organizations to adopt. By June 30, 2023, Dr. Yourman had presented on age-friendly concepts to over 20 different groups, convened a committee of SNF medical directors to share best practices relating to these facilities, and joined several committees focused on identifying gaps in the medical and social services system and finding ways to fill those gaps.

### **CalFresh Expansion**

In June of 2019, very low-income residents living on Supplemental Security Income (SSI) became eligible for CalFresh for the first

time. AIS and Self-Sufficiency Services have conducted outreach to support with increasing enrollment in this program. In Fiscal Year 2022-23, the number of adults age 60 and over with SSI receiving CalFresh increased by 775, from 23,797 in June 2022 to 24,572 in June 2023. The total number of adults age 60 and over (SSI and others) receiving CalFresh increased by 11,131, from 76,695 in June 2022 to 87,826 in June 2023.

### **Senior Nutrition Program**

Proper nutrition is essential to health and wellbeing. With increasing costs of food, many older adults living on a fixed income struggle to access affordable, healthy meals. With funding

*Image: Congregate meal program participants*

*Image on Page 43: Congregate meal program participants*



from the Older Americans Act, AIS contracts with several organizations throughout the county to provide hot, nutritious meals during the week, for adults age 60 and older. In addition to promoting better nutrition, these dining centers reduce isolation for many older adults who may live alone. For those who are homebound, home-delivered meals are available by select providers in several cities. Between July 2022 and June 2023, 1,800,778 home-delivered, congregate, and to-go meals were served to 16,295 clients.

### **SENIOR NUTRITION PROGRAM SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT**

With the cost of food on the rise, program participants are drawn to the fresh produce offerings available at the Gloria McClellan Senior Center. Participants are so grateful that the City of Vista has carved out room in the program budget to be able to provide such a valuable service. One gentleman even shed a tear when asked how he feels about having a fresh salads. “The cost of produce at the grocery store is just too expensive and I can’t afford it. Without these salads, I don’t know how I’d get my fresh vegetables.”



## **NEXT STEPS**

With the growth of social service programs and with Medi-Cal in the midst of CalAIM, the County will continue to play an active role to improve coordination and address gaps in care. Special attention will be given to supporting clinical care providers with the tools they need to refer patients to community resources, and to ensuring that clinicians for those living with dementia have access to ongoing education on best practices. The County’s Chief Geriatric Officer will continue to lead the charge in advancing Age-Friendly Health Systems and sharing age-friendly clinical system best practices across San Diego County.

# CONCLUSION

The Aging Roadmap is a guiding framework for the aging-related work across County departments and in collaboration with community partners. Many of its programs are making a significant impact in the lives of local older adults and several of these programs have earned national and state attention. The collaborative model between the County and the Regional Task Force on Homelessness to educate homeless service providers on aging issues has been presented in national venues, reaching over 1,500 people. San Diego County is one of several communities nationwide experimenting with rental subsidy programs, and the local pilot program is featured in the California Master Plan for Aging Second Annual Progress Report. Also featured in that progress report is the County's hiring of its first Chief Geriatric Officer.

Across the ten priority areas of the Aging Roadmap, there are some common elements that have driven success. One element is cross-sector community collaboration, as noted above with the aging and homelessness issue within the Housing priority area. Another

example is in the Preparedness priority area, where in the last year, emergency response planners have collaborated with organizations as varied as assisted living facilities, fire fighters, and senior volunteer programs to educate residents with access and functional needs on preparedness.

Expanding awareness of, and access to, the many resources available to older adults has been a priority outlined within the Aging Roadmap. In the Social Participation and the Health & Community Support priority areas, technology training programs have helped many older adults to navigate the internet and access helpful resources. In the Safety priority area, the County made significant efforts in raising awareness of elder abuse through social media outreach and by collaborating with community and senior centers as well as other organizations, to educate more than 975 mandated reporters.

Increasing social inclusion and involvement is another key element of the Aging Roadmap. Activities in the Transportation priority



*Image: Participants of the Retired & Senior Volunteer Program recognition event, May 2023*

area helped to improve equity by providing transportation training to empower underserved populations to use public transportation and expand their horizons. Within the Silver Economy priority area, programs connected older adults to volunteer opportunities thus facilitating ongoing meaningful connections to the community.

Looking ahead, the County and community partners will continue to advance Aging Roadmap goals. The Action Plan in Appendix A outlines programs and initiatives that will further advance Aging Roadmap efforts in Fiscal Year 2023-24. In October 2023, the County will conduct

another comprehensive round of community input to inform the Aging Roadmap moving forward.

The growth of the older adult population brings challenges and opportunities as our communities work to ensure the health, safety, and quality of life of all older adult residents. The Aging Roadmap goes beyond basic needs, and recognizes the exciting opportunity to redefine what is possible during this phase of life: ample ways to make meaningful contributions, experience deep social connections, and access systems and resources that honor and respect older adults as valued members of the community.

