

Narratives

Executive Summary

Partners In Care, Inc. Maryland (PIC) estimates that 262 RSVP volunteers will serve in Anne Arundel County. Volunteer activities include: advocacy, transportation and companionship for older adults, managing volunteers and engaging in education and outreach efforts to increase volunteers and expand services at nonprofit organizations. The primary focus area of this project is Healthy Futures. At the end of the 3-year grant, 262 homebound or older adults and individuals with disabilities will report having increased mobility, social ties or perceived social support. The CNCS Federal investment of \$59,462 will be supplemented by \$89,112 in non-Federal resources.

Strengthening Communities

The entire effort will service the Healthy Futures focus area, meeting the requirement of greater than 25% of the Primary Focus Area. RSVP volunteers will address four community need areas within this focus area: aging in place, access to care, companionship, advocacy/resource referral through case management.

Three primary factors support the need for independent living services in Anne Arundel County: older adult population growth and the related increase in demand for services, lack of transportation among older adults, and the risk of social isolation among older adults. This is further complicated by the reduction in funding that would normally support these needs.

Aging Population

According to 2011 Census, the number of Anne Arundel County residents 62 years of age and older increased almost 38 percent in the past decade. By comparison the number of state and U.S. residents eligible for Social Security increased by only about 24.7 percent and 21.1 percent, respectively. The aging population boosted the Anne Arundel County's median age from 36 to 38.4. The median age is 38 in Maryland and 37.2 across the country.

This need is further demonstrated by the County Council's decrease in funding by 13.5% to the Department of Aging at the time of the 2011 Census. As a result, the county eliminated 12 positions from the Department of Aging and Disabilities, including two assistant directors and four senior center assistant directors. Currently, the Department of Aging and Disabilities is preparing a needs assessment to update the previous one from 1999. While it is not yet released, the task force

Narratives

acknowledges that the key issue will focus on the need for supportive services that allow seniors to remain living independently in their homes.

Lack of Adequate Transportation

Since Anne Arundel County is a suburban county located between Washington, DC and Baltimore, needs with regard to senior transportation are similar to national trends. The report on National Center on Senior Transportation (NCST) -Senior Transportation Demonstration Projects, 2007, states "In less than 20 years approximately 62 million adults will be over the age of 65 - an increase of 79% from 2002... adults aged 85 and older (who are more likely to need the support of family, friends, and the community to continue to live independently) are expected to increase from 4.2 million in 2000 to 8.9 million by 2030. The lack of adequate transportation options has a significant impact on the ability of older adults to obtain essential services (health and medical care, nutrition, social services...) Further demonstrating the need for expansion of this type of service and support, the NCST is soliciting... human service agencies... and other entities interested in developing and implementing innovative approaches to increase senior transportation options and improving older adult mobility. This family of services includes volunteer and door-through-door escorted services.

Feeling of Isolation

According to AARP's The United States of Aging Survey (2012), more than 25 percent of seniors in their 60s said they were not confident their communities will have the resources and services they need to lead a healthy and independent life over the next five to 10 years. Only half of seniors say their communities offer a high-quality public transportation system. In addition, approximately 45% of seniors surveyed, listed reasons for feeling isolated due to family and friends being too busy or too far away. As well, 17% they no longer drive or have a car. Twenty-nine percent described no access to internet at home.

Service Activities in Primary Focus Area lead to National Performance Measure Outputs

Aging in Place

Service activities to support independent living include transportation services to shopping and medical appointments, as well as access opportunities for socialization. These activities support achievement of Output H8 (number of homebound or older adults and individuals with disabilities receiving food, transportation, or other services that allow them to live independently) and Outcome H9 number of

Narratives

homebound or older adults and individuals with disabilities who report having increased social ties/perceived social support. These services will be provided through Partners In Care and their volunteer stations in Anne Arundel County that provide supportive services for independent living.

Partners In Care has served the elderly and shut-ins for over 20 years, utilizing a time banking system, allowing the elderly to get support while giving it, as well. One hour of service, such as giving a member a ride to a doctor's appointment, may be exchanged through one hour of errands to pick up groceries. This gives a sense of contribution, as well as support of others in our community.

