



# 4-YEAR PLAN

2020 - 2024



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## **Executive Summary**

Over the past two years, we have further recognized just how deep the lack of societal awareness is to the needs of our older adults, our seniors, those who have forged the way for us in so many areas. I suppose human nature plays a role in this as we are easily distracted by so many other needs and challenges that society now faces, but we must find a way to bring awareness to the increasing needs of our aging population and the new challenges that appear as we move through the aging process. We must bring to light that the latter years of our life cycle is faced with its own unique circumstances that need to be addressed.

We started by increasing our footprint across the County. We were able to reach many new pockets of seniors through increased communication with and provision of educational programming in our many senior high rises. A successful drug take back program was developed that provides easy access to seniors for their prescription disposal. These efforts were the start of relationship building with valued providers of housing for seniors, and various community programs where seniors gather.

In July of 2019, we officially changed our name from Office of Aging and Adult Services to Office of Senior Services in order to clarify the services and funding allocated to the needs and services for residents age 60 and over.

Every four years we are charged with developing a Four Year plan to be approved by our State authority, PA Department of Aging. This plan is to be an outline of what we seek to provide for our Montgomery County Seniors over the course of four years, what we seek to improve on, and how we can further enhance our services to our senior residents.

The goals outlined by PDA for the plan for 20-24 will assist us in our provision of service and enhancement of awareness:

- Expand network capacity to serve seniors
- Responsiveness to diverse aging population
- Promote innovative and best practices





- Enhance engagement of seniors and support health living
- Emphasize a person first culture
- Raise awareness of elder abuse and how to respond
- Improve data integrity using evidence based planning and be accountable for results.

The COVID-19 pandemic brought an unexpected awareness to our vulnerable senior adults, one we didn't expect, nor ask for, but nonetheless surfaced and brought additional attention to our Senior population. We are now moving towards a new way of serving our senior population, one with many unknowns, and also many possibilities.

Through this pandemic many lessons have been learned and the resiliency of our senior population has been successfully tested. Our provider network has risen to the challenge of serving through difficult times and have been responsive, engaging and accountable to the seniors they serve. Our staff have successfully responded to a new way of working and our services continued without interruption.

As we work through this plan over the next four years Montgomery County Office of Senior Services will continue to promote awareness through a strong network that will be responsive, promote engagement and be accountable to the current needs of our senior population.

Doreen L. Hespell

Administrator





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## **Agency Overview**

The Montgomery County Office of Senior Service touches the lives of many County residents annually, providing an array of services and programs to assist seniors, their families and caregivers. Services and programs assist individuals and families in preventing premature institutionalization. We also support seniors to live as independently and as healthy as possible within the community. As Montgomery County population ages, we are continually challenged with meeting the increased needs of our rapidly growing aging population. There are now an estimated 202,380 persons over age 60 in Montgomery County.

Senior Services delivers services through well trained staff, or one of over 82 providers contracted with our agency.

Our agency offers in-home services, senior community center services, functional eligibility assessments for level of care, care management, enrollment assistance, caregiver support programs, protective services, adult daily living center services, ombudsman services, transportation, and health and wellness programs to assist aging residents across all areas of the county.

In order to serve consumers effectively and efficiently our workforce has transitioned into a predominately remote workforce. This allows staff to work more efficiently from their home workspace.

Our agency continues to have the support of the Montgomery County Office of Community Connections, a service which provides information and referral services.

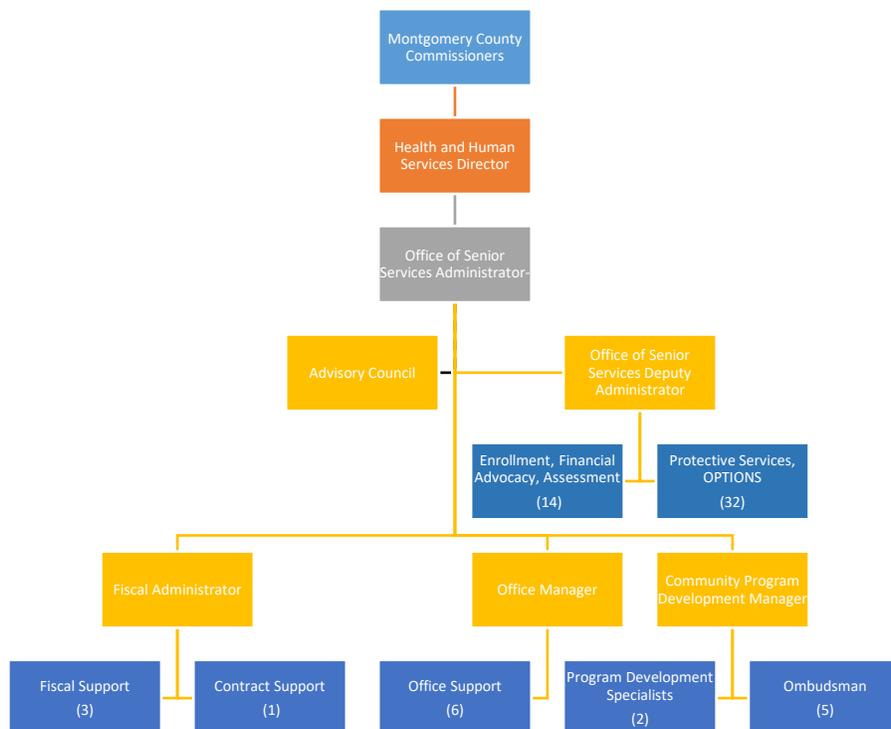




## Agency Structure

The Montgomery County Office of Senior Services is a public agency, operating as part of the Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services. Senior Services has a staff of 68 individuals. Staff are hired following the guidelines of the Merit and County systems and employed as Montgomery County personnel.

Montgomery County Office of Health and Human Services is actively engaged in a strategic plan to assist in the restructuring of our Health and Human Services Department. HHS remains committed to our guiding principles of trauma informed work, increased awareness of diversity, equity and inclusion and strengthening our partnerships in order to improve our access, prevention and model of one department.





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## **OPTIONS Program**

This program provides services to Montgomery County residents age 60 and over who are experiencing some degree of decline in their physical or cognitive status. Through the OPTIONS program eligible recipients may receive care management and in home services including personal care, home supports (shopping, laundry, food prep), adult day care services (if cognitive delays are present) & emergency response systems. A Needs Assessment will be completed by a care manager who will work with the consumer and, if necessary his/her family to determine the individual's specific needs and how those needs should be met. MCOSS contracts with home care providers to provide the services requested and the care manager works with the service provider to ensure the services are being provided as ordered and that those services are effective in meeting the individual's needs. OPTIONS consumers are required to disclose their monthly income and a cost share fee is based on the consumers (and spouse if applicable) previous year's income and the amount of services received.

The OPTIONS program currently serves over 1,300 individuals.

## **Home Delivered Meals Program**

Residents who are over the age of 60 and are home bound and unable to cook & shop for themselves may be eligible to participate in this program. An initial assessment of need is completed in order to determine eligibility and a re-assessment is completed on a yearly basis to verify that they continue to meet the criteria of the Home Delivered Meals program. The Home Delivered Meals program is part of the Larger OPTIONS Program and receives its funding through this program.

Providers of home delivered meals ensure recipients receive five meals per week, and per need some recipients receive frozen meals to assist with meals over the weekend.





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## Caregiver Support Programs

- *Caregiver Support*

Provides caregivers with particular needs to continue caring for loved ones age 60 and older. The program is designed to reduce caregiver stress and burden by reimbursing some of the costs associated with providing care. The amount of reimbursement is based on the household income of the care receiver's residence. The caregiver does not need to reside in the same home as the care receiver. The care manager counsels caregivers as to the benefits, services, supplies, home modifications and equipment available to assist in meeting the needs of the their loved ones. This may allow caregivers to purchase respite care, adult day care, personal care or other services essential to caring for someone.