## PARTNERS

As highlighted in this annual report, the multiple County departments, residents, and community organizations that have contributed to advancing the ten priority areas have seen accomplishments that could have only been achieved through ongoing collaboration. With appreciation, we would like to recognize the following partners:

### **Community Partners**

211 San Diego

511 San Diego

AARP

Access & Functional Needs (AFN) Working Group

Age-Friendly Roundtable

Aging & Independence Services Advisory Council

Aging & Independence Services Health Promotion Community Committee

Age Well San Diego Dementia & Brain Health Team

Age Well San Diego Housing Team

Age Well San Diego Social Participation & Inclusion Team

Age Well San Diego Transportation & Community Connections Team

Alzheimer's Association San Diego/Imperial Chapter

Alzheimer's San Diego



## **Community Partners (continued)**

Caregiver Coalition of San Diego  
Champions for Health  
City of Carlsbad  
City of Chula Vista  
City of Imperial Beach  
City of La Mesa  
City of National City  
City of San Diego  
City of Solana Beach  
El Cajon Collaborative  
ElderHelp of San Diego  
Elder Justice Task Force  
Facilitating Access to Coordinated Transportation  
Federal Bureau of Investigation  
Jewish Family Service of San Diego  
Kaiser Permanente  
Metropolitan Transit System  
Mira Mesa Senior Center  
Naval Medical Center San Diego  
North County Transit District  
Regional Task Force on Homeless  
San Diego Association of Governments  
San Diego-East Community Action Network  
San Diego Fall Prevention Task Force  
San Diego Foundation  
San Diego Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly  
San Diego Seniors Community Foundation  
San Diego Senior Center Coalition  
San Diego State University  
San Diego Union-Tribune  
Scripps Health  
Serving Seniors  
Sharp HealthCare  
South County Action Network  
Southern Caregiver Resource Center  
TrueCare  
University of California San Diego

## **County Departments and Offices**

### ***County of San Diego Finance & General Government Group***

Office of Evaluation, Performance & Analytics

Department of Human Resources

### ***County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency***

Aging & Independence Services

Behavioral Health Services

Homeless Solutions & Equitable Communities

Housing & Community Development Services

IHSS Public Authority

Medical Care Services

Public Health Services

### ***County of San Diego Land Use & Environment Group***

Department of Parks & Recreation

Planning & Development Services

Department of Public Works

San Diego County Library

### ***County of San Diego Public Safety Group***

District Attorney's Office

Office of Emergency Services

Sheriff's Department





# ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

*Acronyms and abbreviations are organized in alphabetical order*

*AARP – American Association of Retired Persons*

*ADRD – Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias*

*AFN – Access & Functional Needs*

*AIS – County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Aging & Independence Services*

*APS – Adult Protective Services*

*Board – San Diego County Board of Supervisors*

*C.A.R.E. – Community Action Reaching the Elderly*

*CDA – California Department of Aging*

*CERT – Community Emergency Response Teams*

*CHAT – Connections, Health, Aging, and Technology*

*County – County of San Diego*

*EMR – Electronic medical record*

*EJTF – Elder Justice Task Force*

*FCSP – Family Caregiver Support Program*

*Guidelines – Physician Guidelines for the Screening, Evaluation, and Management of Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementias*

*HCDS – County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Housing & Community Development Services*

*HHS – County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency*

*HSEC – County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Department of Homeless Solutions and Equitable Communities*

*IHSS – In-Home Supportive Services*

*IP – Individual Provider*

*LTCOP – Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program*

*MPA – Master Plan for Aging*

*MSSP – Multipurpose Senior Services Program*

*OES – County of San Diego Public Safety Group, Office of Emergency Services*

*Public Authority – County of San Diego IHSS Public Authority*

*PDS – County of San Diego Land Use and Environment Group, Planning & Development Services*

*RSVP – Retired and Senior Volunteer Program*

*RTFH – Regional Task Force on Homelessness*

*SMI – Serious mental illness*

*SVA – Senior Volunteers in Action*

*UCSD – University of California San Diego*



# APPENDIX

**A: Aging Roadmap Fiscal Year 2023-24 Action Plan:  
Looking Ahead at Aging Roadmap Priorities**

**B: 2023 Alzheimer's Project Annual Report**



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# AGING ROADMAP FISCAL YEAR 2023-24 ACTION PLAN

## Looking Ahead at Aging Roadmap Priorities



As the older adult population continues to grow and becomes more culturally and ethnically diverse, our systems of care need to be flexible to meet a wider range of needs. Much has changed since the original Aging Roadmap goals were developed in 2019. COVID-19 exacerbated many challenges for older adults and brought to the forefront new issues and priorities. In 2022, Aging & Independence Services (AIS) began the process of conducting community outreach to gather input on current priorities. AIS hosted collaborative threading meetings across County of San Diego (County) departments, listening sessions with diverse older adults, and planning

meetings with various community coalitions including the Age Well Community Teams, the San Diego Senior Center Coalition, and the Caregiver Coalition of San Diego. This input informed the development and implementation of many of the programs and initiatives that are part of the Aging Roadmap. The tables below describe planned activities for each of the ten priority areas for Fiscal Year 2023-24 (July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024). Activities described in the Aging Roadmap 2023-24 Action Plan include ongoing County programs, special initiatives, and projects conducted in collaboration with community partners.



## HEALTH & COMMUNITY SUPPORT

**VISION:** When changes and challenges in health occur, older adults and their families are able to find and access relevant resources, support, and care in their community. The community promotes mental and physical health for people of all ages and abilities.

**MISSION:** Create a community that promotes mental health, physical health, and access to healthcare and community support for people of all ages and abilities, and their caregivers.