Similarly for the RSVP program, clients needing transportation services will call our PIC office to be assigned to volunteer drivers by member coordinators. Once they are logged into our database, volunteer drivers will serve on request based upon their availability. They will transport clients in their own vehicles or run errands for the client and provide delivery to the client's home. In addition, for those with limited mobility or disability, Partners In Care has wheel chair accessible transportation. In FY 2014, 3,500 trips were provided in addition to the volunteer driver trips.

Volunteer members either requesting or otherwise in need of social engagement will be provided with opportunities for socialization through our Warm Houses. A call to our RSVP Member Coordinator will assign them to an event, which is entered into a log and tracked, as well. As we have experienced for over 15 years, strong friendships and camaraderie develop through these gatherings. And discussions among friends lend themselves to other areas they might need support. As a result, mutual needs are met, and a community of support is the outcome.

Similarly, resource referral or advocacy becomes critical when elder members with limited resources need to coordinate services in the community. For example, helping navigate bureaucracies and complicated phone trees to access food banks, legal assistance, medical, eye or dental care, and alternate affordable housing. Our member volunteers will see that they receive the one-on-one assistance to receive the service or reach resolution. Partners In Care currently handles approximately 15 cases per week.

Plan and Infrastructure to Support Data Collection and ensure National Performance Measure Outputs are Measured, Collected and Managed

Narratives

Partners In Care has a database in which we enter data from multiple locations, using a web-based system to report on every facet of the program. This will allow the RSVP Member Care Coordinator to enter the information on site at the participating organizations. The information entered includes types of rides, locations of the rides, identities of the drivers, etc. We are also able to add notes or comments to help us serve our members. For example, we print reports for our matchmakers (those who match riders with volunteer drivers for each ride). The reports include helpful information so that the best "matches" can be made, such as notations that a rider must use a walker, or the rider is vision impaired or has trouble getting into a small car or a larger SUV. Data (hours and miles) reported by drivers is also entered into QuickBooks to generate checks for mileage reimbursement for the drivers.

Periodically, typically after an interaction or when a client calls in, the RSVP Member Coordinator will survey them about their experiences and potential other needs. In addition, at the end of the grant contract year, RSVP will collaborate with participating organizations to administer a survey to determine the number of the members receiving services, and report the resultant increases social support, transportation, advocacy and companionship. We will share the findings in a way to protect confidentiality.

Service to veterans and/or military families as part of service in Primary Focus Area
RSVP places significant importance on engaging veterans in national service through the program. Partners In Care currently transports veterans to medical facilities in Ft. Meade and local Veterans Administration clinics in Baltimore and Anne Arundel County. We also participate in the transportation of retired groups from WWII Veterans (Honor Flights) to visit local memorials many times from the airport to their hotel accommodations and back.

Recruitment and Development

Plan and infrastructure to create high quality volunteer assignments that enable volunteers to share experience, abilities, and skills to improve communities

Recruitment strategies will utilize Partners In Care website (and specific language targeting RSVP), public service announcements, media advertisements, face-to-face presentations, networking with other local charity, church and community organizations. Success stories are the heart of what we find draws others in to be a part of our efforts. We continue to share these stories through the methods identified above. We will incorporate the RSVP Program into our promotion and recruiting efforts, as well as our training.

Narratives

We will recruit and train RSVP volunteers to perform in-home interviews as part of the Member Care Program. When an individual contacts Partners In Care to receive services, a RSVP interviewer will make an appointment to interview the individual in their home, explain the program and the concept of time-exchange. Everyone is called a member whether they are primarily receiving services or whether they are primarily volunteering their time. If the requestor of services is not able to exchange services at the time, they are not denied services, since many others volunteer their time and donate their hours to the "bank" for others. While the time-exchange program is a way to recruit volunteers, RSVP Program in Anne Arundel County will also work with our partners at Hospice of Chesapeake, Anne Arundel County Department of Aging, and Volunteer Centers for recruitment and placement of adults over age 55 with an interest in serving at these volunteer stations.

