



**Inland Coalition
on Aging**

RECOMMENDATIONS

FOR THE

**INLAND EMPIRE MASTER
PLAN FOR AGING**

September 2023





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Housing

Housing: Recommendations for Implementation



- Review affordable housing waitlists in San Bernardino County to confirm need and eligibility.
 - *Context: Participants shared that the current wait time for affordable senior housing is several years long. Riverside County checked their waitlist for affordable housing to confirm all those on the list are eligible, and approximately one-third were removed from the list. This improved efficiency.*
- Educate property developers about the growing older adult demographic and encourage them to build for changing needs and abilities with age. For example, new development should include no-step entryways, hallways and restrooms that allow for wheelchair access. These design elements, sometimes called ‘universal design principles,’ would benefit residents of all ages.
- Offer workshops focused on finding affordable housing, answering frequently asked questions, and providing live assistance with housing applications. Collaborate with senior centers, Meals on Wheels, and organizations serving unhoused individuals to develop these workshops.



Housing

Housing: Recommendations for Implementation (cont.)

- Encourage and support the launch of a moving assistance program in the Inland Empire.
- Encourage and support the launch of a home sharing program in the Inland Empire.
- Encourage and support the launch of local Villages (especially in rural areas of the IE).
 - *Context: Website for the National Village to Village Network*
<https://www.vtvnetwork.org/>
- Expand ‘The Buddy System’ – This is a national program that engages volunteers to support individuals living with HIV or AIDS. There is no cost to those being cared for. These ‘buddy’ relationships are not long term, but they are useful to find someone to give a helping hand, for example, with cleaning, groceries, or rides to and from the doctor.

Housing

Housing: Recommendations for Advocacy

- Propose legislature to request federal HUD expansion of Section 8.
- Advocate at the city and county levels for increased housing set aside for low-income older adults, particularly near services, healthcare, and groceries. Educate local governments about the importance of accessible housing (universal housing).
- Propose expansion of rental protections in the Inland Empire.



Housing

Housing: Recommendations for Advocacy (cont.)

- Advocate for expanded access to long term services and supports (LTSS) for older adults experiencing housing transitions. For example, home care should be available to clients in temporary housing. This could tie into state-funded Assisted Living Waiver (ALW) benefits.
- Advocate for statewide coordination of Housing Authorities. While Housing Authorities report to HUD at the federal level, but there is no statewide coordinating body.
- Advocate for targeted support for those who live in their vehicle. Offer safe places to park, showers, services, food, and areas for pets.
- Advocate to provide housing support for family and friend caregivers who are in financial need. Additionally, provide caregivers with support after their care recipient passes away.
- Advocate for increased state support and improved oversight of residential care facilities for the elderly (RCFE) and skilled nursing facilities at a statewide level.
- Advocate to support and expand local long-term care ombudsman programs.



Transportation

Transportation: Recommendations for Implementation



- Hold and/or participate in summit meetings focused on transportation. Bring transportation providers and local government representatives together to map out existing routes and services, identify overlap and/or gaps in programs, and collectively brainstorm solutions.
- Research which senior centers do not currently have a bus and connect them with funding resources.
- Identify if there are shuttles currently being used for other age groups/ populations that could be expanded to provide needed transportation support to older adults or adults with disabilities in underserved areas (e.g., Morongo Basin).
- Convene agencies that engage volunteer drivers to understand barriers, successes, gaps in services, and opportunities for expansion.
- Participate in or organize a presentation for the Public and Specialized Transportation Advisory and Coordinating Council (PASTACC) to increase partnership between transit providers and community-based organizations.



Transportation

Transportation: Recommendations for Implementation (cont.)