TOPIC	WHO	PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES
Equity Focused Outreach and Engagement	Aging & Independence Services	Increase awareness of aging resources and services through culturally relevant and equity-focused outreach and engagement strategies such as providing translation, soliciting diverse community input, and marketing in places accessible to older adults.
Promote Physical and Mental Health	Health and Human Services Agency and contracted community partners	Empower older adults and caregivers to be safe, resilient, healthy, and informed by hosting workshops, events, and community classes such as fitness classes, fall prevention, and chronic disease self-management.
		Promote mental wellbeing with education, community depression screenings, and focused programs to engage older adults.
Leveraging Partnerships	Aging & Independence Services	Leverage existing partnerships with regional community partners, community centers, and senior centers to ensure residents are aware of and have access to programs which they may be eligible for.
Reducing Digital Divide	Aging & Independence Services	Bring technology programs to older adults to reduce the impacts of the digital divide.





# HOUSING

**VISION:** Older adults live in safe and affordable housing that is located near goods, services, and activities, all of which allows them to age in their community.

**MISSION:** Assist older adults with access to information and resources for safe and affordable housing; support those at-risk of or experiencing homelessness; and provide opportunities to age in place.

TOPIC	WHO	PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES
New Housing	Planning & Development Services	Develop and present program options to the Board of Supervisors for incentivizing the development of new senior housing.
	Housing & Community Development Services	Continue construction on affordable senior housing apartment complexes.
Homelessness Prevention and Intervention	Office of Homeless Solutions	Provide rental support to low-income older adults through continued implementation of the Pilot Shallow Rental Subsidy Program.
		Provide housing navigation and case management to support older adults experiencing chronic homelessness through the Home Safe program.
	Aging & Independence Services	Support housing insecure Adult Protective Services clients to find and secure safe housing through the Home Safe program.
Supportive Housing	Behavioral Health Services	Provide older adult residents living with Serious Mental Illness in affordable housing with Full Service Partnership programs to support their housing security and other needs.
Housing Alternatives	Aging & Independence Services and Planning & Development Services	Increase awareness of affordable housing opportunities by providing community education on options such as Accessory Dwelling Units and shared housing programs, and ensure that older adults know how and where to access housing information.

TOPIC	WHO	PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES
Aging In Place	Aging & Independence Services and Housing & Community Development Services	Provide resources for Age-Friendly home modifications.
Collaborative Efforts and Education	Age Well Housing Team	Enhance efforts of local housing partners by providing a forum for organizations to share information regarding projects for older adults. These partners approach housing from multiple angles, including land use and building codes, affordable housing development, home modifications, and supporting housing insecure residents.
		Educate the community on current older adult housing issues and resources.





## SOCIAL PARTICIPATION

**VISION:** Older adults have access to a range of social and community engagement opportunities that promote active living, reduce isolation, and provide enriching experiences with others across age groups and generations.

**MISSION:** Help older adults stay connected by providing meaningful programs and resources that combat isolation, offer digital support, and are inclusive of all ages, abilities, and regions.

TOPIC	WHO	PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES
Bridging the Digital Divide	Aging & Independence Services, contracted community partners, and Office of Equitable Communities	Increase access to technology and improve digital literacy for older adults throughout San Diego County by providing no-cost tablets, resources for no- or low-cost broadband, and information on local digital literacy training options.
Intergenerational Connection	Aging & Independence Services and Department of Parks & Recreation	Encourage intergenerational connection by providing interactive programs that bring different age groups together for activities such as pickleball, cooking, and gardening at County community centers and other community sites.
	Aging & Independence Services	Provide technical assistance to community organizations on how to develop and successfully implement intergenerational programs.
Access to Social Engagement	Age Well Transportation & Community Connections Team	Offer education and resources about local transportation options that enhance mobility independence, regional awareness, and access to social activities.
	Age Well Social Participation & Inclusion Team	Publicize and distribute guides for social engagement: <i>Ways to Engage and Get Connected!</i>





# TRANSPORTATION

**VISION:** Older adults have access to safe and affordable transportation options that are accessible for all ages and abilities.

**MISSION:** Support affordable, accessible, and equitable transportation and connections to community, quality-of-life activities, and spaces for all ages.

TOPIC	WHO	PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES
Transportation Education	Age Well Transportation & Community Connections Team	Encourage event coordinators to increase older adult access to their events by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hosting events and activities at accessible locations near public transportation</li> <li>• Including transportation options on event publicity</li> </ul>
		Offer education and resources about local and alternative transportation options that enhance mobility independence, regional awareness, and access to daily life activities.
Equitable Access	Aging & Independence Services and contracted community partners	With American Rescue Plan Act funding, continue the two-year No-Cost Transportation Program for Older Adults. Receive feedback from residents about transportation needs and challenges to inform development of future programs.





# DEMENTIA

**VISION:** San Diegans have the information they need to reduce their risk of Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias (ADRD); residents with ADRD receive the highest standard of clinical care; individuals with ADRD are well cared for and supported by “Dementia-Friendly” communities to be as independent as possible; and family members have the support they need to care for their loved ones.

**MISSION:** Promote best practices that support brain health, a dementia-friendly community, and quality care.

TOPIC	WHO	PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES
Equitable Distribution of Information	Age Well Dementia & Brain Health Team	Work with community partners to develop and share brain health information that is regionally relevant, engaging to all ages, and culturally tailored to connect with diverse populations throughout the county.
Improving ADRD Care	Aging & Independence Services and Medical Care Services Division	Work closely with The Alzheimer’s Project Clinical Roundtable as well as other dementia and brain health professionals and institutions to identify and share information that is supportive of the effective screening, diagnosis, and care management of those living with dementia.
	Aging & Independence Services	The Alzheimer’s Response Team (ART) will continue to make home visits to people living with ADRD and their families. ART social workers educate residents on addressing challenges associated with dementia and provide care coordination and linkages to other community resources.
Building Dementia-Friendly Communities	Age Well Dementia & Brain Health Team	Provide workshops and resources to individuals and diverse community sectors (e.g., libraries, restaurants, churches, etc.) to educate them on what it means to be “dementia-friendly” and how to create environments that are welcoming to those living with dementia and their caregivers.