We have a sophisticated process already in place for scheduling and dispatching, recordkeeping and managing our elder care services, which we will leverage for RSVP. For example, for services needed, matchmakers who work in the office contact volunteer members via telephone and assign them the ride. The driver phones the member needing the ride the night before the appointment/errand to confirm. On the day of the ride, the driver picks up the rider and escorts them to their appointment, assisting as necessary, and returns the member home. The volunteer driver then phones or email the office and reports his/her hours spent and miles driven. The Member Care Coordinator enters the data/information into the time-banking software to track events, quality and provide reporting.

Plan and infrastructure to ensure RSVP Volunteers receive training to address identified community needs in primary focus area

We will incorporate the RSVP Program into our current promotion and recruiting efforts, as well as our training to onboard our new member volunteers whereby they are informed about our mission, clients, and our procedures, such as the time banking system. Those members who wish to enter the program as volunteer members are required to attend an orientation and training where the goals and mission of the program are explained, and ethical and safety issues regarding older adults are discussed. We also host a special AARP Driver Safety Program for older drivers. Skill development and training will play an important part in the Anne Arundel County RSVP's plan for ensuring quality volunteer experiences that address identified community needs. Our RSVP program will build volunteer leaders through a workshop series called "Coming of Age." We are currently certified as one of a national network of training sites.

Narratives

This Coming of Age training is based upon research conducted by the Temple Intergenerational Center on issues affecting the engagement of older adults in meaningful service. The workshop series is a unique interactive experience for the participants. The main objective focuses on helping them envision a purposeful and rewarding future as they engage in meaningful life activities as an older adult. The workshops include an introspective self-assessment, visualization exercises, brainstorming sessions to generate ideas for volunteering, as well as providing guidance for participants to set goals, plan and implement their action steps in support of volunteer efforts. Success stories include Edna, age 68, who was forced to quit her job due to debilitating pain, founded an organization that makes quilts for sick children and adults. And, Edie, who reconnected with her dream of becoming a professional harpist by giving impromptu concerts at hospital patients' bedsides at the age of 68. As well, Ed (age 78) and Fred (age 81), who united their interests to clean up the earth by organizing the Senior Environment Corps.

Through Coming of Age certifications, we will now include additional sessions structured as a two-day workshop with two sessions--two hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon. Alternatively, they could offer as a four-day workshop with one session per day. Leaders will be local subject matter experts and highly skilled at working with volunteer organizations. Through the focus area of Healthy Futures - RSVP volunteers will address four community need areas Partners In Care has been working on for over 20 years: aging in place, access to care, companionship, advocacy/resource referral through case management. Our RSVP Advisory Council will be instrumental as they participate in our efforts, as well. We are partnering with the Anne Arundel County Volunteer Center, The Anne Arundel County Department of Aging and the Hospice of Chesapeake, which we have worked on similar purpose and vision, as well as common goals for years. The RSVP Member Coordinator will work with them to assign training representatives responsible for conducting train-the-trainer sessions at these volunteer centers. RSVP will target two representatives (e.g., the executive director, volunteer manager or coordinator and any other staff member who is involved in managing opportunities) to maximize the opportunity that the training offers.

Demographics of community to be served and recruitment plans for a diverse volunteer pool to be reflective of the community

Seventy-seven percent of the Anne Arundel County population are Non-Hispanic White followed by 16% Black, 3% Asian, 7% Hispanic. The projected increase in population older than 60 has increased

Narratives

by 18.4%. RSVP will focus minority recruitment efforts through faith-based outreach, including predominantly African American and Korean churches and community organizations. There is also an increasing need to focus on areas lower income affects a person's ability to obtain needed resources; thus, presenting further need for volunteer support.

Recruitment strategies will utilize Partners In Care website (language regarding RSVP), public service announcements, media advertisements, face-to-face presentations, networking with other local charity, church and community organizations. Success stories are the heart of what we find draws others in to be a part of our efforts. We continue to share these stories through the vehicles identified above.