Caregiving supplies such as disposable briefs, bed pads or other medical equipment and supplies may be purchased by the caregiver and reimbursed through the program as well. An important feature of this program is its focus on the unique needs of individual caregivers. It allows caregivers to choose from available services to provide the type and quality of care they would like to keep their loved ones at home.

- *Grandparent/Older Relative Support*

This program allows for older relatives (55 years and older) who are raising children under the age of 18 to receive reimbursement for monthly expenses associated with child care (i.e., babysitting, daycare, extra-curricular activities, seasonal clothing, baby food, diapers, etc.). The main focus is to provide respite for the caregiver and relieve some of the financial burden of providing full-time care to a child. The amount of reimbursement is based on the household income.

- *Older Relative Caregiver Support*

Caregivers age 55 and older who are the primary caregiver of an Adult with a Disability (Age 18-59 with a non-dementia disability), may be reimbursed for services and supplies





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associated with providing full-time care. The amount of reimbursement is based on the household income.

### **Elder Abuse and Protective Services Program**

The Montgomery County Office of Senior Services is responsible for the implementation of the Older Adult Protective Services Act (OAPS) in Montgomery County for individuals 60 years of age and over. OAPS receives reports of abuse, neglect, financial exploitation and abandonment. These reports are made on a voluntary or mandatory basis, and all reports are kept confidential.

Once a report is received the unit is responsible to conduct investigations, make case dispositions, and when necessary provide services to older adults in order to reduce or eliminate elder abuse. Services may include personal care, home delivered meals, competency evaluations, home support, overnight supervision, legal referrals and guardianship. The OAPS unit works collaboratively with criminal investigators and other local community organizations to reduce and eliminate risk to older adults in Montgomery County. In addition to the provision of services the OAPS unit maintains an ongoing campaign of public information and education to inform older adults, professionals and the general public about the need for protective services and how to report elder abuse.

### **Enrollment**

Montgomery County Office of Senior Services' Enrollment Unit screens all in-coming calls, e-mails, and in-person visits to determine eligibility for home and community based services and need for long-term placement. This Unit also provides financial advocacy. Our financial advocates assist consumers and their families in completing the financial application and gathering financial documentation needed for long-term service and supports.





### **Level of Care Assessment**

MCOSS Assessment Unit provides a functional eligibility assessment. This assessment evaluates a consumer's level of care to determine how to meet his/her needs. Assessors in this unit work remotely to maximize efficiency and use resources effectively. Assessments are conducted in a variety of settings, in homes, hospitals, nursing homes, and shelters.

### **Montgomery County Ombudsman Program**

The Montgomery County Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program is designed to support and empower residents by resolving individual complaints involving long-term care service while working to improve and enhance the long-term living system for the resident and their families. Montgomery County Ombudsman, champion the right of these consumers to achieve the highest quality of life and care wherever they reside. Residents of nursing facilities, personal care homes, domiciliary care, and those receiving long term services and support, are eligible to receive the services and assistance of an ombudsman. Examples of ombudsman support are billing issues, concerns about quality care, appeals regarding transfers and discharges, and discontinuance or changes in services.

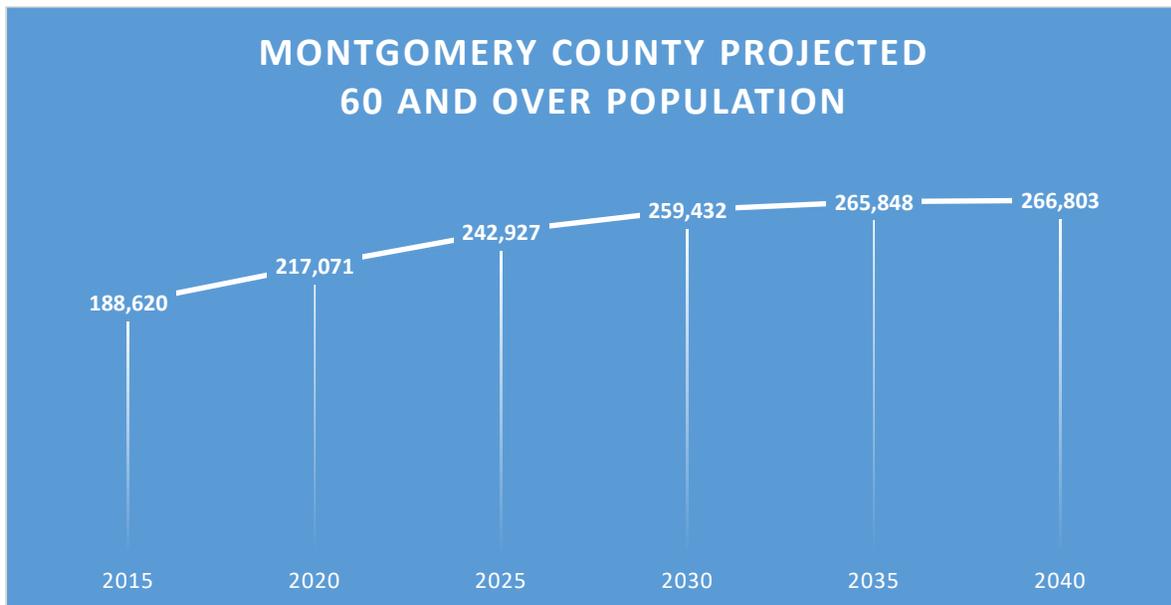
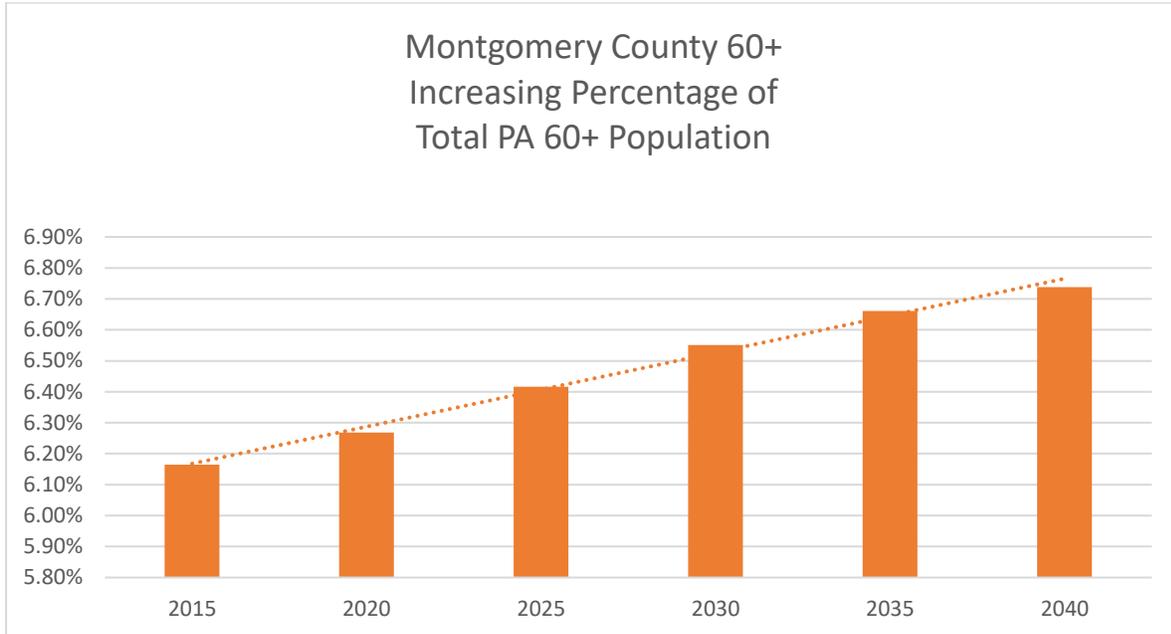
### **Community Program Development Unit**

This unit is tasked with developing programs and partnerships that serve the unmet needs of the senior population in Montgomery County. The Community Program Development Unit aims to increase the knowledge base of seniors through the delivery of evidence-based programs mandated by the Pennsylvania Department of Aging. In addition to evidence-based programs, the Community Program Development Unit offers a wide array of additional presentations and resources that aid in supporting healthy living, active engagement and a sense of community for all older Pennsylvanians.



