



# Senior and Disability Services

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Area Agency on Aging

**DATE:** August 22, 2016  
**TO:** SSAC/DSAC  
**FROM:** Dave Toler, Senior and Disability Services Director  
**RE:** **Senior & Disabilities (SDS) Director Updates**

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## Area Plan

The planning process continues to move along with successful focus groups completed with the LGBT community and the Siletz tribe community. With input from the SSAC and DSAC, this Area Plan will feature more emphasis on behavioral health issues.

The September SSAC/DSAC meeting will seek input about discretionary spending and target populations. A final draft will be sent to SSAC/DSAC members in mid-September, thus providing time for any changes prior to the October 3, 2016 deadline for submission to the state,

## *Meals on Wheels (MOW)*

A request for \$250,000 to support the Meals On Wheels program for the next two years was submitted to Larry Mullins. The support would assist us in moving toward program self-sufficiency by July 1, 2018.

Meanwhile, declining attendance at some of our more remote meal sites is making it more challenging to keep the sites open. In addition, SDS is having some difficulty in attracting qualified Meal Site managers in these more remote area. Some of these sites are averaging less than 10 diners a day. While we will continue to evaluate these sites, sustaining Home Delivered Meals will continue to be the highest priority throughout the entire region.

## *Dementia Summit*

In his role as Mental Health Services Coordinator for our region, Tim Malone has done a great job informing SDS and community partners about an epidemic that is tearing through the fabric of thousands of Oregon families: Alzheimer's and other dementia-related diseases.

Although these diseases are officially recognized as mental health diseases, the mental health providers typically exclude them for care. Meanwhile, the physical health providers are often not trained to treat the disease. The result is a serious gap in service for the fastest growing disease in the U.S.

It seems that there needs to be a spotlight put on this epidemic. Therefore, SDS is considering

taking the lead on developing a Dementia Summit in 2017. This Summit would be intended to ignite this critical issue and to bring the attention it deserves from both state and federal legislators.

### ***Hospital to Home (H2H)***

The H2H program assists people in successfully transitioning from the hospital to home and community. The program has shown to reduce 30-day readmissions back into hospitals. OCWCOG is excited to be entering into a partnership with Albany General Hospital to ensure that they have this tool for their patients who are leaving the hospital. It is our hope that the success of this program will motivate other hospitals to support H2H.

### ***Social Determinants of Health***

The success of health care transformation will greatly depend on the ability of health care systems to address what are termed the “social determinants of health.” There are generally about 10-12 determinants recognized, including access to decent jobs, transportation, education, access to quality health care etc. social supports.

While social supports are often recognized as a social determinant of health, it is not one that gets a lot of attention. This is particularly important because the lack of social supports- or social isolation- is a very important social determinant for older adults and those with disabilities. Several studies indicate that for older adults and people with disabilities, lack of social relationships is as strong a risk factor for mortality as are smoking, obesity or lack of physical activity.

It is my hope that the SSAC and DSAC will consider pursuing more advocacy about including social isolation in our health care system transformation.