What Connects Us

Allegheny County Department *of* Human Services

8/25/2022

Provider Briefing

Agenda

4:30 – 4:40: Welcome / Policy, Legislative and Procurement Updates

4:40 – 4:45: Provider Survey Results

4:45 – 4:50: Back-to-School Information

4:50 – 5:25: Aging Services in Allegheny County

5:25 – 5:30: Announcements

Policy and Legislative Update

Federal Updates

Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 signed into law last week

- Contains a variety of measures aimed at reducing carbon emissions, including billions of dollars in tax credits and rebates to help low income homeowners make home improvements.

- The High-Efficiency Electric Home Rebate program, which will be administered at the state level, includes up to $14,000 in direct rebates on certain energy-efficient appliances and upgrades. States will have to apply for the funding and coordinate with local jurisdictions on distribution.

- For households earning below 80% of the area median income (AMI), rebate limits are substantial enough to cover the full cost of the project.

- Fannie Mae offers a free tool to help you find the median income in your area based on zip code.

Medicaid and Public Health Emergency

- During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency (PHE), certain Medicaid and CHIP requirements were waived, preventing people from losing coverage during the pandemic.

- The PHE was scheduled to end in July but was extended and is now effective through **October 13, 2022**. In a letter to the state Governors, the Administration has indicated they will give at least a 60-day notice before the PHE ends, which indicates it will uktiamtely be extended past October 13th.

State Budget Update

On Friday, July 8, Gov. Wolf signed into law the PA commonwealth budget for FY 2022-2023 which began on July 1. The $45.3 billion spending plan represents a $1.3 billion, or 3%, increase over last year's budget, and included the allocation of approximately $2.2 billion in federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding.

- In general, the FY 2022-2023 budget does not increase taxes and cuts the corporate net income tax from 9.99% to 8.99%, continuing to lower to 4.99% by 2031.

- A significant portion of the increase in the General Fund appropriation is going to schools, with a $525 million increase for basic education.

- The ARPA funds are for a number of initiatives, including mental health, public safety and housing measures, as well as a $640 million investment for environmental programs including water, sewer and storm water infrastructure, agricultural projects, and park and forest maintenance.

- Importantly, a one-time $100m investment in mental health expenditures with ARPA funds did not come directly to counties, so it's unclear how state DHS will spend those funds.

State Updates

Whole Home Repair Program included in State Budget, paid for with ARPA funds.

- Total appropriation of $125m for the entire state. Individual county amounts from this total are unknown yet.

- Up to $50,000 for repairs will be available as grants for low and moderate-income homeowners and loans to small landlords renting affordable units.

- The State's Department of Economic Development will oversee the money, and each county will have a single organization through which homeowners or landlords can apply.

Local Updates

Pittsburgh City Council introduced a bill this week to help address services and housing for unhoused persons in the City.

- If passed, the bill would instruct the city's Department of Finance and the Department of Innovation and Performance to find 40 city-owned parcels of land to designate for homelessness services.

- Council members characterized the bill Tuesday as the start of a larger conversation about how Pittsburgh cares for people without homes, and what council's role is in that conversation. The bill would direct the city to help create a path toward permanent shelter for people experiencing homelessness.

- Council also called for a public hearing with the Gainey administration on the issue of homelessness.

Solicitations

Active Solicitations

DHS Solicitations Webpage

RFQ for Forensic Psychological and/or Psychiatric Evaluators
- Due Date: Thursday, September 1, 2022

RFI for a Racial Equity Training and Support Directory
- Due Date: Thursday, September 15, 2022

RFP for Extended Acute Inpatient Care for Children and Adolescents
- Due Date: Friday, September 30, 2022, at 3:30 pm
- RFP through Community Care on behalf and in conjunction with DHS

RFP for Targeted Rental Assistance and Supportive Services to Reduce Homelessness in Allegheny County
- Releasing today!
- Due Date: Wednesday, October 19, 2022

Provider Survey

THE RESULTS ARE IN!