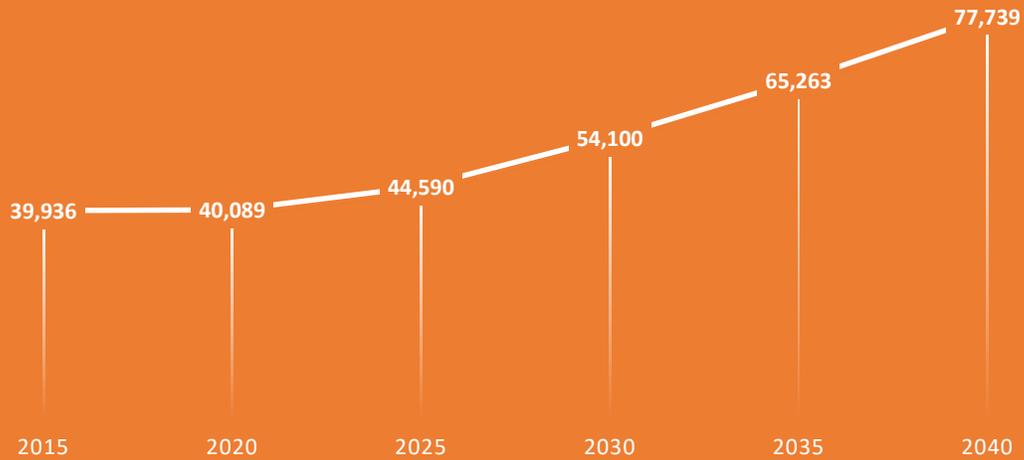


## Our Community

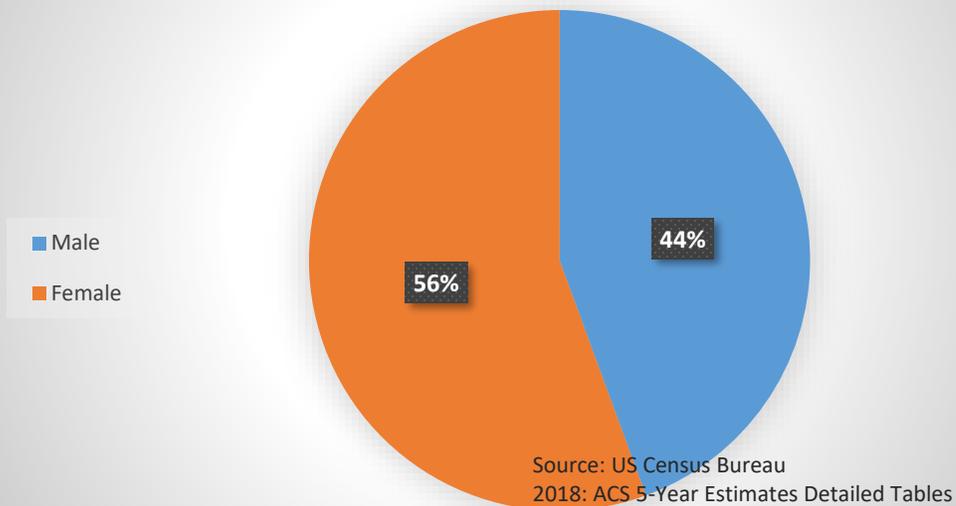




## MONTGOMERY COUNTY PROJECTED 80 AND OVER POPULATION

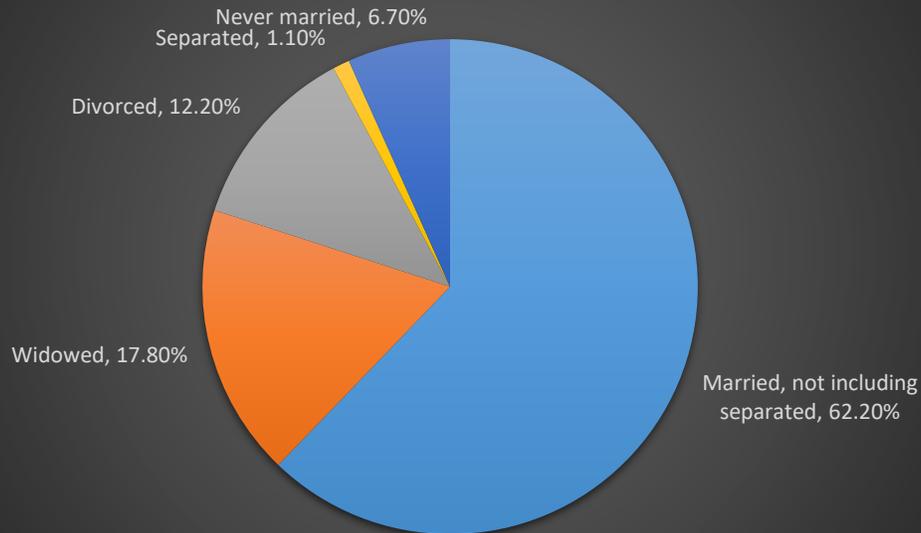


## 60 years and over by gender





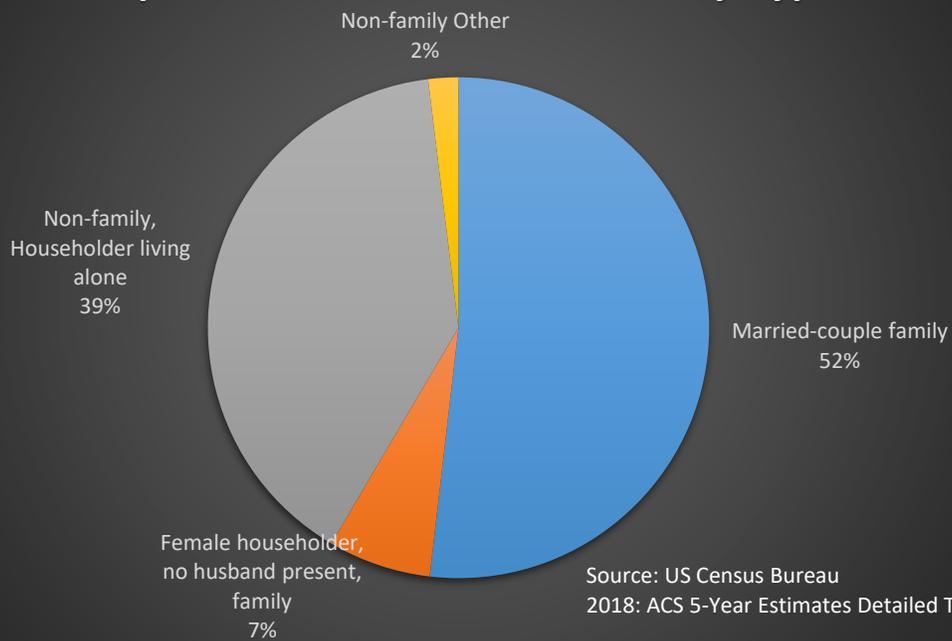
## Population 60 and over



Source: US Census Bureau  
2018: ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables

Source: US Census Bureau  
2018: ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables

## 60 years and over Households by Type



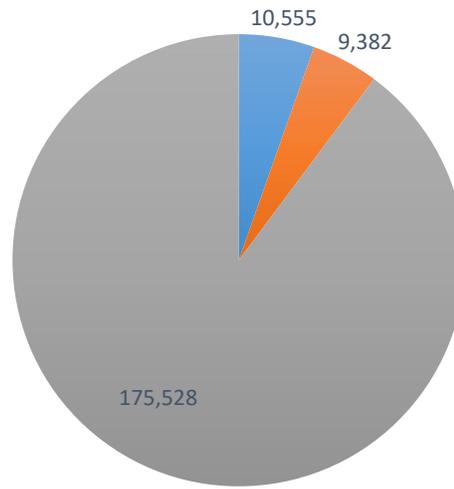
Source: US Census Bureau  
2018: ACS 5-Year Estimates Detailed Tables





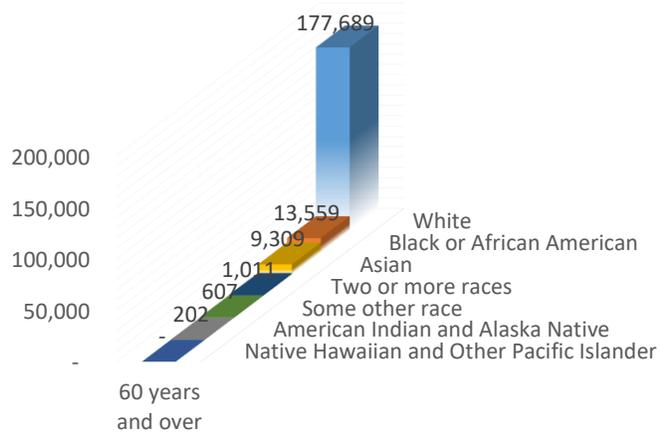
## 60 and Over Below or Near Poverty

US Census Bureau  
2018: ACS 1-Year Estimate Subject Tables



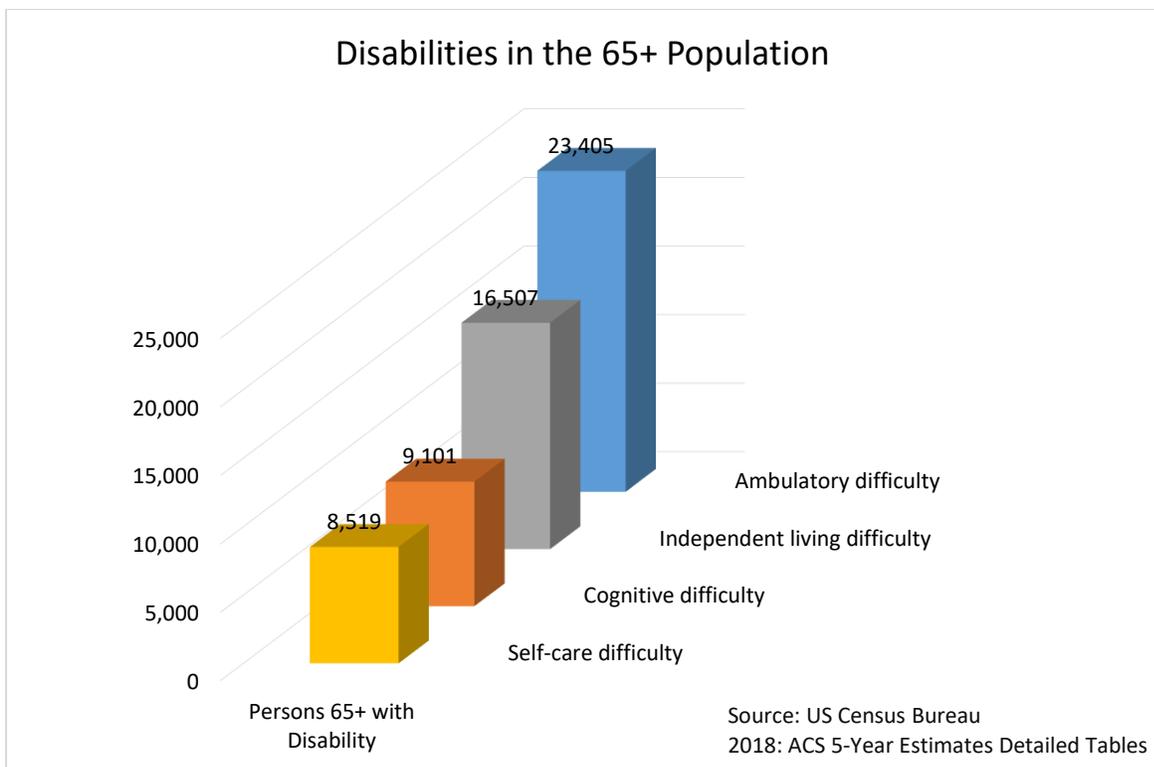
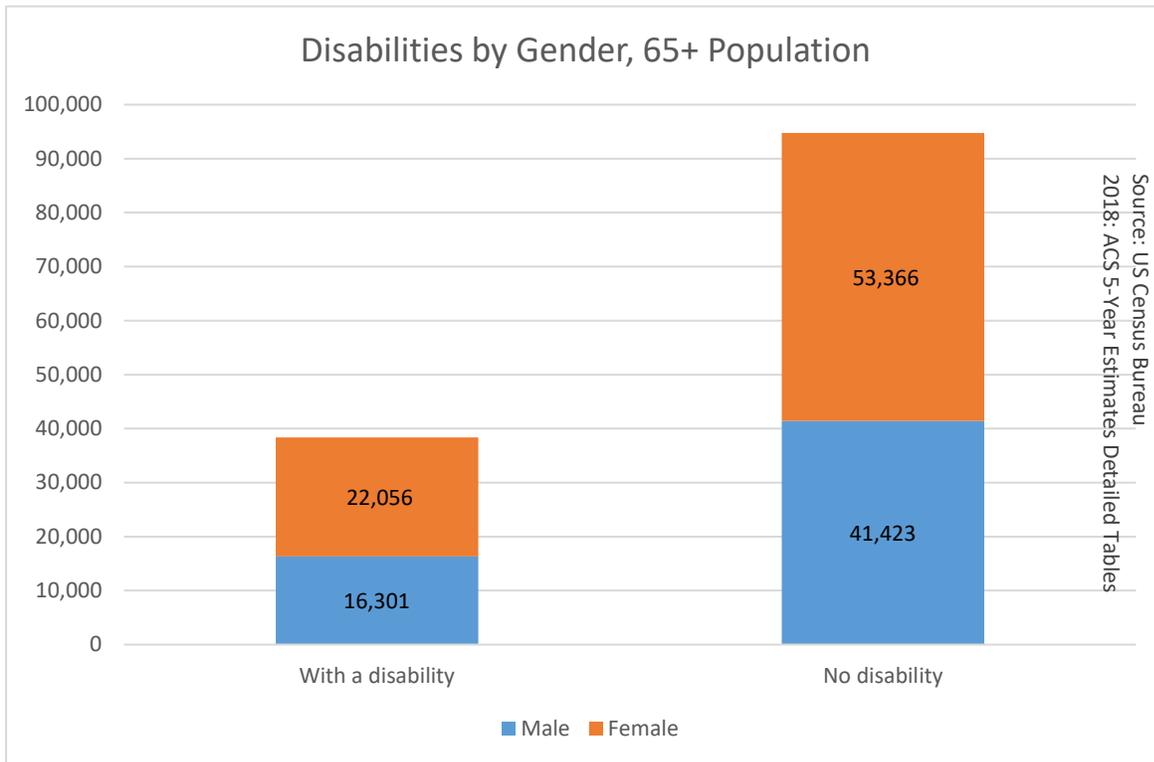
- Below 100 percent of the poverty level
- 100 to 149 percent of the poverty level
- At or above 150 percent of the poverty level

## 60 YEARS AND OVER POPULATION BY RACE



Source: US Census Bureau







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## **Local**

Pandemic [noun](#)

pan·dem·ic | \ pan-'de-mik \

Definition of *pandemic*: an outbreak of a disease that occurs over a wide geographic area and affects an exceptionally high proportion of the population: a pandemic outbreak of a disease (1)

Prior to 2020, it is likely that most of us thought of a pandemic as something that happened in far off lands or some place in the history books. How quickly our vocabulary has changed. The Coronavirus has changed how we live, how we work, how we pray, how we play, how we look and how we will operate moving forward.