## CAREGIVER SUPPORT

**VISION:** Caregivers have access to the support and resources necessary to provide responsive and manageable care to older adults, while also tending to their own wellbeing.

**MISSION:** Provide caregivers with resources and programs to support their ability to provide care and tend to their own wellbeing.

TOPIC	WHO	PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES
Caregiver Education	Caregiver Coalition of San Diego	Educate older adults and family caregivers about existing local resources for family caregivers through in-person events and online webinars in a variety of languages.
		Educate staff and volunteers of local organizations (e.g., businesses, non-profits) about existing local resources for family caregivers and how they can educate their teams.
	Caregiver Coalition of San Diego	Continue to support caregivers by updating, publishing, and distributing the <i>Caregiver Handbook</i> to the community.
Caregiver Resources	Aging & Independence Services and contracted community partners	Support eligible family caregivers through Older Americans Act services including care management, legal services, minor home modifications, outreach and education, counseling, and respite.
	Behavioral Health Services and contracted community partners	Provide mental health prevention and early intervention services and resource navigation for family caregivers.





## SAFETY

**VISION:** Older adults and persons with disabilities are safe in their homes and community.

**MISSION:** Support older adults and persons with disabilities to be safe in their homes and community.

TOPIC	WHO	PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES
Elder Abuse Prevention and Awareness	District Attorney and Aging & Independence Services	Conduct community awareness and education on elder abuse and scam prevention including media campaign with print and social media ads.
		Develop training for first responders to recognize and report signs of abuse and deficiencies in care and wellbeing.
		Support Elder Justice Task Force efforts to bring scammers to justice and focus on creative ways to return the stolen funds to older adult victims.
Elder Abuse Response	District Attorney	Coordinate the Elder Protection Council and provide regular outreach and education to community partners, organizations, and directly to older adults and their caregivers.
		Prosecute cases of elder abuse and support victims.
Protection for Vulnerable Adults	Aging & Independence Services	Seek resolution of complaints and advocate for the rights of residents in long-term care facilities to ensure their dignity, quality of life, and care, through the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program.
		Investigate and respond to reports of elder and dependent adult abuse, and connect victims to resources.
		Provide Public Guardian and Public Administrator services to protect adults who are not capable of managing their personal affairs and finances.



TOPIC	WHO	PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES
Fall Prevention	San Diego Fall Prevention Task Force	Educate service providers and older adults living in the community about how to prevent falls.
	Aging & Independence Services and community partners	Provide Tai Chi classes at various host sites in the community.
		Distribute fall prevention home safety kits to older adults who are susceptible to falls.





