

Development of a cabinet level position who will be responsible for promoting policies, coordination, accountability and sustainability related to the diverse and expanding needs of older Coloradans.

Goal 1: Colorado seniors are able to live and fully participate in their **communities** of choice for as long as they wish without encountering unnecessary barriers.

- Under the heading of built environment, the Physical Community committee identified several issues which need to be addressed:
 - Work with the Colorado State University Built Environment Institute in the development of a Universal Design Certification program to encourage the inclusion of universal design elements in new and remodeled housing for seniors
 - Work with existing organizations, including local governments that support affordable housing for seniors in Colorado to encourage their efforts, including ensuring that information is available at the local level
 - Educate local government officials, planners, developers, and architects on the benefits of and strategies to create mixed use developments with a wide variety of housing options and accessible open spaces
 - Encourage local planners and developers to prioritize locations of senior housing to access transportation and other amenities and encourage community walkability
 - Maintain and enhance the current database of affordable housing in Colorado to provide effective data on senior housing options; preserve current affordable housing options
 - While most of these initiatives can be achieved within current operational and financial structures, the committee recommends financial support for the CSU Built Environment Institute to develop the Universal Design Certification as well as prioritizing funding for affordable housing.
 - At present, no single organization has the jurisdictional authority to achieve these goals. The committee recommends consideration of providing these authorities to the Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) to support implementation of these strategies.
 - Supporting the Colorado DOT's State Coordinating Council in its efforts at promoting coordination among the various transportation services within Colorado
 - Encouraging the use of supportive vehicle technologies such as automatic braking, blind spot warning, and other technology by seniors by providing incentives; ensure seniors are driving vehicles that are supportive of their independence such as by using the CarFit program
 - Promote the use of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) by local governments to support seniors who drive
 - Support transit infrastructure including bus shelters, lighting, and other such amenities to enhance senior mobility and transit use
 - Improve communication on available transportation services for seniors by supporting the expansion of programs such as:
 - The Getting There Guide published by the Denver Regional Mobility & Access Council
 - The statewide transit directory managed by the Colorado Transit Association
 - Local travel training
 - Increase awareness of the special mobility needs of an aging population among decision-makers and funders, including during community-wide emergency evacuation situations

- Older Adults have access to resources and needed services in the community to support their aging in place.
 - The State should create a multi-agency leadership team to coordinate the efforts recommended in the reports of CLAG, CO Aging Framework, CDPHE Healthy Aging Plan, and the CO Alzheimer's Disease Plan
 - Link 'care gap' population programs (limited income but not eligible) with each other and identify additional resources needed
 - Create an Ombudsman program to help with any problem (community wide) with agencies, home health care, and facilities.
 - Develop regional data base repositories of resources and services and have the capacity to serve gap populations
 - Build on lessons from recent study groups and reports such as CLAG, CCLP, NWD and others
 - The Colorado Departments of DLOA, DHS, DHCFP and DHCPE should provide to each Planning and Management Region (PMR) an inventory of resources and services or the Department in each PMR
 - Every PMR should have a link to an Aging and Disability Resource Center - No Wrong Door (ADRC/NWD)
 - ADRC/NWD should have the capacity to serve adults and older adults with information and referral, option counseling case management, application assistance and cash and counseling services
 - ADRC/NWD should have the capacity to link or provide access to resources and servicers
 - ADRC/NWD should have MOU with other agencies (e.g. RCCOs) on sharing resource and client information
 - ADRC/NWD should have policies on client information release and sharing and business associate relationship with DHCPE, DHS, DHCPE
 - ADRC/NWD should have an MOU with Ombudsman programs of CDHCPF and DHS and program policy on client advocacy (ability to investigate and represent)
 - ADRC/NWD should have ability to follow-up on client status in the community
 - Boomer Bond Assessment Tool and Supports should be available to each Planning and Management Region
- Older adults are free from abuse and neglect and exploitation.
 - Ensure quality, effective Adult Protective Services are available and provided to all vulnerable older adults in Colorado
 - Establish a State Office for Guardianship
 - Expand training for law enforcement and district attorneys on abuse, neglect and exploitation of vulnerable adults as well as how to interact with this population effectively and prosecute these crimes
 - Raise awareness of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation, what people can do to prevent it and how they can report it when they suspect it.
 - Assess statewide need for community services and support for older adults (particularly in rural communities)
 - Develop a program to address redetermination of Medicaid by providing Long-term Care Liaisons
 - Training for caregivers recognition and prevention of abuse, neglect and exploitation
 - Support sufficient state funding amounts for the APS program by:
 - Ensuring adequate funding levels for counties to obtain optimal caseload ratio of 25 to 1 for the APS programs (national best practice).