Initially, the coronavirus slowly crept into our borders and across our country. It became very real when it crept into our county. On March 14, Montgomery County Senior Services moved to a work from home as Montgomery County went to a Stay at Home order.

Little did we know that we were running a marathon, not a sprint?

Our care managers, protective service staff, office support, assessors, community program specialist and ombudsman staff went from having face to face contact to a telephone or virtual relationship with their consumers. This type of contact can be difficult at times. Many seniors do not always answer their phones. Difficult hearing can become a barrier for having a meaningful conversation. Many seniors do not have computers, internet access or the technical ability to maintain a virtual relationship.

Many changes had to be put into place to protect our senior population from unnecessary exposure to others. Our home delivered meal providers had to adjust delivery schedules to minimize exposure to seniors. Most providers switched to a reduced delivery schedule by preparing frozen meals to be delivered with shelf stable items. While reducing exposure, we knew we were limiting the much needed socialization that goes along with our home delivered meals. This prompted our agency and many of the providers to also do well calls.





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The senior centers in our county closed their doors on March 13. They have been staying in touch with their consumers via Facebook, their website, virtual classes, phone calls to individuals and mailings. It has been a difficult replacement for the seniors. Many of the seniors attended the senior centers for their daily socialization needs. Seniors have had to make a very big change in their social habits.

The Long Term Care facilities in our county have been hit hard by the Coronavirus. While many facilities followed COVID plans and worked hard to stay ahead of the virus in some cases it was a futile attempt. Both workers and residents became victims of the virus. Staff has worked long, exhausting hours often without recognition from the general public. These workers are often the unsung heroes in the healthcare arena.

Moving forward, there is no doubt that the word *pandemic* has been etched into our brains. Have we learned any lessons? The answer is *many* lessons. Moving forward we know that our seniors will need the support of the entire community to stay safe and healthy. We know that last year's normal will never be the same moving forward. Our world has changed and it will continue to change. Our work moving forward will need to promote community support and safety for our seniors. We need to advocate for the seniors in our community. We need to instill in the younger population the desire to help support our senior community. Maybe, just maybe, the new normal will be a better normal.

(1) <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/pandemic>

## **Economic**

Pandemic [noun](#)

pan·dem·ic | \ pan-'de-mik \

Definition of *pandemic*: An outbreak of a disease that occurs over a wide geographic area and affects an exceptionally high proportion of the population: a pandemic outbreak of a disease (1)





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The economic health has changed rapidly with the pandemic. Many people have been laid off or lost their employment due to the restrictions placed on society and commerce related to the pandemic. This may impact seniors who rely on part time employment to make ends meet. It may also impact seniors who depend on their extended family for financial support and assistance. Some seniors may see changes in their investments and retirement funds due to the current economic status. This may possibly effect where they fall into the poverty guidelines, which may directly affect who will be eligible for services through our agency. We may see a rise in the request for services related to changes in consumer's eligibility status. This will force our agency to look at ways to stretch the already stretched, flat funding required to deliver our current services.

Another economic strain that can directly influence our agency the next four years will be the ability of our providers to sustain their financial burden. If providers are unable to continue doing business, it will decrease choice for our consumers. We are aware that many of our business partners will struggle through this pandemic era.

We are also cognizant of our non-profit partners struggling to survive in a pandemic era where people may be unable to make donations due to their own personal financial problems. This may cause some non-profits to discontinue operations in the future.

Our County has 60 skilled nursing facilities that may experience economic difficulties as a direct result of the pandemic. It could possibly cause smaller independent facilities to close. This in turn could result in less bed availability for seniors needing skilled care. The limited bed availability could increase the need for seniors requiring direct care services in the community. We are unsure of how the pandemic will impact the State and Federal budgets in the future. It is very likely that due to current relief packages that our future funding may remain flat or even reduced. This will require our agency to operate as efficiently and effectively as possible to deliver our services.





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## **Political**

Pandemic [noun](#)

pan·dem·ic | \ pan-'de-mik \

Definition of *pandemic*: An outbreak of a disease that occurs over a wide geographic area and affects an exceptionally high proportion of the population: a pandemic outbreak of a disease (1)

The pandemic has given us a need to look to our government for guidance and protection. Politicians from our County, Commonwealth and National level have all frequented our TV, computer screens and radios telling us how to stay safe. The pandemic has often become a platform for political controversy. However, the Coronavirus is not affiliated with a particular party or platform. The only race the Coronavirus is affiliated with is the human race. Even in this politically charged environment we still need our politicians to lead us safely through this pandemic. The general population is counting on politicians to be transparent, informative and calm.

Wearing a mask in public, at times, has become a political statement. As public workers serving the most vulnerable population we need to also be individual leaders, by setting an example of social responsibility. If a mask can protect you and others, the question of whether to wear a mask should have an easy answer.

Currently, there are some politicians suing other politician: The Governor of Georgia is suing the Mayor of Atlanta for mandatory mask requirements in that city. There are threats of federal funding for education to be held if schools refuse to open.

It is certain that what politicians determine and how they can work together will impact how we deliver services, how we communicate with our seniors, how we re-open senior centers and what our future work will look like. It will surely impact how we reach the goals in this 4 year plan. In this election year, the coronavirus has recently become a battleground for politicians. During this global pandemic it is a time for politicians to put party interest aside and join together to





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keep citizens informed and safe. Political leadership is important in this trying time. We need our political leaders to come together to battle the pandemic.

### **Senior Needs in Montgomery County**

Every four years the Montgomery County Office of Senior Services evaluates the programs provided over the past four years to seniors in the community. This evaluation is meant to locate areas in which improvements are needed. At the same time, the consensus of priorities for the future is reached. This process allows for the development of a plan suited to the specific needs of seniors in Montgomery County.

In order to evaluate the needs of the community thoroughly, information must be gathered from as many groups and individuals within the county as possible. Therefore, seniors, disabled adults, caregivers, advisory council members, Office of Senior Services staff and the citizenry was tasked with deciding on the importance of various services and programs. Written and web based surveys were made available for completion. In person information gathering sessions, including a public hearing, were offered as well.

Based on the information received the primary needs of seniors and the direction of services in Montgomery County was conceived.