- Encourage health care facilities to promote and advertise public transportation alternatives for older and disabled adults. Train health providers to provide patients with resources when their driver’s license is revoked.
- Launch a Peer Navigators program for transit. Public transit riders from various communities could be ‘champions’ and help those who need it to navigate the transportation system.
- Address paratransit needs among the disability community in Victorville. Increase non-emergency medical transportation down to the valley.
 - *Context: SB Transportation reimbursement program (TRP) is only offered in the north desert- east of Victorville area- only 350 miles/month. SBTA has grants but agencies have been unable to offer the needed transportation in the Victorville area since the costs are greater than the available funds. TRP funding is limited and community-based organizations who help coordinate services are not sufficiently reimbursed to cover program expenses.*

Transportation

Transportation: Recommendations for Advocacy

- Advocate for improved regulation of the quality and reliability of public transit.
- Advocate for free or subsidized rides for older adults and adults with disabilities on public transit.
- Advocate for transportation to connect older adults with senior centers, meal locations, and health care facilities.



Healthcare

Healthcare: Recommendations for Implementation



- Tap into existing statewide initiatives to expand geriatric training for physicians, nurses, physician assistants, and the paraprofessional healthcare workforce. (For example, current statewide initiatives include the California Department of Aging’s CalWorks and Dementia Care Aware initiatives, and the Alzheimer’s Association Health Systems initiative)
- Increase access to dental care by ensuring clinics are accessible to older adults and adults with disabilities. For example, ensure clinics are accessible to wheelchair users and explore expansion of mobile dental clinics.
- Arrange for a Medicare representative to be available at local senior centers to answer questions (not just facilitate sign-ups).
- Launch a patient advocacy program; a middle person to speak up for the patient, take notes on behalf of the patient. This is particularly important in hospital and skilled nursing facility settings, and for patients with cognitive decline.
- Ensure Community Health Worker/ Promotora programs incorporate training on resources for older adults, adults with disabilities, and caregivers.
 - *Context: CHW/Promotora programs are currently expanding through CalAIM and other state funding sources.*



Healthcare

Healthcare: Recommendations for Advocacy

- Advocate for expansion of availability and hours of operation of hospitals, urgent cares, and pharmacies in rural areas of the Inland Empire.
- Advocate to expand case management, including for those who fall just above the MediCal qualifying line. Case managers would provide needed support to navigate the healthcare system, insurance changes and eligibility, and access to needed services and supports.
- Advocate for age friendly health systems and age friendly emergency departments in the Inland Empire.
 - *Context: See <https://www.ihl.org/Engage/Initiatives/Age-Friendly-Health-Systems>*
- Connect with other coalitions and advisory committees focused on improving care transitions. Identify ways to support their efforts and expand service reach. Advocate for discharge plans to be created on the day of being admitted to a hospital or rehabilitation/ skilled nursing facility. Patients should be informed of the expected length of stay and plans for care transitions.



Mental Health & Social Support

Mental Health & Social Support: Recommendations for Implementation



- Offer training through the Diverse Elders Coalition for local leaders of community-based organizations in the Inland Empire. This will increase awareness of how to ensure programs are accessible and inviting to residents with diverse abilities, cultures, and languages, as well as those who experience intersectionality of aging/disability/mental health conditions.
- Promote or organize community-wide, intergenerational social events that foster positive and safe relationships, including among individuals of different ages, backgrounds, viewpoints, and life experiences.
- Create opportunities and spaces for inclusive and intergenerational social connection through the built environment, for example, via parks, parklets, or community centers.
- Expand access to counseling at senior centers and in older adults' homes.
- Implement an Inland Empire adopt-a-senior or buddy system.
 - *Sample program: In the Crestline Mountain Area, the 'You're not alone' program offers check in calls to residents. Also, Citizens on Patrol provide referrals when they encounter isolated residents.*
- Launch programs to support pet owners. For example, offer free or discounted pet food and veterinary care. Also, advocate for more housing that allows pets.



Mental Health & Social Support

Mental Health & Social Support: Recommendations for Advocacy

- Ensure community programs and events are marketed specifically to older adults, for example, by showcasing photos of diverse older adults on flyers or in newsletters.
- Ensure community programs and events are accessible and welcoming to all. For example, ensure availability of sufficient seating, shade, restrooms, and water, and offer discounts and accessible transportation for older adults and those with disabilities.
- Support intergenerational events organized by daycares or high schools.
 - Sample program: OneGeneration provides a variety of intergenerational programs and events.