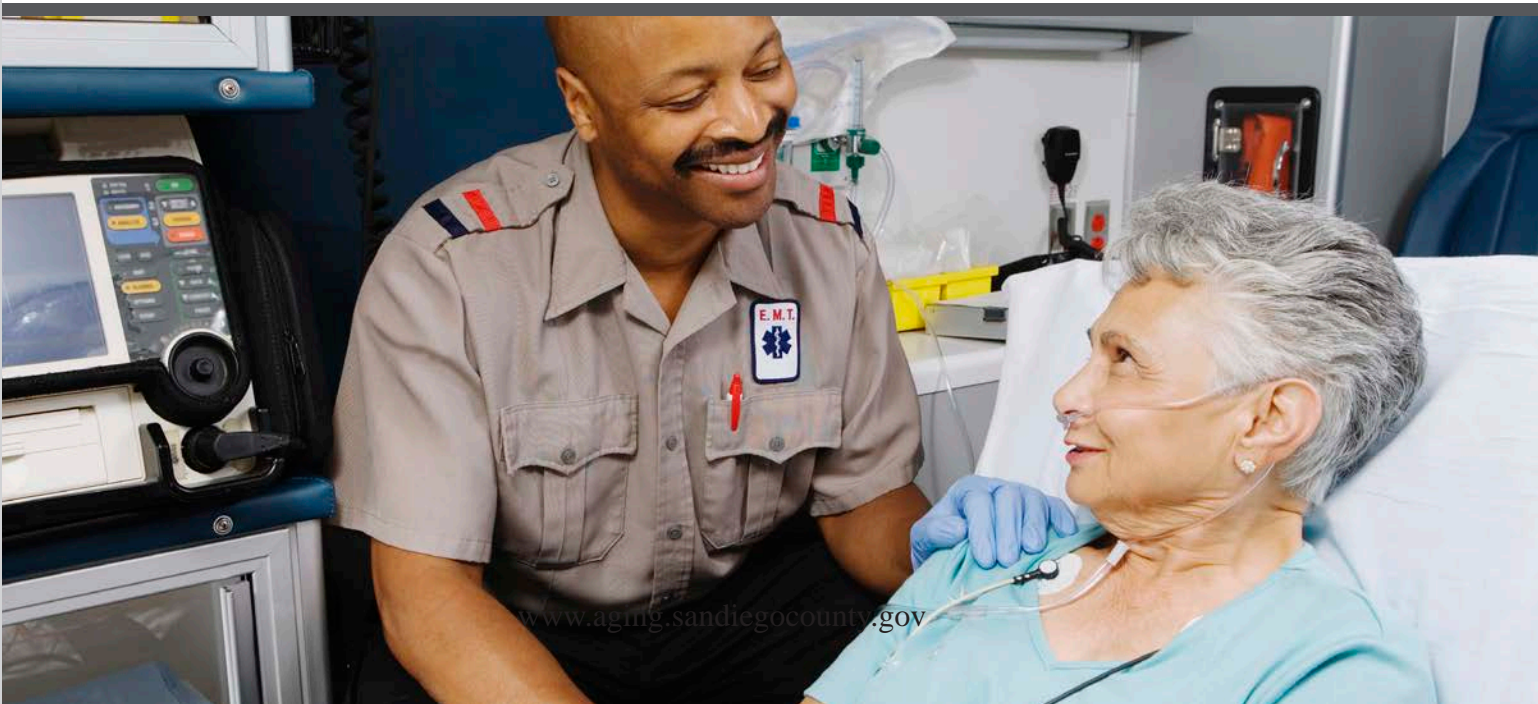


## PREPAREDNESS

**VISION:** Older adults and their caregivers are prepared to be safe during disasters.

**MISSION:** Educate older adults and caregivers to develop personal disaster plans.

TOPIC	WHO	PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES
Strengthen Preparedness	Aging & Independence Services, Office of Emergency Services, and the Access and Functional Needs (AFN) Working Group (comprised of community stakeholders such as Cal Fire and disability service organizations)	Distribute the <i>Personal Disaster Plan for People who May Need Assistance</i> booklet in multiple languages, reaching residents throughout San Diego County.
		Train AFN Working Group members to train community residents on making an effective personal disaster plan.
Response	Aging & Independence Services and community partners	Coordinate community partners to provide seasonal “Cool Zone” sites for older adults and other residents to stay safe during extreme heat.



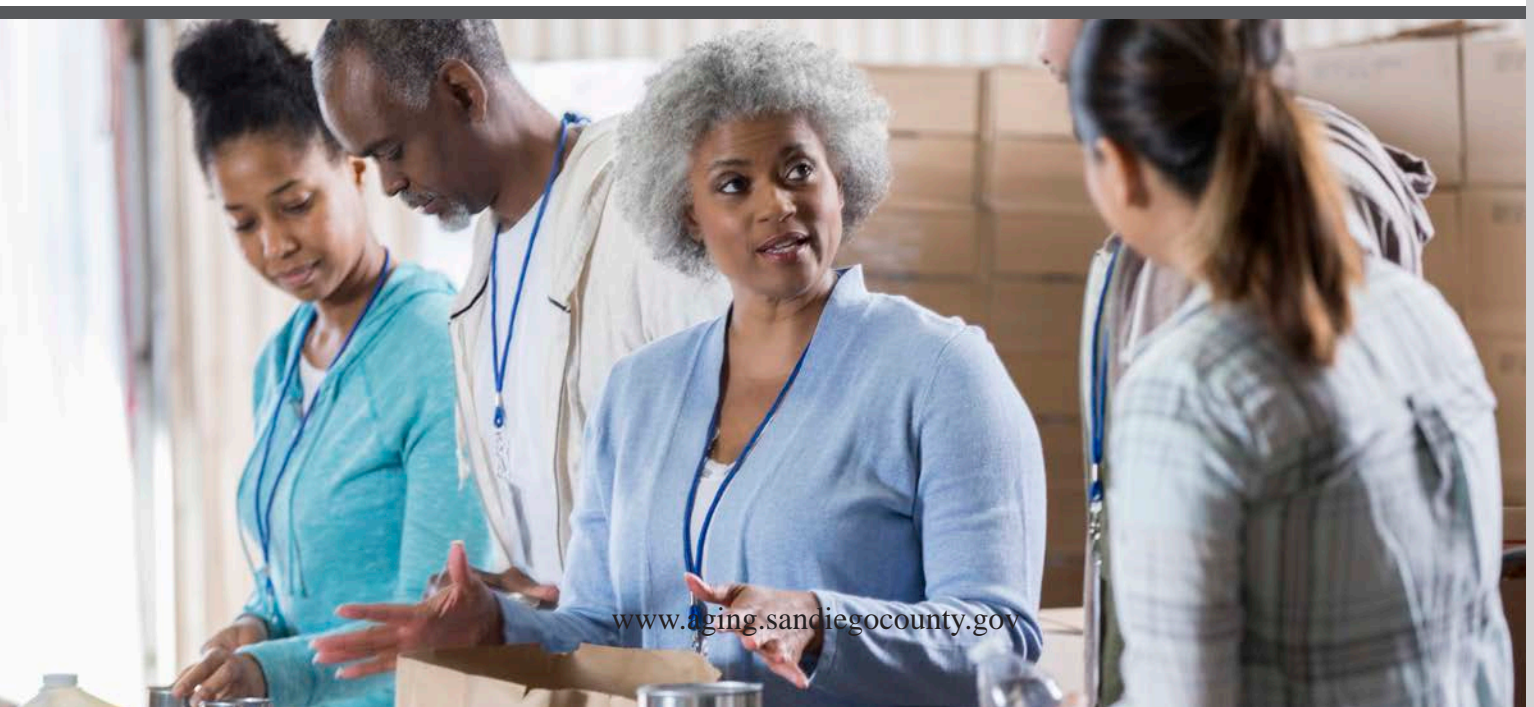


## SILVER ECONOMY

**VISION:** There is a skilled and diverse workforce of caregivers to support the older adult population. Older adults have opportunities to stay engaged in the community through volunteering and paid work.