While the percentage of veterans who are volunteers reflects the community's veteran demographic profile, RSVP will prioritize engagement of their service. Through the service we provide to them, transporting to appointments and running errands, we have an opportunity to invite them to participate, which follows our current volunteer model. Additionally, we are committed to providing volunteer opportunities for those who may have physical challenges, e.g., sight or hearing or restricted mobility. Through our regular surveys, we will incorporate language to capture our military veterans' feedback, as well as the aspect of disability and limitations.

Retention and Recognition of RSVP Volunteers

Partners In Care has enjoyed higher than average retention of 22% for greater than a 5-year period in Anne Arundel County as well as extensions in other counties. Our board and staff meet regularly to review feedback from member volunteers. These meetings ensure that they are top of mind and will be furthered through the RSVP Advisory Council. We find that the approach to time banking, whereby member volunteers give time and then receive time for services needed, is a critical part of our success.

Retention strategies will include:

Ensuring opportunities allow for flexibility in areas such as volunteer activity, length of commitment, location, population served, leadership opportunities offered, and new skills gained

- * Providing a well-organized structure to provide help when needed
- * Offering intergenerational opportunities for events, include days of service
- * Conducting follow-up with volunteers after they are placed and at least twice per year to ensure satisfaction has been achieved

Narratives

- * Reaching out to inactive member volunteers
- * Frequent communication via e-newsletters three times per year, social media, the community and via member volunteers themselves
- * Developing educational, social, and cultural activities for members
- * Yearly recognition and awards dinner
- * Training quarterly through AARP, twice a year driver update meetings, annual handyman services

Program Management

Management Plan/infrastructure for volunteer stations: assurance that volunteer stations are complying with RSVP Program regulations and assurance that volunteers are performing their assigned service activities

RSVP volunteer stations have been carefully considered and establish tangible collaboration from each station to: develop outcome-based plans and service opportunities that address identified needs, comply with regulatory and policy requirements, and provide assigned volunteers with the support necessary for successful performance in their assignments. RSVP Advisory Council will meet four times per year to review and ensure the requirements are being met. RSVP staff will conduct on-site visits yearly to in compliance with requirements outlined in the Code of Federal Regulations Title 45 Part 2553 - The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (which includes the responsibilities of volunteer stations and legal limitations that apply to the RSVP grant and expenditure of its funds), and with agreements maintained in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The MOU will describe the relationship between RSVP and the volunteer station. A handbook will be created and shared with the RSVP member volunteers at each site. It will provide member volunteers with job descriptions and volunteer assignment plans as part of their volunteer management.

Site visits will include interviews with the RSVP Volunteer Station Coordinator and other site leadership to evaluate program viability and compliance via a checklist; review of current and projected volunteer opportunities; observation of volunteers performing their assigned service activities; verification of adequate volunteer supervision; assessment of physical space, accommodation for volunteers with disabilities, and safety; review of records management and volunteer activity tracking; inquiry regarding training provided for volunteers and volunteer recognition; identification of specific technical assistance needs; discussion of issues presented by station; the provision of guidance where issues are identified; and determination of the site as a continuing volunteer station.

Narratives

Plan/Infrastructure to meet community needs while minimizing disruption to current volunteers and/or graduating stations

Since the fundamental principle of the RSVP Program is so similar to that of Partners In Care, it helps to minimize disruption to current volunteers and the upcoming expansion efforts. The founders of Partners In Care, Barbara Huston and Sandra Jackson, have been assuring that critical community needs are met in Anne Arundel County for over 20 years through relationships and efforts within the community. The fundamental principle of the RSVP Program is to engage older individuals over age 55 in volunteer efforts. This is also at the core of Partners In Care's purpose and core competencies. PIC has formulated strong relationships with community service providers, funders, government agencies, business leaders, church and community representatives. For example, the Board of Directors includes Michael Livingston, President & CEO of The Bank of Glen Burnie; Barney Hughes, Administrative V.P., Regional Manager of Business Banking at M & T Bank, among other local business owners and physicians organizations.