Thanks to those of you who responded to our survey. You told us, and we listened! Effective with the September briefing, we're going to make the following changes:

- The briefings will now be held from 3-4 PM on the 4th Thursday of the month.
- When reminder emails are sent the week before the meeting, they will include an RSVP function. If you RSVP, Zoom will send you an invitation to the series that you can download to your calendar.

We will continue to send a follow-up email after each meeting with links to the audio and PPT from the briefing. You can always find current and past briefing materials at: http://dhstraumaresourcelibrary.alleghenycounty.us/covid-19-information-for-dhs-providers/.

Getting Ready for Back-to-School

DHS Education Priorities

- **Students are 'healthy' and ready for schooling when they walk in the door.**
  - Quality early learning, out-of-school-time programming and kindergarten readiness efforts are available
  - Mental health systems that make sense are in place within school buildings
  - State-sponsored prevention programming is available through the Bureau of Drug & Alcohol Supports

- **School stability is prioritized**
  - Youth in foster care remain at their school of origin if it is in their best interest
  - Students experiencing homelessness receive support to navigate the complex school landscape

Early Childhood Education

Early Head Start, Head Start and Pre-K Counts
- Language Development
- Math,
- Science and
- Social Skills

To Enroll:
- Allegheny County residents: (412) 394-4594
- City of Pittsburgh residents: (412) 529-4291 option 2

K-12 Education

What's needed to enroll in K-12 schooling:

- Proof of age (birth certificate, prior school records or medical records with birth date included)
- Proof of residency (lease, deed, utility bill, driver's license)
- Proof of immunizations (from the doctor, from prior school records)
- Signed Act 26 statement about student's history of school expulsion (provided by the school and may be completed by person enrolling the child)

Education Barriers to Permanency Project

- Started this summer
- Data-focused project looking at education and school stability for young people in foster care
- Partnership between DHS and American Bar Association and Center on Children & the Law
- 3 Key Principals guiding the work:
  - School stability strengthens placement stability
  - School success guides life success
  - Collaboration is key to supporting students in foster care

Aging Services in Allegheny County

Dr. Shannah Tharp Gilliam

DHS Aging Services Deputy Director

Aging Services

Aging Services support basic needs adding years to life through…

- **Nutrition programs that provide Meals** in group settings and in homes;

- **Funding senior center Health promotion** and disease prevention programs;

- Delivering programming and creating a network for caregivers, many of whom are over 60 themselves; and

- **Checking on seniors who are at risk** of fraud, abuse, or neglect – and investigating allegations, when needed.

NUTRITION

HEALTH & WELLNESS

CAREGIVERS

ELDER RIGHTS

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

SAFETY

Aging Services

Older adults enter our network of services based on their needs

For protection and help   ⟶   Protective Services (7,000 reports of abuse/neglect)

To get answers   ⟶   "SeniorLine" (50,000 calls each year)

For an advocate   ⟶   Ombudsman

For a helping Hand   ⟶   In-Home Services

To make critical decisions   ⟶   Community Care Transitions

When someone is in danger   ⟶   Protective Services

NUTRITION   HEALTH & WELLNESS   CAREGIVERS   ELDER RIGHTS   SUPPORTIVE SERVICES   SAFETY

Aging Services

We also add life to senior's years by…

- Supporting a community of caregivers
- Maintaining dignity and championing older adults' rights
- Connecting residents over 60 to resources and services that improve the quality of life

NUTRITION

HEALTH & WELLNESS

CAREGIVERS

ELDER RIGHTS

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

SAFETY

Aging Services

Highlights

- Domiciliary Care
- Senior Companion Program
- OPTIONS

KEEPING SENIORS

Independent

mpowered

In Community

Safe & Connected

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NUTRITION

HEALTH & WELLNESS

CAREGIVERS

ELDER RIGHTS

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

SAFETY

Aging Services

Our Community Based Services bring support to older adults where they live

We fund:

- **Transportation** to medical appts & errands for daily living

- **Senior Center** programming & activities in neighborhoods

- **Home visits** to help seniors identify and connect to needed services

Aging Services

Oversight for AAA's provided by:

Federal Administration on Aging
U.S. Administration on Community Living
Pennsylvania Department of Aging

Aging Services

DHS Aging Services pays it forward to serve, partner, & employ the helpers in our region

- AAA contracts with 75+ partner organizations
- AAA Employs 110 full-time staff

Aging Services

When you feel lucky, seniors win!