- Supporting additional State APS positions for Quality Assurance so that the State APS program can adequately oversee county APS programs and provide them with feedback on areas for improvement
 - APS share best practices across the state
- Implement the recommendations made by the Office of Public Guardianship Advisory Committee (PGAC) in their report to the Chief Justice of the Colorado Supreme Court including:
 - Recommended Action as states in 2014 Advisory Committee report: “Through extensive discussion, review of surveys from various interest groups, and analysis of the existing models, the PGAC has determined what it believes are viable options for implementation of an office of public guardian in Colorado. Members of the PGAC are united in their determination that a definite need exists in Colorado for a public guardian. Due to the unavailability of definite numerical information of statistics, the PGAC strongly recommends the creation of a legislative study to further define and ascertain the cost for an Office of Public Guardian, as well as to determine where such an office would be housed.”
 - Develop proposed legislation and fiscal impact for this initiative and seek statutory changes and funding to support the creation of this Office within the State
- Establish a POST created a training program for law enforcement officers and district attorneys for dealing with cases involving at-risk elders.
- Make online training and resources available for mandatory reporters and others interested in learning more about reporting suspected abuse, neglect, exploitation (Available currently by CDHS APS program)
- Implement recommendations made by the SB109 Task Force recommended funding for the creation of State staff positions that would be dedicated to providing facilitated training on mandatory reporting across the state. CDHS received an appropriation for a portion of the amount requested for FY16-17 and beyond to hire a contractor and pay the costs of travel to training sites and the costs associated with renting training facilities. Expansion of this program would allow for more outreach to be conducted.
- Develop and fund an outreach effort in alignment with World Elder Abuse Awareness Day across the state to be held annually.
- Implement recommendations made by the SB109 Task Force recommended \$250,000 be allocated to develop a statewide public awareness campaign. The public awareness campaign would focus on improving awareness of reporting requirements among the hundreds of thousands of named reporters and among the public in general of the epidemic of mistreatment being experienced by at-risk elders and at-risk adults with IDD. The Task Force believes that this undertaking should include public service announcements, radio and TV spots, and development of marketing materials that are developed by a professional marketing firm.

Goal 2: Colorado seniors can **work** in the paid and volunteer sectors for as long as they wish and are able to contribute.

- Develop an education and planning program for people as they age throughout their lifecycle

Goal 3: Colorado seniors and their families are more **financially secure** and prepared to meet the challenges of aging.

- Conditions exist to be economically secure:
 - Colorado promote minimum standards for employers to maximize savings options for all workers, utilizing the essential ingredients of availability, automatic enrollment, automatic investment, and automatic escalation.
 - Colorado should create a public-private partnership to offer a workplace retirement saving plan for employees who currently do not have access to one. Ensure portability.
 - Colorado should support the US Department of the Treasury myRA program to help people start saving
 - As major employers in the state, all public employers should fully meet their obligations to fund employee retirement plans to make them viable over the long term, including Defined Benefit plans.
 - Colorado should designate an agency to conduct regular employer surveys to assess the prevalence and types of workplace retirement offerings.
- Educate people to understand the importance of planning and motivate them to follow through:
 - Create or identify a statewide commission or entity to develop and support financial literacy programs.
 - Programs must be tailored to different marketing segments. No one program can meet the needs of all consumers.
 - Programs must be customized to individual factors, technology knowledge, and community and ethnic values.
 - Programs should include topics on establishing an emergency fund, negotiating with creditors, finding access to social services, and building job opportunities and provided through a person’s economic lifetime.
 - Programs should be relevant to individual circumstances to encourage people to make the link between education and adopting new and helpful financial behaviors.
 - Messages must be repetitive, from different sources and through different channels to motivate people to change from negative to positive behavior.
 - Colorado must identify and enlist people of influence who can lead the campaign and champion the cause.
 - Colorado must strongly support the Colorado Senior\$afe program developed the Colorado Division of Securities and Division of Banking and Financial Services and the personal financial literacy standards created by the Colorado Department of Education.
 - Garner Support of the business community and the organizations and associations that support its efforts.
 - Educational resources must be provided throughout a person’s lifetime. “Just-in-time” financial information must be available throughout each stage of life so individuals can acquire knowledge and change behavior during points in their lives when they are motivated to change or must make an important financial decision (teachable moments).

Goal 4: Coloradans are prepared for the challenges of **caring for aging loved-ones** and are able to do so without endangering their own health or well-being.