Alzheimer's & Related Dementias

Alzheimer's & Related Dementias: Recommendations for Advocacy

- Advocate for innovative long-term care models to be developed in the Inland Empire, for example, dementia villages.
- Advocate to improve early detection of cognitive decline and expand care planning.



Caregiving

Caregiving: Recommendations for Implementation



- Offer a peer support program for care recipients.
- Help current caregivers to plan for ‘life after caregiving.’
- Offer support for after ones’ caregiving role ends, for example, when the person being cared for passes away, or during major caregiving transitions.
 - *Context: Currently, funding for caregiving support cannot be used for this; there may be a need to advocate for change in funding restrictions.*
- Organize a program to offer caregiver check-in calls.
- Support in home services support (IHSS) recruitment, hiring, and training, especially in the Palm Desert area.
 - *Context: IEHP & Molina Care will begin offering respite care as of January 1, 2024 for Medi-Cal members. Members may receive up to 336 hours/ calendar year; this will be in addition to existing IHSS eligibility.*
- Support care recipients to maintain eligibility for supplemental security income (SSI) and other programs when their caregiver passes away.



Caregiving

Caregiving: Recommendations for Advocacy

- Advocate for sustainable, increased funding for existing caregiver support programs and services. While valuable caregiver support exists in the Inland Empire, the need is greater than the current capacity.
- Advocate for expanded funding for In Home Supportive Services (IHSS) and Adult Protective Services (APS).
- Advocate to subsidize long term care and private home care at a state level, supporting families, in-home care agencies, and professional care providers.
- Advocate to expand access to home care or adult day services for older adults on tribal lands.

Education & Awareness

Education & Awareness: Recommendations for Implementation

- Launch a campaign to expand awareness of existing resources to support older adults, persons with disabilities, and family caregivers in the Inland Empire. Outreach through clinics, faith communities, community centers, radio, TV, and social media. Ensure linguistic- and cultural- specific outreach (e.g., via embassies and ethnic media outlets). Collaborate with statewide groups like AARP to spread the word.



Education & Awareness

Education & Awareness: Recommendations for Implementation (cont.)

- Some resources that came up in during the IE-MPA needs assessment include:
 - Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)
 - IE Connect
 - 211
 - Resources to support home modifications, e.g., Inland Empire Health Plan, Riverside County, and Habitat for Humanity.
 - USDA loans that allow purchasing a home without a down payment.
 - Transportation resources, e.g., Riverside County TRP- Travel Reimbursement Program, Trip Trek, Dial-a-ride, RTA, or Riverside Special Transportation.
 - Medicare Advantage 24-7 phone number
 - Health clinics specialized in memory care
 - Mental Health resources such as the mental health hotline; The Center LGBTQ mental health resources (free); DAP Health social workers and wellness team; Friendship Line California
 - Inland Caregiver Resource Center
 - Alzheimer's Association, including their 24/7 Helpline
 - Adult Protective Services



Education & Awareness

Education & Awareness: Recommendations for Implementation (cont.)

- Increase education and awareness about planning for retirement, long term care, and financial planning, including reverse mortgages and tips for saving costs of healthcare and utilities.
- Create a marketing and education campaign about aging (including age-friendly communities) targeted to people of all ages (including youth). The public would benefit from more awareness around what to expect as we age, what resources are covered or not covered, and the importance of advance care planning, including a dementia-specific plan.
- Launch a media and education campaign to inform family caregivers about resources for education and support.
 - *See an example from Santa Barbara County here:*
<https://fsacares.org/caring-together/>
- Launch a marketing and education campaign geared towards families and professionals to increase understanding of why and how to identify a professional caregiver who is carefully vetted and screened, and to increase understanding of state licensure requirements. Additionally, educate families so they can avoid hospice and palliative care fraud, which is on the rise.
- Launch a media campaign to break stigma of mental health with a focus on older generations.



Inland Coalition on Aging

Contact Information



Please email any comments or suggestions. Scan the QR code to send an email now.



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<https://www.icaging.org/>