



Middle Alabama Area Agency on Aging

Regional Plan on Aging Fiscal Years 2022-2025

The Middle Alabama Area Agency on Aging or M4A was formed in 1989 by multi-jurisdictional agreement between the counties of Blount, Chilton, Shelby, St. Clair, and Walker. Shortly thereafter, M4A was designated as the Area Agency on Aging for these five counties. M4A is Planning and Service Area (PSA) 3 for the State of Alabama and comprises five of the six counties in the Regional Planning Commission of Greater Birmingham.

M4A's mission is not only to empower older individuals, people with disabilities and caregivers to self-advocate but also to provide services so that they may age at home with dignity, independence and security. The Older Americans Act services M4A provides include in-home services, legal services, case management, adult day health, recreation, outreach, nutrition, wellness programs, caregiver services, elder abuse education and intervention, and ombudsman advocacy. M4A also provides transportation, no-wrong-door options and benefits counseling, home repair/modifications, telephone reassurance, medication assistance, Medicare counseling, Medicare fraud education, senior employment and job training opportunities, and Medicaid Waiver Services.

M4A's primary source of funding is public funds from the Alabama Department of Senior Services and Medicaid Waiver funding via contract with Alabama Select Network. M4A also receives funding from its County Commissions, health foundations, and from additional grants from the Administration on Community Living and the Center for Workforce Inclusion.

M4A's other major partners are the five county governments which formed M4A and the numerous municipalities that have agreements with M4A to provide meals and other Older Americans Act (OAA) services. These agreements with municipalities for the senior nutrition sites are critical to the success of M4A's service delivery system as the local senior centers are major focal points not only for the dissemination of information and for the provision of services but also major focal points for consumer feedback and input into strengthening and changing the service delivery system.

M4A's current strategic plan on aging goes through FY2021 with the new strategic plan on aging covering FY2022-FY2025. Development of the FY2022-FY2025 plan was different because of the pandemic which affected the number of surveys M4A was able to get back plus M4A's ability to hold in-person town halls. In addition, M4A's Public Hearing, which was held on September 2, 2021, was conducted virtually due to concerns over the COVID19 positivity rates in Alabama.

Fortunately, M4A was able to utilize the results of the community needs survey of the Alabama Department of Senior Services to complement the results of M4A's own community needs



survey. However, this Four-Year Area Plan on Aging is greatly affected by the pandemic—both the needs that the pandemic exacerbated and the solutions that were developed to meet those needs.

Most of the M4A region is rural with only certain regions of Shelby County being classified as urban by the Alabama Rural Health Association. Because of the growth primarily in Shelby County, the M4A older adult population is projected to be 117,298 by 2040, a 121% growth over 30 years. On average, about 23.8% of the M4A population is 60+ and the life expectancy is 75.26 years. The percentage of minority older individuals in the M4A region is 8.7% with 560 older individuals reporting limited English proficiency. About 8,520 older adults in the M4A region report income below the poverty level; 8,530 adults age 60+ report at least one self-care or independent living difficulty and 6,045 report both a self-care and independent living difficulty. Please see Appendix IX for data and sources.

According to the results of M4A’s survey, the following continue to be critical needs for older individuals and people with disabilities in the M4A region: in-home services such as homemaker services, chore services, and personal care; support and relief for caregivers; transportation; home modifications; and food. These needs, other needs, and comments are addressed in M4A’s Four-Year Area Plan on Aging. To organize and focus M4A’s Area Plan, M4A has the following goals and objectives which are consistent with the goals and objectives of our State Unit on Aging (ADSS) and the Administration for Community Living (ACL):

GOAL 1

Help older individuals and persons with disabilities live with dignity and independence

OBJECTIVE 1: Promote and support service provision and sustainability of OAA programs

GOAL 2

Ensure that older individuals and persons with disabilities have access to services to assist with daily living

OBJECTIVE 2: Promote, advocate, and support service provision, sustainability, and expansion of ACL discretionary grant programs and other funding source programs

GOAL 3

Ensure that people served through all programs will be able, to the fullest extent possible, to direct and maintain control and choice in their lives

OBJECTIVE 3: Continue to integrate and support a person-centered approach in all aspects of the existing service delivery system

GOAL 4

Consistently advocate for and promote the rights of older and disabled Alabamians and work to prevent their abuse, neglect, and exploitation

OBJECTIVE 4: Continue to address the issues of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation by



supporting systems change and promoting innovative practices in the field of elder justice

GOAL 5

Ensure that M4A is taking a proactive approach in detecting challenges and seeking opportunities to help people live where they choose with help from home and community-based programs

OBJECTIVE 5: Work with partners to improve the health and well-being of those we serve.

GOAL 6

Support and provide proactive planning and management of programs for strict accountability

OBJECTIVE 6: Provide high-quality, efficient services

M4A will meet these goals and objectives working with its major partners including its County Commissions, senior centers, the Alabama Department of Senior Services and other Area Agencies on Aging, and many more. M4A will also continue to learn from organizations that are successfully meeting the needs of rural, isolated older individuals, such as faith-based organizations and other community-based organizations. M4A will continue partnering with businesses in the private sector because older individuals and caregivers must be aware of private resources to meet long-term care and other needs.

The approved Area Plan for 2018-2021 is available online at: www.m4a.org. For questions regarding the plan, please contact Crystal Crim, Director of Operations and Strategy, at ccrim@m4a.org.