- In PA, AAA's are funded primarily through the PA lottery
- Smaller portions of funding come from other sources
  - Fee-for-service work, other grants, & the County match
- Annual budge of $48 million annually

Aging Services

When you feel lucky, seniors win!

- AC AAA serves roughly 41,000 residents over 60 yrs.
  - *Veterans*
  - *Homeless*
  - *LGBTQ*
  - *Races & Ethnicities*

- 10.6% of the population of those over 60 years of age in AC

- Based on our $48M budget, that's $1,170 per person served

Aging Services

CHALLENGE:

More is needed and more could be done for Seniors.

The population of older adults is growing, and need is increasing.

On average the 41,000+ seniors served by DHS Aging receive $1,170 in services.

AAAs have been flat funded by the State for decades.

- 26% of Allegheny County's residents are 60 or older
- Over the next twenty years, the number of AC residents over 60 is expected to increase to over 400,000 people

Aging Services

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More is needed and more could be done for Seniors.

The population of older adults is growing, and need is increasing.

On average the 41,000+ seniors served by DHS Aging receive $1,170 in services.

DHS is putting more of our existing dollars into Aging Services and seniors can use your help.

- A groundswell of partners are actively working on this issue.
- With additional resources, we can show impact.
- Recently, PA Dept. of Aging issued 8 RFPs targeting SDoH

THE ASK:

We need additional funding to:
- Develop an effective systemic, multi-pronged approach
- Implement and test scalable approaches
- Document the impact that can be replicated across the state
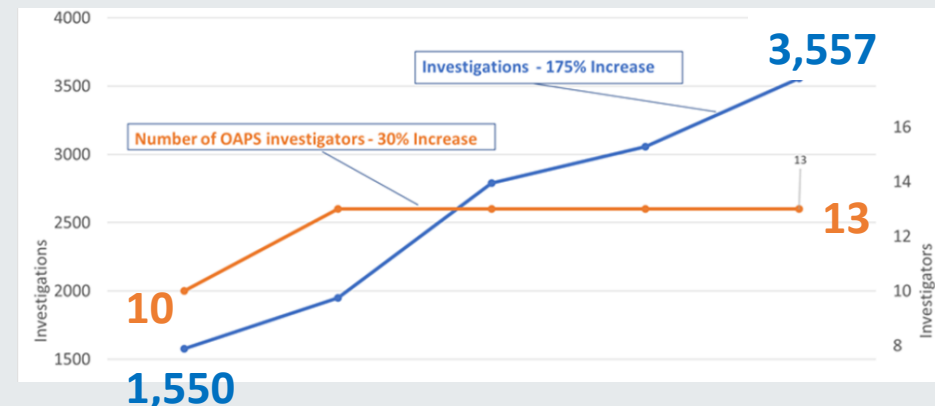
Aging Services

CHALLENGE:

Demand has increased, while the workforce has not.

Older adult Neglect and Abuse has skyrocketed, while the number of workers has not kept pace.

Demand for Personal Aide service for older adults has increased dramatically, with health declining among Boomers and the impact of the pandemic.

Protective Services: The increase in need for protection from senior abuse far overruns those able to do the work, even before COVID ('14 – '19)

Same goes for…
- In-home health care workers
- Direct Care Workers

Aging Services

CHALLENGE:

Demand has increased, while the workforce has not.

DHS Aging Services partners like UPitt, Pittsburgh Technical College and CCAC are developing training pathways for those willing to enter geriatric health serving careers.