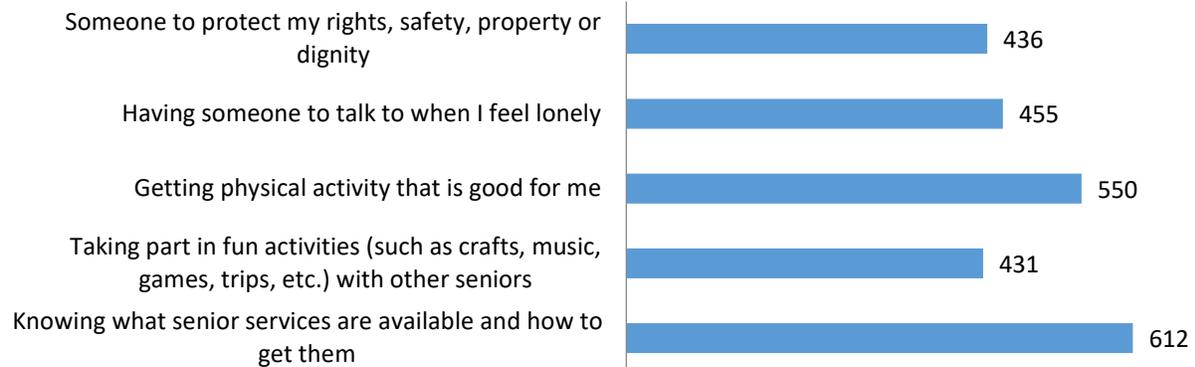
### **Citizen Survey Response**

The consumer survey consisted of sixteen questions. Consumers were asked to submit their feelings and opinions about services. A total of 668 responses were received. For the graph below respondents were asked to label each area as important, not important or does not apply.



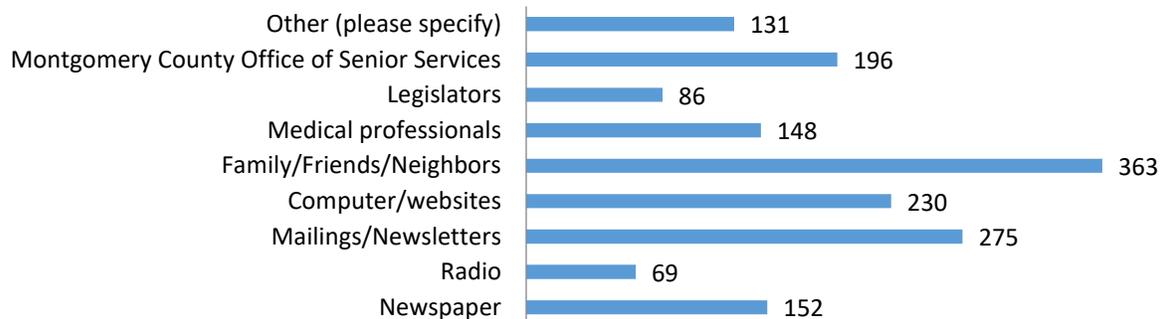


## The following are the most important to surveyed individuals:



Respondents stated that their sources of information for senior programs is typically family, friends or neighbors. The second most used source of information is mailings and newsletters.

## Where do you get your information about services and programs for seniors?



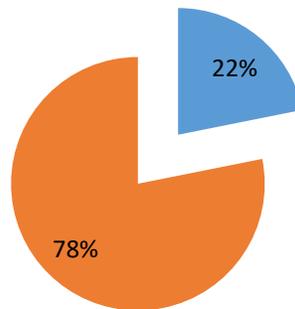
78% of respondents were unaware of APPRISE services. APPRISE is the designated State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) in Pennsylvania that assures Medicare beneficiaries receive free, unbiased insurance counseling so that they are able to make informed decisions.





## Are you aware of APPRISE services?

■ Yes ■ No



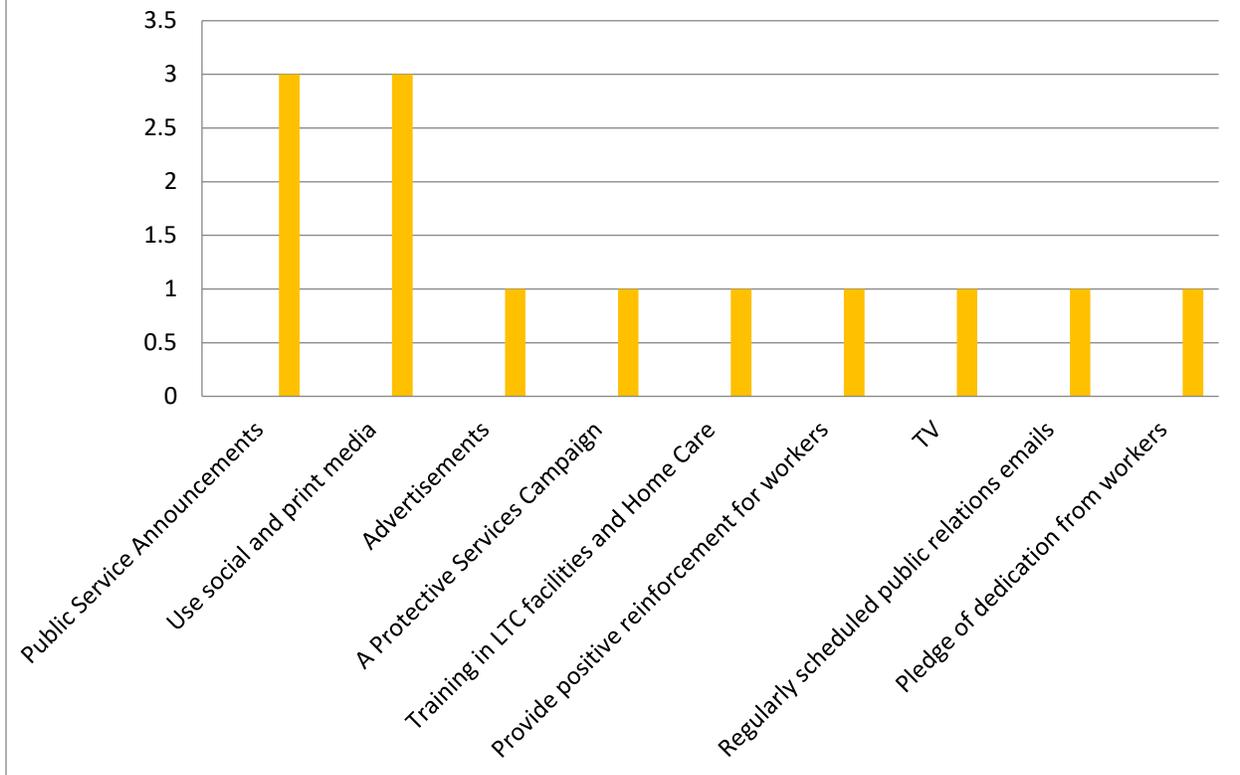
### **Advisory Council Survey Response**

The Montgomery County Advisory Council members completed surveys in order to pinpoint a consensus for the direction of the agency as well. Members completed a six question survey. Five of the surveys were returned for review.





## How can we raise awareness of protections for older adults, such as Protective Services?



The advisory council response was that in order to increase awareness of aging programs and protections for seniors the use of Public Service Announcements and media including social media and printed media should be utilized. The creation of a campaign relating to protections for seniors is offered as a possible way to keep seniors safe. Other ideas to increase awareness include the development of pamphlets, webinars, trainings and illustrated posters or flyers. Emails and mailers are also noted as ways to boost awareness and are noted by seniors to be a good way to receive information. Members also believe that the development of relationships with government officials, hospital staff, home care agencies and doctor's offices may be a way to get the word out to the community about what is available to seniors in Montgomery County. The Council members suggest a good way to promote healthy living programs offered by MCOSS would be advertisements and an information table at the mall. Other options include the use of flyers on trails in Montgomery County and in health clubs including the YMCA.





Information on available programs can also be provided through senior centers, fairs, shopping centers and libraries.

