



NASUAD'S POLICY PRINCIPLES

2011 REAUTHORIZATION OF THE OLDER AMERICANS ACT

1. SUPPORT THE NETWORK TO MEET THE NEEDS OF TOMORROW:

Services that can assist individuals to remain in their homes and communities longer will delay more costly acute care and long-term care costs. Studies indicate that on average three people can be served in their homes and communities for the cost of one person placed in a long-term care facility.

The Network should be the nexus of rebalancing the delivery of long-term care

The Older Americans Act has played a key role in extending the period of time that older adults and individuals with disabilities can remain independent in their homes and communities and avoid unnecessary, premature, and costly institutionalization. As the shift in long-term care delivery continues to move away from institutionalization, the role of the Network as the nexus of the rebalancing process will continue to evolve and become more critical to the success of home and community based long-term services and supports.

Recommendation:

Embed the crucial role of the Network in rebalancing long-term services and supports.

Enhance the capacity of the State Units on Aging as outlined in the Older Americans Act

The Network needs to promote best practices to develop and expand models of long-term services and supports programs that build upon the core programs of Titles III, V and VII of the Older Americans Act. Currently, the vast majority of Administration on Aging funded technical assistance programs are resource centers that focus on demonstration activities and not the central Older Americans Act programs.

Recommendation:

Establish a technical assistance and resource center for core programs, peer to peer assistance, and state SCSEP programs to identify, develop and promote best practices.

Enhance the value of the Network by promoting its involvement in local, regional, and state planning

State Agencies on Aging should be considered the focal point for aging related matters. State Agencies on Aging inherently possess distinct expertise that can assist communities, counties, and cities to prepare, plan, and develop Livable Communities for persons of all ages and disabilities. Local, regional, and state agencies should actively involve Area Agencies on Aging in planning for the social and physical needs of older individuals.

Recommendations:

Amend the Older Americans Act to explicitly recognize the principal role State Agencies on Aging take part in planning for the social and physical needs of older individuals.

Amend Title III to include a broader vision for inclusion of a Livable Communities Plan for older adults and individuals with disabilities. Livable Community plans should include input from city, county, and regional planners and regional planning authorities through Area Agencies on Aging.

2. ADVANCE THE NETWORK BY STRENGTHENING ITS CORE FUNCTION:

A larger federal investment is needed to fund the Network

With the population of older individuals expected to grow exponentially in the coming years, the Network faces incredible challenges associated with the influx of older individuals into Older Americans Act programs. The scope of the Older Americans Act is vast and expanding to cover additional populations while the investment in its mission has been severely, and consistently, underfunded. In order for the Network to continue to build its infrastructure and to most effectively serve the growing population of seniors, there must be a larger federal investment in Older Americans Act funded services and supports.

Recommendation:

Increase the authorized funding for the Older Americans Act.

Build the capacity of State Agencies on Aging to meet the needs of older individuals

Congress has capped state administrative funding. Despite the increasing roles and responsibilities of State Agencies on Aging, states have failed to receive the needed increase in administrative funds. For the past two decades more than a quarter of the states have failed to receive an increase in administrative funding for Title III services even though the demand for services increased.

Recommendation:

Increase the allowable percentage of administrative funding for State Agencies on Aging to 10 percent, in line with Area Agencies on Aging, or \$750,000, whichever amount is greater.

Increase Flexibility to Respond to Consumer-Driven Needs

Due to the limit on transferability between congregate and home-delivered meals under Title III C of the Older Americans Act, states do not have the flexibility to meet the higher demand for home-delivered meals. The Older Americans Act should allow states more flexibility to respond to consumer demand.

Recommendation:

Merge Title III C1 and C2 funding into one category, and allow states the flexibility to distribute funding between home-delivered and congregate meals.

Build on the Promise of Home and Community Based Services and Supports

NASUAD supports fully funding and making permanent the Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs), the evidence-based disease prevention and health promotion programs, and the Community Living Program. This strategy of providing long-term services and supports will generate savings to the Medicaid and Medicare programs at the federal and state levels, while simultaneously enabling older adults and individuals with disabilities to age in their homes and communities.

Recommendation:

Make permanent and fully fund the Aging and Disability Resource Centers, the evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention programs, and Administration on Aging nursing home diversion demonstration, the Community Living Program.

3. INCREASE THE EFFICACY OF THE NETWORK BY SUPPORTING INNOVATION:*Modernize the Older Americans Act Language and Objectives to Reflect Current and Future Realities*

The Network continues to expand its Older Americans Act program efforts to meet the needs of populations unanticipated by the Older Americans Act, such as individuals with disabilities who are served through the Aging and Disability Resource Centers, and the family members who receive services through the family caregiver support and lifespan respite programs. In response to the challenges resulting from these expansions, both current and anticipated, the State Agencies on Aging have been providing person-centered services that are designed to empower older adults, individuals with disabilities, and their families by responding to the individual's needs and preferences. The Older Americans Act language and objectives must reflect this philosophical and practical change.

Recommendation:

Amend the Older Americans Act to incorporate and promote person-centered language, objectives, and goals.