



Senior and Disability Services

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Area Agency on Aging

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 15, 2018
TO: Senior Services Advisory Council and Disability Services Advisory Council
FROM: Randi Moore, Senior and Disability Services (SDS) Director, and Jennifer Moore, Community Services Program (CSP) Manager
RE: **SDS and CSP Program Updates**

SDS

SDS Director Randi Moore

Focus on Seniors and People with Disabilities in the Oregon 2018 Legislative Session is Making Home Care Worker Program Stronger

Required Training

Oregon's Home Care Workers (HCWs) play a critical role in helping seniors and adults with disabilities stay in their homes and maintain their independence. Senate Bill 1534 supports HCWs and ensures a higher quality of care for those choosing to live in their own homes by directing the Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS) to work with the Home Care Commission to establish minimum training standards for HCWs.

Previously, the only requirements to work as a HCW were that an individual was 18 years or older, attending a two-hour long orientation, and passing a background check. There is no licensing or training requirement; an optional free training is offered by the Oregon Home Care Commission, very few HCWs take advantage of the opportunity, as it is not mandatory.

The new training required by the bill must be geographically accessible in all areas of the State, culturally appropriate for workers of all language abilities, and considerate of the unique needs of each worker type. Training providers must strive to align training requirements with those required for care providers in other long-term care settings.

Increased Staffing in Background Check Unit

Currently, background checks, which are required before a HCW can work with a consumer in their home, are taking up to nine weeks to complete. This extended wait time can cause a hardship for consumers who require the assistance of a care worker to assist them in activities of daily living.

A rebalance of the DHS budget was approved by the Joint Committee on Ways and Means during the 2018 session. Projected savings will be used to address workload and backlog issues in the background check unit. The goal is to decrease wait time for background check completion from the current six to nine weeks, down to an average of two weeks.

Corvallis Office Move

The Corvallis office of Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments will be moving to a new location on Ninth Street. The target date for the move is June 1, 2018.

The current office location, on Fourth Street, has historically housed Eligibility Specialists, Benton County Veteran Services, and Corvallis Area Metropolitan Planning Organization staff. This move allows for more space dedicated to the Community and Economic Development Department, drop-in work spaces for teleworking staff visiting consumers in Benton County, and additional room for work study participants. Located in the Samaritan Health Services building next to Sam Fit, the new location is ideal for consumers using transit services, with a bus station directly in front of the entrance. In addition, this move allows for continuing to build stronger relationships between OCWCOG and Samaritan Health Services.

CSP

CSP Manager Jennifer Moore

Meals on Wheels (MOW)

Menu standards for *MOW* are developed to sustain and improve client health through the provision of safe and nutritious meals, using specific guidelines on nutrition requirements set according to the Oregon Congregate and Home-Delivered Nutrition Program Standards, with oversight provided by the Oregon State Unit on Aging. The guidelines encourage local programs to include key nutrients and recommendations, with goals of lowering chronic disease and improving the health of older Oregonians.

Each meal served by nutrition services providers funded through the Older Americans Act must meet the current U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Health and Human Services Dietary Guidelines, and must contain at least one-third of the current Dietary Reference Intakes, as established by the Food and Nutrition Board of the National Academy of Science – National Research Council. All menu planning conducted by OCWCOG's *MOW* program meets these requirements.

Benton County Veterans Services Office (VSO)

In March, the VSO team participated in the *Corvallis Area Resource Event (CARE)* hosted by the Corvallis Police Department. *CARE* is an event seeking to bring resources to those in need, rather than waiting for those in need to seek out resources. While the target audience is anyone in Benton County who is in need of assistance, the primary demographic anticipated are homeless individuals. Staff from OCWCOG's *ADRC* and *Options Counseling* programs are co-tabling with the VSO.