- Caregivers have access to respite and resources that reduces stress and help them be better Caregivers.
 - Utilize the BRFSS Caregiver Module Questions statewide household survey to include questions on caregiver related items

- The Alzheimer’s Association of Colorado will be the lead in distribution of BRFSS information and material to PMR areas
- Implement the recommendations made by the Respite Care Task Force in their January 2016 report: Statewide training, website with respite care locator, outreach and communications campaign, Conduct a study to demonstrate the return on investment of respite care services, which will build the care for future funding for respite care services
- Make respite care services available to those who need them – funding required
- Expand the utilization of Mental Health First aid
- Develop a repository of resources and make them widely available to address specific needs of caregivers (e.g. resources like the Mental Health of America for Colorado’s PowerPoint for caregiver resources with links to online resources for caregiver ALZ information, AAA’s Family Caregiver Support Program)
- Develop and conduct education and outreach to caregivers at employers to assist in their wellness needs. (CDHS State Unit on Aging and Easter Seals are already starting this – they developed a lunch and learn program for employers) – funding would be needed to hire someone to do the trainings – could be done at town halls, community meetings, faith groups etc. statewide
- Identify target audience with the most need and link them to those that can provide services for caregivers
- Connect/outreach to insurance companies/payers to focus on employee training programs about the importance of caregiver health and strategies to remain so
- Families are able to make difficult choices without endangering earning potential or family resources:
 - Support efforts to increase the prevalence of accommodative and flexible workplace policies for caregivers at the state and local level.
 - Create a partnership between the state and employer groups and/or educational institutions to:
 - Create, maintain and publicize an inventory of best practices to support caregivers in the workplace. Best practices include, but are not limited to, paid sick leave, paid family leave, and flexibility (such as modified schedules, teleworking and flexible approaches to time off).
 - Train employers about the business case for supporting caregivers and offer technical support for those who want to implement best practices.
 - Educate employers about optional benefits that specifically support those caregiving for older adults. These could include, but are not limited to:
 - Referral to caregiver resources in the community
 - On-site support for working caregivers
 - Discounted back-up home care for emergency needs
 - Geriatric care management services
 - On-call advice, support and emergency intervention services
 - Assistance with and information about Medicare, Medicaid and other insurance policies
 - Assistance for employee caregivers who leave the workplace to discern if they qualify for unemployment insurance
 - Training for managers and supervisors on how to support and encourage caregiving employees

Goal 5: There are enough skilled, educated and trained **workers** to meet the needs of employers and industries serving Colorado’s growing senior population.

- Promote application for federal grants, such as the Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program, to support the development of a health care workforce that improves health outcomes for older adults by integrating geriatrics with primary care, maximizing patient and family engagement, and transforming the healthcare system.
- Provide targeted opportunities through scholarships and loan repayment programs for geriatric training through the National Health Service Corps and the CO Health Service Corps.

Goal 6: Older Coloradans stay healthier longer through access to quality and affordable **person-centered care** that aligns with their preferences and values.

- To ensure access to quality, affordable, coordinated, person-centered care and address the lack of awareness and access to existing programs that support older adults, we recommend the development and promotion of a centralized, statewide resource for older adult services that includes community and state-based resources and services; prevention-based programs; connection to resources that help people navigate health benefits, eligibility and choices; care planning resources; and family caregiver resources.
 - The centralized clearinghouse resource will assist consumers and healthcare providers, recognizing that many healthcare providers may have limited awareness of available Colorado resources for older adults.
 - The resource should be widely accessible via the Internet and telephone, building upon local capacity of the Aging and Disability Resources for Colorado (ADRCs) and other organizations.
 - The resource should enhance the ADRCs located within the Area Agency on Aging so that consumer resources are comprehensive and updated regularly to ensure accuracy. Resources should include, but not be limited to:
 - Community-based resources including Area Agency on Aging resources such as Meals on Wheels; Project Angel Heart; transportation options, etc. This should be clearly linked to No Wrong Door Planning Advisory Group and other efforts to coordinate services for older adults.
 - Prevention-based health and wellness programs including evidence-based initiatives such as Chronic Disease Self-Management programs; Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment coordinated fall prevention programs;
 - Healthcare eligibility, benefit and other resources to help older adults navigate health insurance choices including Senior Health Insurance Program (SHIP) and healthcare benefit information for Veterans.
 - Care planning resources related to medical and financial planning, including advance care planning (<http://coloradoadvancedirectives.com/>)
 - Family caregiver resources, including clear linkages to the resources and recommendations of the Colorado Respite Care Task Force (<https://sites.google.com/a/state.co.us/cdhs-cai-aas/respite-care-task-force-overview>).