A long standing issue within the aging community is the feeling of social isolation. The Advisory Board suggests MCOSS partner with faith communities, schools and colleges to reduce the feeling of social isolation among residents of Montgomery County. Programs similar to the Well Calls program which was implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic can be used as a guide. This program started using volunteers from colleges and the community in order to minimize the feelings of social isolation that existed during the COVID-19 pandemic; however, feelings of social isolation continue to exist within the community every day.

The Advisory Council members suggest that in order to assist MCOSS staff in embracing diversity; diversity training should be offered. This training can address various specific cultural beliefs and practices that will be useful to staff and will help to dispel prejudice.

The surveys returned suggest that the most important service for seniors is transportation. Other important services include: available health care, homes that are adapted to needs, ability to use drug stores, markets and restaurants, ability to age in place, communal gatherings and assistance with technology.

### **MCOSS Staff Survey Results**

All staff were asked to participate in the completion of individual surveys. Each survey consisted of eleven questions. There were thirty-five responses received. More than any other survey completed, there are some clear themes in staff responses.

Staff strongly feel that efficiency can be improved through increased communication. Staff report that it would be beneficial to their time management to have time set aside in order to work from home to complete paperwork/notes. It is indicated that supplying updated equipment whenever possible will also improve efficiency. Providing staff trainings on jobs performed by



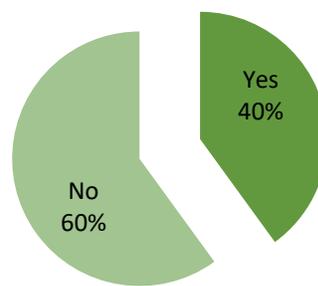


all units within the county office would be helpful in order to direct consumers and families in an efficient manner.

In order to better address diversity within Montgomery County, staff suggest cultural diversity training. Staff point out that there is a large Asian population in Montgomery County. It is also mentioned that staff would benefit from learning more about Russian, Ukrainian, Polish, Indian and Jewish cultures. A response that is echoed throughout this survey is the belief that forms, brochures, flyers, posters and other information on services should be available to consumers in various languages including braille and large print.

40% of staff think they need further training on protective services.

### Do you feel like you need further education on what the PS unit does?



42.86% of staff respondents feel that more outreach is needed in Montgomery County. Staff reiterate in their response to this question that a good way to be mindful of diversity while completing more outreach is to offer literature in different languages. Making connections with different religious groups could also allow for diversity to be addressed. Providing more information about services to community members, holding quarterly MCOSS events/meetings and pursuing partnerships with agencies who work with different ethnic groups would also be of benefit.





62.86% of staff respondents feel that they know what services are offered through the Community Development unit. Staff state that programming to address transportation, depression, education on scams/financial exploitation, support groups for grief/loss and memory deficits – including virtual support group options would be the most beneficial to the senior community. Other possible future programming ideas include planning for the future (crisis, placement, financial), pet fostering for hospitalized consumers, eating healthy on a budget/with limited access to the market/with physical limitations, hoarding and available resources for seniors raising grandchildren.

Staff suggest that we can reach more consumers by utilizing mailings, social media, distribution of brochures at physician offices and acquiring more quality service providers. Some other suggestions include flyers, brochures, providing info in churches/grocery stores/pharmacies, outreach and collaboration. Staff point out that the use of volunteers and an increase in support staff in Protective Services to follow up on PS cases would allow more seniors to be reached.

### **Convergence of all surveys**

The most important thing to consumers is that they are able to obtain information about services and programs and know how to get them. This overlaps with the staff survey in that it is important to staff to have materials available to them in various languages to supply to consumers and consumer's families as needed. All surveys touched on ways to make information more readily available to the public. Ideas to help get information out to the citizens and consumers include PSA's, TV, social media, mailings, flyers, etc. The consensus appears to be that knowledge is power and MCOSS must find ways to empower the citizenry.

### **Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 1: Strengthen aging network capacity, promote program innovation and best practices, and build effective and efficient response to the growing and diversifying aging population.**





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*Objective 1: Provide a simple method for contracted providers to share their best practices on service delivery with our network.*

Strategy 1: Provide guidance to providers on collecting and tracking best practices utilized and generating a quarterly publication to be shared between contracted providers and our network.

Strategy 2: Establish an annual meeting for contracted providers and our network staff that work with providers to share challenges, promote innovation, and discuss best practices.

**Performance Measures:**

- Establish quarterly publication based on provider best practices
- Successfully complete an annual meeting for the 4 years of this plan
- Consumer satisfaction survey exhibits increased numbers of satisfaction with service from provider.

*Objective 2: Establish relationships with community organizations that serve a diverse aging population in our network to improve our effectiveness and efficiency as we respond to their needs.*

Strategy 1: Formally invite faith-based organizations and minority-serving organizations, who represent diverse populations, to meet with our network and establish outreach techniques.

Strategy 2: Complete presentations at various county locations with assistance from faith-based and minority-serving organizations, with the intent to directly engage diverse populations and establish relationships.

Strategy 3: Ensure promotional flyers are available in various languages, as needed or requested, to ensure equal access of information for our diverse community.





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Strategy 4: Establish focus groups among diverse communities to explore community specific needs and best practices for engagement, leading to potential to recruit representatives from these diverse communities as liaisons to our network.

**Performance Measures:**

- Host a meeting with faith-based and minority serving organization to initiate outreach techniques.
- Number of presentations held yearly for faith-based and minority serving organizations.
- Number of established partnerships for promotional material translation as needed.
- Number of focus groups held each year in identified diverse groups.

*Objective 3: Develop direct volunteer programming to support and strengthen our network capacity and enhance delivery of required services.*

Strategy 1: Hire a volunteer coordinator to head programming and establish avenues of volunteer recruitment.

Strategy 2: Aim recruitment efforts at individuals who are nearing retirement and are seeking volunteer opportunities. Potential to work with local businesses to drive recruitment efforts of younger seniors who can fully commit.

Strategy 3: Identify unmet community needs to be addressed via volunteer program by meeting with our network staff, providers, and consumers directly. Develop and establish volunteer programming to meet these identified needs.

Strategy 4: Specifically recruit volunteers who are able to provide instruction both 1:1 and in small groups regarding the use of technology, such as computers, tablets, smart phones, email, smart home devices and virtual capabilities of technology for seniors.





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### **Performance Measures:**

- Volunteer coordination hire by calendar end of 2021
- Successfully recruit volunteers by calendar end 2022
- Complete annual community needs meeting led by volunteer coordinator in 2023 and 2024.
- Number of volunteers recruited to assist seniors using technology by the end of 2022.

### **Goal 2: Establish and enhance efforts to support healthy living, active engagement and a sense of community for all seniors in Montgomery County.**

*Objective 1: Increase knowledge base of seniors in Montgomery County regarding health and wellness through an increase of evidence based programming in a group atmosphere or virtual options.*

Strategy 1: Present education and resources to community dwelling seniors and members of local senior centers to address the fear of falling and falls prevention with programs such as A Matter of Balance: Managing Concerns about Falls, Healthy Steps in Motion, Healthy Steps for Older Adults, BINGOcize and Walk with Ease.

Strategy 2: Present education and resources to senior groups throughout the County addressing Chronic Disease through programs such as Chronic Disease Self-Management, WISE and the National Diabetes Prevention Program.

### **Performance Measures:**

- Increase in knowledge of seniors from pre-class evaluation and post-class evaluation
- Number of classes held
- Number of seniors attending at least one session of class





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*Objective 2: Increase knowledge base of seniors in Montgomery County regarding healthy living through an increase in non-evidence based programming that follows current trends.*

Strategy 1: Engage seniors on safety topics to educate them to live safer, healthier lives with topics such as Gun safety for Seniors, Pedestrian Safety, Driving safety and medication safety.