Further, at the invitation from the local hospice and with the support of over 20 contractors, Partners In Care was provided rent-free spaces for the Anne Arundel County offices. We are the first tenant of what will be a collaborative community of care campus. This partnership with Hospice of the Chesapeake enables PIC to expand our thrift store, which raises 25% of our income and positions us for greater collaborative initiatives that will benefit both our members and the community at large. They will support us and serve as a volunteer station for the RSVP volunteers, allowing for administration and expansion as the efforts open countless volunteer opportunities.

Not only do we partner with other local agencies and community organizations, the outcome of our efforts provides opportunities to combat social isolation with volunteer projects and gatherings such as our Warm Houses which brings people together in their own neighborhoods for conversation, camaraderie, and creative projects including Art With a Heart. New relationships are made, as are new RSVP volunteer opportunities in the community to support everyone in a richer, healthier life. Plan/infrastructure to ensure compliance with RSVP Federal regulations, including establishment of an RSVP Advisory Council, MOUs completed and signed by stations, volunteer eligibility verified Partners In Care will leverage our infrastructure for monitoring and ensuring compliance with the RSVP Federal regulations. We maintain program records for a number of other grants that ensure the grantors' programmatic expectations are being met. This is part of our ongoing process.

During the implementation of the RSVP grant, Partners In Care has identified that a Director for

Narratives

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program will be primarily responsible for assuring compliance and meeting all of the programmatic expectations, administrative rules and guidelines and requirements. This will be shared in meetings and communication materials among the Advisory Board and partners. The partners include the Hospice of the Chesapeake, the Volunteer Center, and the Anne Arundel County Department of Aging and Disabilities (who has experience managing the RSVP program in the past). Anne Arundel County Department of Aging and Disabilities has advised PIC that we would be well-suited to manage such a program.

MOUs have been completed and signed by the partners, who will also be responsible for setting up and maintaining volunteer stations, where they will verify volunteer eligibility. Since we have established this with our current volunteer members, we will be able to leverage the process, procedures, onboarding and training.

Organizational Capability

Plan and infrastructure to provide sound programmatic and fiscal oversight (both financial and in-kind) and day-to-day operational support to ensure compliance with RSVP Program requirements and to ensure accountability and efficient and effective use of available resources

It is noteworthy to mention the numerous awards and commendations received by Partners In Care throughout the years for financial and in-kind oversight, compliance with other grants, and their accountability that reaches well beyond minimum grant and program requirements.

Among Partners In Care accomplishments is their recognition among fewer than 100 non-profit organizations awarded the Standards of Excellence in the state of Maryland. The Maryland Association of Nonprofit Organizations (MANO) sponsors the nationally renowned Standards for Excellence program, reviewing over 22,000 competing organizations and ultimately recognizing their ethical and accountable management and leadership. Standards for Excellence: An Ethics and Accountability Code for the Nonprofit Sector, is a model for how the most well managed and responsibly-governed nonprofits operate.

Our CEO, Barbara Huston, has been recognized for her efforts in this area and participated in an international conference in Belfast to showcase the program which will be used as a model for a government initiative to engage older volunteers to provide services to an aging population. In addition, the Feb/March 2012 issue of AARP The Magazine spotlighted Partners In Care as a solution for seniors seeking to stretch limited resources and highlighted the value of the program to the community.

In further support of PIC's sound infrastructure, in a recent study undertaken at Johns Hopkins

Narratives

University of four Baltimore-area nonprofits, a philanthropy fellow at the Center for Civil Society Studies commended Partners In Care for its accurate database, keeping records of volunteer efforts per every single task performed by volunteers. PIC was found to be the only organization that compared the economic value of volunteer work with related cost to determine the net benefit for the community. And PIC demonstrated a strong sense of awareness of the value created.

For over 20 years Partners In Care has demonstrated programmatic and fiscal oversight through our accountability in maintaining accurate and complete records and clean audits. We maintain Mass Transit Administration grant compliance for our transportation program. We conduct site visits and provide documentation for our government-sponsored and private funders.

