

**The Williamsburg Community Action Plan On Aging:  
2010-2020  
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**



*A Report to the Senior Services Coalition*

*Williamsburg, Virginia*

**THE CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE  
IN AGING AND GERIATRIC HEALTH™**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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On August 18, 2008, the Center for Excellence in Aging and Geriatric Health (CEAGH) entered into a contract with the Senior Services Coalition (SSC) to prepare a Community Action Plan On Aging (herein referred to as CAPOA). This Plan delineates goals, strategies, and action steps that can be implemented by the SSC, the three jurisdictions, and the community over the next ten years to assure the Greater Williamsburg Area is a “more livable community for seniors.” Plans in a variety of communities, including Charlottesville, Arlington, and Fairfax, Virginia and Boston, Massachusetts have been evaluated.<sup>1</sup>

The initial step in the development of this CAPOA occurred through a review of previously conducted Williamsburg community needs assessments. Second, an examination of demographic data was completed. The Greater Williamsburg Area has become a retirement destination for many individuals. Currently, the 60-plus population represents 20.44% of the total community population. The community will experience an additional increase in the senior population, to nearly 30%, by 2030.<sup>2</sup> The third step involved a compilation of current community services, resources, long-term facilities, and other support programs for seniors. The fourth step was to gather input from the community via three forums held in October and November 2008. More than 160 people, including retirees and seniors, service providers, leaders from religious organizations, and other community leaders, participated in these forums. As a result of input received during these three forums, it became evident that four priority areas deserved additional time and resources. The four priority areas include:

- 1) **Awareness of and Access to Resources:** Helping seniors and caregivers navigate community resources.
- 2) **Vulnerable Seniors:** Focusing on the needs of hidden populations including isolated and frail seniors, low-income seniors and those with mental health issues.
- 3) **Housing and Neighborhood Support:** Offering affordable and accessible housing options as well as designing neighborhoods to be age-friendly.
- 4) **Seniors as a Resource:** Valuing the contribution of all seniors and enhancing opportunities for engagement in the community.

In January 2009, a fourth and final community forum, bringing together nearly 100 members of the community, was held to review the main points and

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Strategic Plans on Aging Notebooks compiled by the Center for Excellence in Aging and Geriatric Health, 2009.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Estimates 2005; Virginia Employment Commission, 2007; Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, 2007.

recommendations raised during the previous forums. Additionally, the final forum served to engage the community in prioritizing the goals for the CAPOA and in identifying responsible partners. Panelists included experts representing the four priority areas for the CAPOA. Subsequently, these four areas serve as the key issues to be addressed in the CAPOA.

### Goals and Strategies

Goals, objectives, action steps, time frames, potential partners, and potential funding sources for the four priority issues are outlined in the CAPOA. It is important to note that the information simply provides a framework for implementation. Inherent in this framework is flexibility to accomplish the goals as other means for achieving success in the four priority areas may arise as the implementation proceeds. Each goal is stated such that it is a broad, overarching aim for the community to address. The action steps, written in the form of strategies, include specific activities and steps that can be initiated toward realizing the respective goal. The metrics are simply a form of measurement to assess progress in determining the goal's effectiveness. The time frames involve target dates for completion and will be dependent upon the commitment of the partners and funders. The identified list of potential partners and potential funders is not exhaustive but rather serves as a guide from which to execute the CAPOA.

### Recommendations for Implementation:

It is critical that the larger Williamsburg community embrace and adopt the CAPOA by bringing together seniors, healthcare and service providers, community leaders, and funding partners. A number of recommendations were raised during the forums and in consultation with the SSC. In addition, the careful evaluation of other community and state plans provided valuable information into the development of the goals, strategies, and recommendations for the implementation of the CAPOA. It is clear that implementing the CAPOA is a process and will be most successful when addressing each of the following recommendations:

- Strive to make Williamsburg a model community for its older residents by accepting and instilling the “elder-friendly community” vision;
- Adopt a continuum of care approach;
- Coordinate with organizations and jurisdictions in their planning efforts by working together to support seniors;
- Explore a consultative business partnership with the Jefferson Area Board on Aging (Charlottesville, Virginia) to discover more about the implementation and sustainability of their model plan;

- Seek funding to support the implementation of the CAPOA and employ a full-time staff person to lead the implementation of the CAPOA;
- Develop a communication plan for reporting progress on the CAPOA; and
- Institute an annual review process for measuring performance and implementation of the CAPOA.

The CAPOA is a ten-year plan and because it involves ongoing evaluation to determine its effectiveness, it is possible that issues, other than those identified in the four priority areas, will emerge. It will be important for the SSC and the implementation team to assist in verifying these emerging issues and to determine if and how these new matters will be addressed.