Strategy 2: Present education and resources about Talking with Your Doctor to empower seniors in their healthcare and prepare them for medical appointments.

**Performance Measures:**

- Increase in knowledge of seniors from pre-class evaluation and post-class evaluation
- Number of classes held
- Number of seniors attending at least one session of class

*Objective 3: Active engagement of seniors isolated in the community via telephone, mail or computer outreach.*

Strategy 1: Promote well calls or computer contact among seniors who feel isolated in the community through website, physicians, care managers and providers.

Strategy 2: Recruit volunteers to contact isolated seniors via phone calls or emails.

Strategy 3: Start a pen pal program with a local school once every school year.

Strategy 4: Start a program to match college students with seniors for a school year, to promote intergenerational relationships.





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Strategy 5: Provide resources to seniors on our agency website, flyers and in senior center newsletters that can assist seniors with funding for smart devices to help isolated seniors stay connected to the community.

**Performance Measures:**

- Number of seniors served in our well call program.
- Number of volunteers recruited to do well calls.
- Number of local school students participating in a pen pal program.
- Number of college students participating in senior match program.
- Number of resources for seniors available on our website, flyers and senior center newsletters to promote funding resources for purchasing smart devices to promote isolated seniors having a connection with the community.

**Goal 3: Emphasize a person first culture that provides outreach, embraces diversity and honors individual choice**

*Objective 1: Outreach*

Strategy 1: Expand efforts to reach homebound consumers by exploring alternative venues that will ensure that more seniors are introduced to the services offered by our agency, such as physician offices, physical therapy and pharmacies.

Strategy 2: Expand our media promotions by establishing a social media presence (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) on our HHS sites, and by continuing to work with local press regarding our programs and services

Strategy 3: Update our website quarterly to include information on all agency programs. Website fosters cross promotion by establishing links to subcontracted agencies, senior center newsletters, home delivered meals, and other information relevant to older adults in Montgomery County.





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Strategy 4: Identify and utilize new outlets frequented by seniors to promote programs and services, such as retail spaces, pharmacies and community health centers.

**Performance Measures:**

- Annual report on social media demonstrates improved website and social media hits.
- Increased traffic on Senior Service Office webpage and ensure that [www.montcopa.org/seniorservices](http://www.montcopa.org/seniorservices) will show in search results for specific services
- Quarterly review of website completed for updated information.
- Number of new outlets to promote programs and services with seniors.

*Objective 2: Improve staff understanding of consumer diversity and person directed choice.*

Strategy 1: Ensure that all new staff within the agency are fully trained on all agency programs and partnerships (i.e.: PACE, APPRISE, Protective Services, ACLAMO, Senior Intensive Services etc.), not just those they work within, but educated to ensure they are able to promote all agency services while in the community.

Strategy 2: Create new relationships with community agencies in an effort to serve more seniors and cross promote our services with them. Increase presence at various community diversity events.

Strategy 3: When new request for proposals are issued, attempt to engage new providers and increase choice for seniors.

Strategy 4: Agency staff can incorporate facility wide trainings and educate residents about their choices and advocate for person-directed care and how diversity can be addressed in our services, facilities and community based programs.





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### **Performance Measures:**

- Ensure that orientation for new agency employees receive a list of our providers and partners in the community.
- Attend diverse community events as an outreach.
- Number of new providers added to our provider list each year.
- Ombudsmen can provide education annually to 4 facilities, LTC residents about choices and person-directed care.

### **Goal 4: Advocate for the rights of older adults and ensure their safety and dignity by raising awareness of and responding effectively to incidences of abuse, injury, exploitation, violence and neglect.**

*Objective 1: Ensure compliance with the Older Adult Protective Services (OAPS) law when delivering protective services to older adults in order to effectively respond to reports of abuse.*

Strategy 1: Attend state mandated trainings, webinars and committees to ensure the most up to date delivery methods of protective services. Report these delivery methods to all staff so quality assurance is maintained.

### **Performance Measures:**

- Number of mandated trainings, webinars and committees attended annually by Protective Service supervisors and staff.

*Objective 2: Improve awareness of abuse in Montgomery County and the need for older adults to feel safe while maintaining dignity.*

Strategy 1: Work with the Health and Human Services communication office to educate them on Protective Services so they can provide additional training in Montgomery County.





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Strategy 2: Work with the Elder Justice Roundtable to provide trainings to professionals in the community such as banks, law enforcement, attorneys and social services.

Strategy 3: Review data collection monthly in SAMS to ensure the abuse of Montgomery County seniors are accurately reflected in the data.

**Performance Measures:**

- Provide annual education to other offices within the County HHS about what elder abuse is and the services provided by Protective Services.
- Number of training provided in the community about what the role is of Protective Service.
- Protective service supervisors review data monthly for accuracy.

*Objective 3: Protect older adults from incidents of abuse through utilization of other programs and resources in Montgomery County in order to meet their needs.*

Strategy 1: Educate staff on programs provided by all of Health and Human Services so the needs of older adults can be met safely in the community or facility.

Strategy 2: Provide education to staff on availability of community resources that benefit seniors that might be at risk of abuse. These services may include behavioral health resources, senior law services, domestic violence resources and transportation assistance.

**Performance Measures:**

- Protective services supervisors invites other HHS offices to staff meetings twice annually so staff can be educated to what others programs can offer seniors.
- Protective Service supervisors review at least one community resource at staff meetings that may benefit seniors at risk. Protective Service supervisors review with new employees community resources that may benefit seniors at risk.





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**Goal 5: Improve services for older adults and the ability to advocate for them by using evidence-informed planning, committing to data integrity and being accountable for results.**

*Objective 1: Improve the consistency and reliability of data added to SAMS (State data base.)*

Strategy 1: Internal Monitoring Team will complete random case reviews for each program to verify data has been correctly added to SAMS.

Strategy 2: Reminders or training for correct data input will be given to care managers and other involved staff at least once per quarter.

Strategy 3: Determine cause of most frequent mistakes and make adjustments to remediate.

**Performance Measures:**

- Number of internal random case reviews conducted annually.
- Number of completed quarterly trainings delivered to improve data integrity with staff.
- Improved maintenance reports with less noted errors.

*Objective 2: Provide multiple avenues of data collection in order to gain a better understanding of areas of need for consumers.*

Strategy 1: Complete annual needs surveys and OPTIONS consumer surveys. Develop and implement consumer phone surveys.

Strategy 2: Create a suggestion box via the agency website for consumers and citizens to provide direction and feedback.





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### **Performance Measures:**

- Conduct annual needs survey and OPTIONS consumer survey.
- Management to review suggestions from website suggestion box as they are submitted.

*Objective 3: Collect data from all contracted programs.*

Strategy 1: Develop invoices with sections for data collection for all contracted programs.

Strategy 2: Analyze data and report on trends to agency Administrator, Performance and Planning Administrator, staff and others as needed.

### **Performance Measures:**

- Invoices developed with sections for data and verification by fiscal staff the invoices are completed by providers correctly.
- Information gained from invoices is analyzed bi-annually by performance and planning staff with a report of trends to agency administrator.

*Objective 4: Use collected data to inform planning and improve quality of services provided.*

Strategy 1: Utilize SAMS to determine if timeframes are being met for getting services started, maintaining annual reviews & six month contact visits. Produce reports with recommendations for best practices and provide to staff and agency Administrator.

Strategy 2: Compile information obtained from all telephone and written surveys. Find trends and produce reports with recommendations to present to staff, board and agency Administrator.





**Performance Measures:**

- SAMS administrator runs monthly reports for supervisors, staff and administrator to review
- Planning and performance compiles data collected from annual surveys with consumers and presents date results to agency management, advisory council and staff.