Well-defined staff positions, including identification of current staff assigned to the project and how these positions will ensure the accomplishment of the program objectives

The program's staffing infrastructure will ensure the accomplishment of program requirements and objectives as follows:

1) We will dedicate 100% the current position of Member Care Coordinator to be the Director for Retired Senior Volunteer Program. Responsibilities include: program budget, resource development, reporting, local and national advocacy, planning, program evaluation and assessment, building commitment among partners of program priorities. This will include our Advisory Council and volunteer center hubs. A job description has been created outlining job qualifications suited to manage and monitor the program. Placement will be assigned once the grant has been approved.

2) Two Program Coordinators (a Ride Partner Coordinator and a Assistant Member Care Coordinator) will each be 50% assigned to the RSVP Program. They will be selected from existing staff will be responsible for identifying, screening, and matching volunteer skills with nonprofit/public organizations both within and external to the services Partners In Care provides. Disruption will be limited as this description fits in with their current job responsibilities. They will receive guidance from the RSVP Director and support program oversight of volunteer projects and provide measurable results through surveys and tracking requests, transportation trips, and other efforts.

Ride Partner Coordinator: Manage and coordinate the activities of the RSVP Ride Partners, matching members requesting rides with volunteer drivers, following procedures in volunteer matchmakers handbook, ensuring good matches according to their needs (i.e., location, vehicle requirements, mobility issues); monitor calendar, updating for changes or for vacations and avoiding duplicate calls when transportation has already been arranged; interact with volunteer station coordinators and other staff members to ensure consistency of procedures across all sites; oversee the

Narratives

coordination/matching of transportation volunteer members and those receiving the services; attend training and adhere to procedures, policies and guidelines of the RSVP Program.

Assistant Member Care Coordinator: Provide services to RSVP member volunteers and support member care staff, including: database entries, documenting RSVP member volunteer hours/miles; assist in calling and making match requests for member care tasks, providing all documentation, visiting members' homes to reassess needs and gather feedback to ensure frailer members receiving the services needed and matched to appropriate member volunteers, documenting all pertinent information in their files, attend training and adhere to procedures, policies and guidelines of the RSVP Program.

3) Administrative Assistant (existing staff) will provide administrative support for the RSVP Program for staff as 50% of her job. Her responsibilities include: interacting with site coordinators and overseeing the database, ensuring consistency of procedures across volunteer stations, monitoring and reporting to RSVP Director regarding member involvement and participation in volunteer transportation activities, attend training and adhere to procedures, policies and guidelines of the RSVP Program.

Development and implementation of internal policies and operating procedures to provide governance and manage risk, such as accounting, personnel management, and purchasing Partners In Care, through its auditing, planning and budgeting, and human resource efforts, along with the grant program will ensure that all programs administered follow the grant compliance guidelines without exception. These policies, relevant state laws on RSVP program regulations will be provided in a grant management procedure manual.

The recruiting and human resource management process will plan, develop and implement policies and systems, and/or adjust current ones to include: hiring, promotions, position classification, evaluating and rewarding performance, training and development programs. Partners In Care and the Advisory Council will determine appropriate adjustments to current policies so that the RSVP Director and Member Coordinators can maintain policies to mitigate risks associated with the HR function, such as background checks, diversity training, and other support to ensure that policies and standards are applied equitably to all employees, assuring workplace security and safety.

Organizational infrastructure in the areas of robust financial management capacity and systems and past experience managing federal grant funds

Partners In Care has successfully managed private, state and federal grants for over 20 years. There is an Advisory Board that provides oversight and meetings bimonthly. The Finance Committee meets

Narratives

monthly. And we have yearly audits.

Since 2010, PIC has developed and implemented processes for reporting on federal grants as a subgrantee. This includes items such as compliance, time keeping, procurement policies, Title VI compliance, receipt and recordkeeping. We are able to comply with grants including receipt of capital assets and federal funding of mobility buses. Recently passed audit/Compliance Review from MD Mass Transit Administration. Review of a checklist and documentation concluded that no findings that needed to be corrected.

Other

Not Applicable

PNS Amendment (if applicable)

Not Applicable