
Orange County
Aging Services
COLLABORATIVE

Policy Goals & Agenda 2015

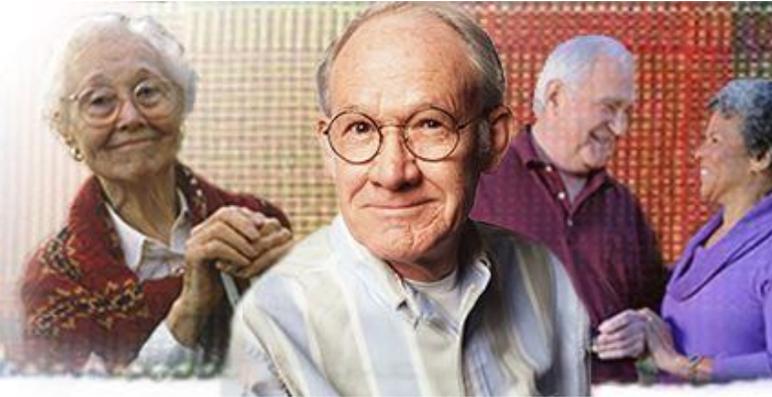
*In 2010, there were 496,404 seniors over age 60 living in Orange County. By 2020, there will be over **719,000 seniors**.*

Mission

To create and maintain an integrated network of services that address the needs of older adults and their caregivers.

Vision

A community where all older adults and their caregivers experience a high quality of life in Orange County.



Meet Basic Needs

OCASC supports strengthening non-medical services that enable seniors to remain in the community while improving well-being and quality of life including:

- Affordable housing and long-term care options
- Transportation
- Adult day services
- Nutrition programs
- Caregiver supportive services
- Education regarding planning and conversation around end-of-life decisions

Advocate for the Reauthorization of Older Americans Act Programs

OCASC believes in the importance of protecting and advocating for programs provided under the Older Americans Act (OAA). The Older Americans Act has not been officially renewed since it expired in 2011, and continues to be plagued with modest resources to support seniors within the continuum of care. The Budget Control Act of 2011 imposed cuts in non-defense discretionary (NDD) spending, which includes OAA programs, and resulted in dramatic reductions in senior nutrition and other programs in Fiscal Year (FY) 2013. Under provisions of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, FY 2014 funding was restored to pre-sequestration levels for nutrition programs, but other programs are receiving less money now than they did in FY 2012.

The Leadership Council of Aging determined that in order for Older Americans Act funding to simply catch up with the growth in the senior population, its appropriation would have to be increased by at least 12 percent each year for several years.*

Programs offered by Title III of the Older Americans Act saves Medicaid and Medicare considerable amounts of money through its services, which allow older adults to remain in the community. These programs include:

- Home Delivered Meals and Case Management
- Congregate Lunch Programs
- Aging and Disability Resource Centers
- Home and Community Based Services (case management, in-home services, legal services, mental health services, and adult day care)
- Long-Term Care Ombudsman Programs
- Family Caregiver Support Programs
- Prevention of Elder Abuse and Neglect Programs

In a time where programs serving older adults should be preparing for an influx of aging adults, many of these programs have been forced to decrease the number of individuals they serve. OCASC advocates for strengthening programs that serve older adults. We believe ensuring these programs are protected and reauthorized is not only the right thing to do for the residents of Orange County, but it is also fiscally responsible. These programs keep older adults out of institutional settings, often resulting in health care savings.

[Keep Social Security Viable](#)

OCASC supports the protection of Social Security through seeking lasting solutions to the sustainability of this crucial system. Social Security sustains many vulnerable individuals who do not otherwise have a safety net. ***According to AARP, Social Security has enough money to pay 100 percent of the promised benefits for the next 20 years. After that, there are only enough funds to cover 75 percent of the promised benefits.***** However, with gradual and modest adjustments, we can ensure that future generations will receive the benefits they've worked for.

[Advocate for Coordinated Health Care Services](#)

OCASC understands the importance of having a voice within the rapidly changing health care environment. Given the effort by the state to better coordinate care for individuals dually eligible for Medicare and MediCal, OCASC is working closely with CalOptima (also a member of the collaborative) to ensure that the needs of this vulnerable population are met and not overlooked in the health care system. During this time, it is especially pertinent that the members of OCASC and other key leaders in the community are invested in the process to improve care coordination for persons dually eligible for Medicare and Medi-Cal. OCASC plans to be very actively involved in supporting CalOptima's efforts and engaging in the stakeholder process.

OCASC promotes the importance of a person-centered, integrated system of services and supports that enables individuals to live more functional lives. We advocate for access to quality doctors and services at the right time and in the most appropriate setting. OCASC would also like to see the system of care become easier to navigate for individuals using the system as well as the professionals who interact with the individuals being served. We recognize the need for a wider array of affordable long-term care options in the community as more individuals desire to age in place, as it pertains to the level of care in their least restrictive setting.

OCASC advocates for the maintenance of adequate Medicare funding to ensure access to comprehensive services and choice for seniors. While it is important to reduce redundancies and improve efficiency in the health care system, it is concerning that lower reimbursement rates are driving more medical professionals, including primary care physicians, to opt out of Medicare. In light of the continuing shift to Managed Care systems, it is imperative that seniors have the tools to make informed decisions about their health care plans and maintain access to adequately reimbursed physicians. OCASC will continue to collectively advocate for the well-being of Orange County seniors in the rapidly changing health care environment.

* Leadership Council of Aging Organizations <http://www.lcao.org/files/2014/07/LCAO-House-Approps-FY15-Letter-.pdf>

** Protect Social Security and Medicare During Budget Debates, AARP, January 8, 2013, <http://www.aarp.org/politics-society/advocacy/info-01-2013/protect-social-security-and-medicare-during-budget-debates.html>

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www.ocagingservicescollaborative.org

Voting Members

ABRAZAR

Acacia Adult Day Services

Age Well Senior Services

AltaMed Health Services

Alzheimer's Association, Orange
County Chapter

Alzheimer's Family Services Center

Caregiver Resource Center Orange

Council on Aging - Orange County

Easter Seals Senior Day Services

Horizon Cross Cultural Center

Institute of Gerontology – CSUF

Jewish Federation & Family
Services OC

OC Adult Day Services Coalition

RTH Stroke Foundation

SeniorServ

St. Jude Senior Services

The Gay and Lesbian Community
Services Center - The Center OC

UC Irvine Division of Geriatric
Medicine and Gerontology

UCI MIND

VITAS Community Connection

Advisory Members

AARP

CalOptima

City of Irvine Senior Services

Irvine Health Foundation

OC Community Foundation

OC Office on Aging

Orange County Health Care
Agency

Orange County Social Services
Agency

Orange County United Way

*NOTE: Advisory Members abstain
from voting on policy issues.*