- The resource should include a catalog of training resources for health care providers of all disciplines that identifies available geriatric/gerontological training programs, as well as associated personnel or informal caregivers who work with older adults.
- The resource should promote evidence based practices and develop a return on investment for these practices to get increased funding.
- Potential action – Existing local/regional resources such as 1) Senior Source, supported by Rose Community Foundation, or 2) Network of Care (<http://denverregion.co.networkofcare.org/aging/services/index.aspx>), could be expanded into a statewide comprehensive resource partners at the city, county, and state-levels.
- To address the lack of centralized, multidimensional data that reflects the needs of older adults, we recommend that the Colorado Cross-Agency Collaborative produce an Annual Report on Older Coloradans (age 50+) that is linked to the Colorado Opportunity Project Life-Span Indicators (see Appendix) and other key indicators for well-being in older adults. The goal of this centralized and on-going data reporting is to track outcomes of older adults identify gaps in health outcomes, and promote opportunities for implementing evidence-based programs to improve outcomes.
 - Data should draw from state and county-level outcome data wherever possible.
 - The Colorado Cross-Agency Collaborative (CCAC) is an existing collaborative partnership of Colorado Department of Human Services, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, and Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing. This group produced the 2016 report “Measuring Health in Adults 65 and Older” <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/hcpf/colorado-cross-agency-collaborative-reports>
 - The CCAC should work with local organizations and state agencies to achieve coordinated collection and reporting of data related to the SAPGA’s priorities for older adults.
 - The CCAC would coordinate with other reports that address aging such as the Colorado Health Report Card, United Health Care report, Colorado Health Institute surveys
 - Additional recommendation: [The Colorado Opportunity Project should implement and coordinate evidence-based initiatives to improve key indicators for older adults.](#)
 - The Colorado Opportunity Project is an existing multi-agency initiative that is currently working to improve health outcomes for Coloradans at the time of Family Formation, the first life-stage of the life-span framework. <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/hcpf/colorado-opportunity-project>.
- To provide person-centered care for older adults with decreasing functional status, address the insufficient supply of healthcare providers of all disciplines, and address issues of depression and isolation, we recommend:
 - Create a state certification in dementia care for facilities, agencies and individuals licensed and monitored by CDPHE and the state health professions’ licensing boards.
 - Enhance the geriatric competence of the entire workforce and increase the recruitment and retention of geriatric specialists and caregivers.
 - Train aging service providers to screen, provide, and/ or refer to services those older adults who are at-risk for depression, anxiety, suicide, or substance misuse or abuse.
 - Support hospital care transitions programs for Medicare-Medicaid dually eligible beneficiaries and use savings to support aging services, evidence based practices, and community based services for older adults.

- Support the use of standardized depression, anxiety, and substance use scales as screening tools and as outcome measures to evaluate the effectiveness of individual care and overall program implementation.

Goal 7: All levels of **government** fulfill their obligations to support older Coloradans and their families.

- Colorado’s congressional delegation, with the support of state and local leaders, should make the long-term viability of Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid a top priority and should work together to promote federal legislation to achieve that goal. Such legislation should recognize the critical role these programs play in ensuring the economic security, health, and wellbeing of Colorado seniors and should avoid efforts to materially reduce the support they provide seniors who have contributed to these programs throughout their working lives.
- The Governor should create a permanent, high-level office or position within the executive branch with the authority and capacity to:
 - set consistent statewide policy priorities
 - coordinate the aging-related work of state agencies
 - help the state coordinate effectively and consistently with federal and local partners — and learn from the experiences of other states
 - maximize efficiency and cost-effectiveness of state expenditures
 - identify gaps and unmet needs
 - identify and help develop innovative new financing mechanisms, including utilizing opportunities for matching funding, and
 - help drive public education efforts around the effects of aging in Colorado.
- The Colorado Legislative Council should consider establishing a similarly and parallel high-level mechanism and process for tracking and coordinating among these issues as well as educating individual lawmakers.
- The OSPB and Legislative Council staffs should work together to compile a comprehensive state budget on aging to identify all state expenditures related to aging issues (including revenue expenditures such as tax credits) as a tool to help policymakers plan and prioritize at the state level. These efforts should also include identification of major long-term trends in state expenditures related to aging (including Medicaid expenditures) as a component of any statewide effort to plan for possible scenarios and address the state’s structural fiscal imbalance.
- Colorado’s counties and municipalities, in collaboration with the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, should develop and implement comprehensive individual and, where appropriate, regional plans for aging that prioritize services and expenditures, promote efficiencies, and identify public and private strategies to ensure adequate long-term funding.
- State and local elected officials and opinion leaders should support and participate in meaningful efforts to build statewide understanding of the state’s structural fiscal imbalance and to build broad consensus for addressing that imbalance in a manner that ensures adequate support for the state’s aging population, among other priorities. This affects a wide range of issues that go well beyond the charge of the SAPGA, and yet no state strategic plan on aging can be successful over the long-term if the state does not address this issue.
- Colorado regulators should work to assure existing state laws and regulations are adequate to protect consumers, recommend any changes required to strengthen these protections and support US Department of Labor rules to protect workers from business practices that cost American families an estimated \$17 billion a year in excess fees and charges.

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