**MISSION:** Recruit and train professional caregivers, and support older adults with opportunities to volunteer.

TOPIC	WHO	PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES
Train In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Caregivers	IHSS Public Authority	Expand trainings to increase the number of Individual Providers available to serve as caregivers for IHSS recipients by increasing training offerings and expanding them to different areas of the county.
Recruit IHSS Caregivers		Increase efficiency and accessibility of provider enrollment by creating and implementing mobile enrollment options and expediting the enrollment timeline.
Older Adult Volunteers	Aging & Independence Services	Recruit new organizations that host volunteers and add these organizations to the Senior Volunteer website.
		Support older adults in identifying enriching volunteer opportunities by conducting outreach and assistance with prospective volunteers.





## MEDICAL & SOCIAL SERVICES SYSTEM

**VISION:** Care coordination among medical and social services provides proactive, seamless, prevention-focused, and person-centered support for older adults.

**MISSION:** Provide essential services and support system improvements to address gaps in care and increase service coordination.

TOPIC	WHO	PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES
Improving Care	Medical Care Services Division and Aging & Independence Services	Support The Alzheimer’s Project Clinical Roundtable in advancing their long-term goal to integrate Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias best practices into primary care workflows.
Supporting Providers and Maximizing Independence	Medical Care Services Division	Educate Skilled Nursing Facility (SNF) providers on resources for transitioning residents from these facilities to lower levels of care in the community, when appropriate.
		Support the development of smooth referral processes for SNF diversion by participating in the San Diego Duals - Long Term Services and Supports Working Group which convenes local health and social service providers to identify and address gaps in care related to Medi-Cal services for older adults.
Age-Friendly Health Systems		Work with Clinical leads to achieve recognition of County clinical services as “Age Friendly” using the 4 M’s Framework by the Trust for America’s Health.
		Share best practices of Age-Friendly Health Systems (i.e., 4 M’s) with local Federally Qualified Health Centers.
Essential Social Services	Aging & Independence Services	Provide ongoing essential social services, including In-Home Supportive Services and care coordination programs.
		Assist older adults, persons with disabilities, caregivers, and service providers with information, assistance, and referrals via the Aging & Independence Services Call Center.



TOPIC	WHO	PROGRAMS & INITIATIVES
Essential Social Services	Behavioral Health Services and contracted community partners	Provide essential mental health services for older adults with serious mental illness and substance use disorders.
	Public Health Services	Provide essential public health services for older adults such as vaccinations at Public Health Clinics.



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APPENDIX B



**THE ALZHEIMER'S Project**  
Prevention – Care – Community Support

**ANNUAL REPORT • 2023**





## Introduction

County of San Diego (County) epidemiologists have estimated that there are nearly 102,000 people living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ADRD) in San Diego County and the prevalence is expected to reach 115,000 by 2030. Since the launch of The Alzheimer's Project on May 6, 2014 (5), the County has been paving the way for improved dementia care with its innovative approach to addressing the impacts of ADRD in the region. In addition to County funding, the work of The Alzheimer's Project has been supported by several external grants. In 2020, the County was one of seven municipalities in California that were granted funding to implement national Healthy Brain Initiative (HBI) strategies locally. The efforts of the HBI support The Alzheimer's Project vision of a region where San Diegans have the information they need to reduce their risk of ADRD; residents with ADRD receive the highest standard of clinical care; individuals with ADRD are well cared for and supported by "Dementia-Friendly"

communities to be as independent as possible; and family members have the support they need to care for their loved ones. In 2023, the California Department of Public Health notified the County that funding will continue in Fiscal Year 2023-24 for two additional years to further advance HBI strategies.

Several community teams advance the work of The Alzheimer's Project. The Alzheimer's Project Clinical Roundtable addresses quality healthcare and improved connections between clinical care and social services. The Age Well Dementia & Brain Health Team focuses on sharing best practices with the broad community. The Caregiver Coalition of San Diego provides education to family caregivers, including those caring for people living with dementia.

This annual report showcases the work of The Alzheimer's Project and related dementia initiatives in San Diego County.





## Clinical Roundtable

Primary care physicians are on the frontlines of dementia care due to a shortage of geriatricians and other specialists. Prior to the Alzheimer's Project, physicians in San Diego County noted that there was minimal guidance for non-specialists on how to effectively screen, evaluate, and manage the diseases that cause dementia (e.g. Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, and more). Early detection can allow impacted patients to get treatment and patients and their loved ones time to get resources in place and make plans to ensure a higher quality of life for as long as possible.

The Alzheimer's Project Clinical Roundtable — comprised of neurologists, psychiatrists, geriatricians, and other members of the clinical community — has worked to address the need for higher quality care. This group developed the *Physician Guidelines for the Screening, Evaluation, and Management of Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (Guidelines)*, to equip primary care clinicians with the knowledge and tools they need. The *Guidelines* were first released in 2016 and have been updated regularly thereafter. The *Guidelines* are available in print, online, and as a mobile application, AlzDxRx. The *Guidelines* include best practice algorithms, screening and evaluation instruments, information on FDA-approved medications, information on care through the disease stages, and resources for clinicians and caregivers. Together with the Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program and the Dementia Care Aware initiative, the Clinical Roundtable is working to extend the implementation of the *Guidelines* across clinical sectors locally and across the state.



