

from Seniors & Families Expert Forum on April 8, 2009

## **Seniors & Families Suggested Strategies & Tactics**

with Expert additions & recommendations

*to achieve the community's chosen outcome:*

**Outcome goal #1: All seniors stay independent and live safely in their homes for as long as possible.**

**Outcome goal #2: Seniors with complex health service needs and their families have access to affordable services locally.**

**Outcome goal #3: The availability of accessible, affordable, and convenient transportation for seniors is increasing.**

### **Community Suggested Strategies**

#### **I. Financial Services**

- A. Provide free money management assessment, components include,
  - 1. Economic security
  - 2. Money management
  - 3. Financial abuse protection
- B. Provide more accessible and user friendly educational materials for seniors so that they feel confident in their knowledge of Social Security, Prescriptions, and Medicare
- C. Provide rent control to seniors to keep them living in their homes affordably
- D. Elder abuse prevention programs
  - 1. Increase seniors' engagements with neighbors so that the signs of abuse are more easily identifiable
  - 2. In senior assessments, include questions regarding financial abuse

#### **II. Health/Wellness/Education/Volunteerism**

- A. Engage seniors in activities that help them to age well – hobbies, intellectual stimulation, memory exercises, entertainment
- B. Engage seniors in the community through increased volunteer opportunities
- C. Intergenerational activities - bring seniors and children together through mutual educational opportunities (incorporate Adult Ed)
- D. Keep seniors well through regular exercise programs
- E. Nutrition and food
  - 1. Help setting up home garden
  - 2. Community garden
- F. Faith based communities
- G. Dental assessment and care for all seniors
- H. Macular degeneration assessments and vision care for all seniors
- I. Senior resource guide with information on existing medical programs
- J. Health Insurance coverage
- K. Expand Medicare part D benefits (prescription drug)

#### **III. In-home care & care management**

- A. Hospice care
  - B. Multi-purpose Senior Service Program (MSSP)
    - 1. Create a similar combined case management and financial assistance program like MSSP and extend benefits to all seniors
      - a) Social workers in the MSSP program do just about everything, from providing nutritional services to getting them out of the house and fixing leaky roofs
  - C. Daily living advocates
    - 1. Best practice
      - a) Anaheim, California – Senior Serv
        - i. Deliver meals to homebound seniors (like Meals on Wheels)
        - ii. In home senior assessment/social worker home visits - provide social workers to assess each senior who is served meals at home. Staff considers the safety of the home and other basic needs of the adult every three months to make recommendations and referrals.
    - 2. Help with errands, grocery shopping
      - a) Grocery ordering and delivering
    - 3. At home physical therapy
  - D. Mobile Resource Centers
    - 1. Senior expo on wheels
    - 2. Provide free mobile assessment
    - 3. Increase senior awareness of available services
- IV. Transportation**
- A. Accessibility to convenient transportation
    - 1. On demand transportation
    - 2. Golf carts
    - 3. Electric wheel chairs
    - 4. Access to grocery stores
    - 5. Affordable/free taxi service
    - 6. Neighbors offer rides
    - 7. Help those who want to drive engage in DMV programs to keep them driving safe
    - 8. Increase accessibility to public transit centers
      - a. Expanded routes and availability
- V. Reaching out to seniors to increase involvement and independence**
- A. Outreach
    - 1. Use everyday language when engaging seniors
      - a) Example, use terms like “Help you get help” instead of “Case Management”
    - 2. Pitch a senior awareness campaign to local philanthropists and foundations to get community engaged in being part of the solution
      - a) Approach local philanthropists and foundations with a project that integrates children and seniors to open up funding avenues; draw on all sources to fund intergenerational activities
  - B. Information and referral

1. Access to knowledge about existing programs
2. Encourage doctor offices to distribute senior resource information to patients
3. Conduct mini senior fairs in selected neighborhoods staffed with doctors, nurses, etc.
4. Senior information bus that regularly visits neighborhoods to inform seniors about services
5. TV/Radio station for seniors with news items and program info
6. Information about City Parks & Seniors Recreation Activities
7. Caregivers and close family members are educated about senior needs
8. Neighborhood senior resource directory
9. Newsletters to seniors in community

## **VI. Neighborhoods**

- A. Select and train neighborhood advocates
- B. Divide community into neighborhood areas and designate "champions"
- C. Select and train block leaders to champion committees, town/"neighborhood" hall meetings, websites, etc.
- D. Create neighborhood government and committees and engage seniors in becoming involved
  1. Get well committee, etc.
- E. Neighborhood walking groups
  1. Proven health and mental health benefits
- F. Create Neighborhood websites/Facebook pages providing neighborhood info & resources, links to free online assessments, names and contact information of neighbors, etc
- G. Best practice
  1. Senior Barter systems, Oxnard, CA
    - a) Use an artificial coin to trade services with neighbors
    - b) Example, "I'll do your taxes if you can fix my toilet"
    - c) Adds to the total amount of services available in the community
- H. Mobile home parks are naturally occurring neighborhoods
- I. *Our Mesa Neighborhood, Santa Barbara, CA*
  1. Start with Basic Social Units (a street)
  2. Set up tents/umbrellas as meeting points
  3. Take action to correct problems
  4. Don't wait for someone else to do something
  5. Educate all about available services
  6. Coordinate transportation for all
  7. Guide, educate and protect all children
  8. Each neighborhood forms its vision
  9. Produce monthly neighborhood newspaper funded by local advertising
  10. Establish neighborhood website
  11. Take no political stands
  12. Empower all members
  13. Neighborhood Gardens