## Clinical Roundtable

### Fiscal Year 2022-23 Achievements

- In Fiscal Year 2022-23, a total of 774 local clinicians were trained on the *Guidelines*, with an additional 1,464 practitioners outside of San Diego County receiving training. This brings the total number of clinicians trained on the *Guidelines* to over 7,000 over the life of The Alzheimer's Project.
- As discussed in previous reports, Clinical Roundtable physicians have identified a need to embed certain aspects of the *Guidelines* into their organizations' electronic medical record (EMR) systems, such as a distinct field for cognitive evaluation scores. This past year, this goal has been expanded to having the EMRs include more ADRD tools, such as the algorithm decision tree, smart phrases for the screening and evaluation instruments, as well as patient scores on cognitive instruments. Inclusion of these fields would improve patient tracking and assure systemic screening and diagnosis, but many EMR systems lack these fields for ADRD information.

By June 2023, Kaiser Permanente had implemented smart phrases and distinct fields for ADRD information. TrueCare, a primary care Federally Qualified Health Center, has implemented similar fields. Other health systems such as Scripps Health are in the process of determining the specifics of what will work best for their system.

To support the implementation of these EMR changes, in May 2023, Clinical Roundtable leaders met with health systems' Chief Medical Officers. In this meeting, several health systems committed to designating a primary care physician to serve as a "Champion" to work with the County's Chief Geriatric Officer and Clinical Roundtable on identifying the specific protocols that will integrate smoothly into the health system's current EMR systems. These organizations include Sharp Rees-Stealy, Sharp Community Medical Group, San Diego Program of All Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE), and Veterans Administration San Diego Healthcare.

- Champions for Health, in partnership with UC San Diego Family Medicine, received funding from Sanford Institute for Empathy and Compassion to begin a formal evaluation of the impact of using the *Guideline's* protocols in the UC San Diego Health EMR system on clinician behavior in addressing ADRD.
- Educating middle-aged patients on dementia prevention and brain health is a new approach in most clinical environments. Primary care physicians have continued to disseminate the *Healthy Body, Healthy Mind* handout (created in 2020) which encourages patients to engage in healthy lifestyle behaviors—such as eating a balanced diet, getting regular exercise, and being socially involved—to reduce ADRD risk. This represents a unique multiple health system effort to educate patients on actions they can take early in life to promote brain health.





## Caregiver Support

County epidemiologists estimate that approximately 290,000 San Diegans are currently caring for someone with ADRD. In collaboration with community-based organizations that serve caregivers and individuals living with dementia, County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHS), Aging & Independence Services (AIS) has continued to provide services, tools, and information to support individuals in their caregiving journey.

The Caregiver Coalition of San Diego hosted several conferences and events for family caregivers on a wide range of topics, including how to care for and communicate effectively with people living with dementia. Additionally, the Caregiver Coalition's *Caregiver Handbook* was printed in five threshold languages (English, Spanish, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and Arabic). Efforts are currently underway to translate this valuable resource into additional threshold languages (Persian, Korean, Somali, and Chinese Mandarin) resulting in a more equitable approach to information-sharing.

Respite gives caregivers valuable time away from their caregiving duties while allowing the person living with ADRD to receive care in a safe environment. In partnership with its contractors, the County has provided thousands of hours of respite to caregivers in need. Through the Family Caregiver Support Program, clients received free respite and had access to information and education services, caregiver counseling, and case management. Additionally, through the Respite Voucher Program, clients received cost-reduced respite including in-home care, companion care, adult daycare, overnight respite, and out-of-home care.

Adult Protective Services has a specialized program called the Alzheimer's Response Team (ART). This program helps older adults with dementia access support services when they are in crisis so that they can avoid going to the emergency department or into law enforcement custody. ART accepts referrals county-wide, providing individuals with ADRD and their loved ones with informed crisis response and intervention, as well as care coordination.

### Fiscal Year 2022-23 Achievements

- Southern Caregiver Resource Center and Coast Care Partners provided more than 67,847 hours of cost-reduced respite to approximately 1,385 ADRD caregivers through the County's Respite Voucher Program.
- Southern Caregiver Resource Center provided more than 15,000 hours of free respite through the Family Caregiver Support Program.
- More than 300 caregivers, professionals, and community members attended events and conferences on caregiver issues.
- AIS' Alzheimer's Response Team (ART) provided support to more than 960 households to people living with ADRD and their families. ART social workers educated these residents on addressing challenges associated with dementia and provided care coordination and linkages to other community resources.



## Public Awareness and Education

In a dementia-friendly community, individuals are well-informed and can recognize and respond effectively to the needs of individuals living with dementia and their caregivers. AIS' Outreach & Education team has continued to educate the community on the causes and warning signs of ADRD through outreach events and presentations. As the region's Master Dementia Friends Champion, AIS has continued to provide informative sessions that draw contrast between normal signs of aging and signs of cognitive impairment, as well as promote best practices for effectively interacting with someone living with dementia. Collectively, these efforts can help change attitudes and public perceptions about dementia, as well as reduce the stigma that prevents people living with ADRD from actively participating in community life.

An all-sectors approach is needed to create public spaces that are welcoming and inclusive of individuals living with dementia. The Age Well Dementia and Brain Health Team has engaged senior centers, senior living communities, libraries, faith-based institutions, and banks in efforts to make their settings more dementia-friendly. This has been accomplished through trainings or materials that address sector-specific dementia-friendly practices. Because individuals living with dementia can be at greater risk for abuse and neglect due to impaired judgement and communication difficulties, these dementia education efforts included information on abuse prevention and reporting instructions to promote vigilance in these settings. The AIS elder abuse training was also revised to include more information on dementia.

### Fiscal Year 2022-23 Achievements

- 1,018 mandated reporters received elder and dependent adult abuse training and are better equipped to recognize ADRD and respond to incidents of abuse. Among the tools distributed as part of these trainings was the Dementia Communication Card, a card for caregivers to give to community members to help facilitate compassionate interactions with individuals living with dementia. The Dementia Communication Card has also been made available on-line in multiple languages.
- Over 1,000 dementia resources have been disseminated to the general community, community health workers, and providers including caregiving specific information, Dementia-Friendly toolkits, and sector-specific brochures to educate businesses on identifying and addressing clients with ADRD.



## Looking Ahead

### *Next Steps for Improving Clinical Care, Expanding Caregiver Supports, and Providing Education on ADRD*

The Alzheimer's Project has made significant progress in addressing the toll of ADRD; however, as the number of older adults continues to rise, the number of people affected by these diseases is also projected to rise. There is still more work to be done to improve clinical care for patients at-

risk or diagnosed with ADRD; to expand services and supports available to family caregivers; and to raise awareness and understanding of ADRD in all community sectors. The Alzheimer's Project partners will continue to advance the projects described in this section.

#### Clinical Roundtable

- Continue to work with the Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program and Dementia Care Aware efforts to educate clinicians on best practices for ADRD described in the *Guidelines*.
- UC San Diego Health and Champions for Health will continue implementation of the research study to assess effectiveness of the use of the *Guidelines* and their incorporation into the UC San Diego Health EMR system. Through this project, changes in clinician behavior and patient care will be assessed.
- Support the development of a two-day symposium for staff members of PACE centers.
- Revise and provide updates to the *Guidelines* with the latest information and changes to the screening and evaluation guidelines, and with information regarding new medications for ADRD.

#### Caregiver Support

- Continue to provide much needed respite services and resources to caregivers of individuals living with ADRD.

#### Public Awareness and Education

- Disseminate sector specific resources to educate staff of community institutions on how to respond to and assist patrons living with ADRD, and how to create more dementia-friendly environments.
- Promote evidence-based prevention messaging to the general public that promotes healthy lifestyles as a means to prevent or delay the onset of ADRD.



# Acknowledgements – Fiscal Year 2022-23 Partners

## *Clinical Roundtable*

- Michael Lobatz, MD, Scripps Health, The Neurology Center of Southern California (Committee Chair)
- Alvarado Hospital Medical Center
- Alzheimer’s Association San Diego/Imperial Chapter
- Alzheimer’s San Diego
- Champions for Health (formerly San Diego County Medical Society Foundation)
- County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Aging & Independence Services
- County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Medical Care Services
- Kaiser Permanente
- Naval Medical Center San Diego
- Palomar Health Medical Group
- Perlman Clinic
- San Diego State University
- San Ysidro Health
- Scripps Health
- Sharp Community Health Group
- Sharp HealthCare
- Sharp Rees-Stealy Medical Group
- Southern Caregiver Resource Center
- The Elizabeth Hospice
- The George G. Glenner Alzheimer’s Family Centers, Inc.
- The Neurology Center of Southern California
- TrueCare
- UC San Diego
- UC San Diego Shiley-Marcos Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center
- VA San Diego Healthcare
- Vista Community Clinic

## *Caregiver Support and Public Awareness & Education Partners*

- 101 Mobility of San Diego
- Aaron Home Care
- AARP
- Aging & Independence Services Advisory Council
- Alliance Healthcare Foundation
- Always Best Care Senior Services
- Alzheimer’s Association San Diego/Imperial Chapter
- Alzheimer’s San Diego
- California Relay Services
- California Telephone Access Program
- Caregiver Coalition of San Diego
- Coast Care Partners
- ComForCare Home Care
- Consumer Advocates for RCFE Reform
- Consumer Center for Health Education and Advocacy
- County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Aging & Independence Services
- County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Public Health Services
- County of San Diego Sheriff’s Department
- Elder Law & Advocacy/Health Insurance Counseling & Advocacy Program
- ElderHelp of San Diego
- For Love & Art
- Foundation for Senior Care
- Gary & Mary West Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly
- Home Instead Senior Care
- IHSS Public Authority
- Jewish Family Service of San Diego
- Meals on Wheels San Diego County
- National Alliance on Mental Illness San Diego
- NeuroLab 360
- Oasis Senior Advisors
- Parkinson’s Association of San Diego
- Parkinson and Other Movement Disorder Center
- Point Loma Nazarene University
- San Diego Community College District
- San Diego Military and Veterans Advisory Council
- San Diego Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly
- San Diego State University
- San Diego Union-Tribune
- San Diego VA Caregiver Support Program
- Sharp HospiceCare
- Sharp Senior Resource Center
- Silver Linings Transitions
- Solutions for Change
- Southern Caregiver Resource Center
- Southwest Lifeline
- St. Paul’s Senior Services
- The George G. Glenner Alzheimer’s Family Centers, Inc.
- Time to Move Care Placement
- Union of Pan Asian Communities
- Windward Life Care

## Online Resources

The Alzheimer’s Project  
[www.sdalzheimersproject.org](http://www.sdalzheimersproject.org)

Aging Roadmap  
[www.livewellsd.org/agingroadmap](http://www.livewellsd.org/agingroadmap)

Clinical Roundtable materials  
[www.championsforhealth.org/alzheimers](http://www.championsforhealth.org/alzheimers)

Data on ADRD in San Diego County  
[www.sdhealthstatistics.com](http://www.sdhealthstatistics.com)

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