Ultimately, the geriatric care workforce needs Government support of systemic approaches

THE ASK:

Consider legislation that makes these jobs more attractive:
- "AmeriCorps" style approach that provides education funds or student loan cancelation for those committing to work in in-home care for a certain number of years
- Funding mechanisms to subsidize salaries for in-home health care earmarked for staffing and wages
- Incentives to increase staff among the personal care workforce (e.g., PDA's funding to increase access to health care providers)

Aging Services

CHALLENGE:

Try not to forget about us.

AAA's vision is for…
"…Allegheny County residents, over 60+ to live safe, healthy, and independent lives."

Older adults end up unsafe, in poor health, and have to leave their homes for many reasons:

…Financial, lack of in-home support, safety issues in the homes themselves.

Think about your Mom and your Mee-maw, WHENEVER you write legislation and plan the budget.

THE ASK:

There are many connection points that can be used to impact the lives of our older adults:
- Workforce / Employment
- Housing / Transportation
- Emergency Preparedness

Remember, you have a thought partner in Allegheny County DHS Aging Services
"Call me" 412-616-0031

Aging Services

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SeniorLine
412-350-5460

Announcements

Allegheny Connect is launching on August 31
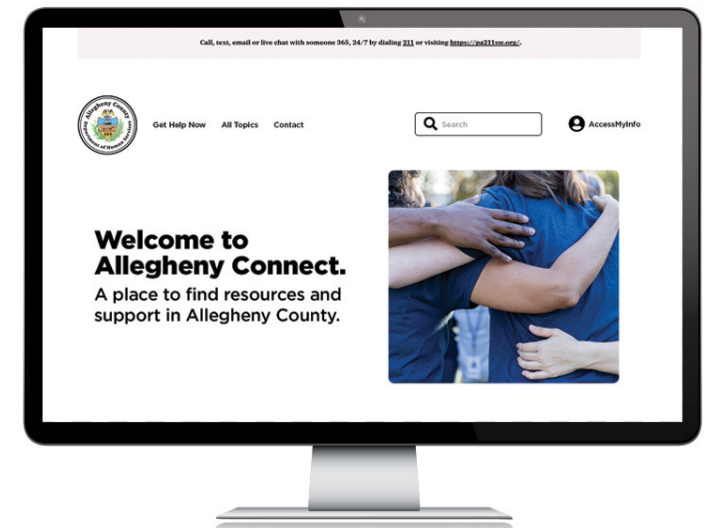
A new simple, resource-rich website for the community

Acts as a wide-open door to services needed right now

Includes access to nine main service topics, ability to connect with the DAL or 2-1-1 for immediate assistance and the opportunity to browse providers and their accommodations.

Connect.alleghenycounty.us

COVID-related funding for computers and Wi-Fi Hotspots is no longer available.

DHS's Digital Divide Program has come to an end.

Other resources are available.

Digital Divide Resources

The Federal Affordable Connectivity Program
Offers reduced price broadband access and vouchers toward discounts on laptops
https://www.affordableconnectivity.gov/

Carnegie and Allegheny County Libraries
Offer public computer labs and free Wi-Fi. Many also allow users to borrow "Chromebook bundles" which include laptops and hotspots. Be advised that bundles often have a waitlist.
https://www.carnegielibrary.org/services/computers-wifi-printing/

Computer Reach
Local City non-profit which refurbishes computers for low-cost sale. They also raffle off free computers every month.
https://www.computerreach.org/

Metamesh
Local non-profit has a program called "Every1Online" that offers free-Wi-Fi to residents in need who reside within their network areas. Serves residents in Homewood, Wilkinsburg, New Ken, Coraopolis and more.
https://www.metamesh.org/

Join the DHS Team!

https://alleghenycounty.bamboohr.com/jobs/

NEW TIME!

Next Provider Briefing
9/22/22
3:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Meeting notices and reminders will come from the staff of the Office of Equity and Engagement. Monthly meetings can be accessed at **https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81751270241**.

Here is the link to sign up to receive those notices:
https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/Uvw6IMX/ProviderBriefings
Or email us at **DHS-OEE@AlleghenyCounty.us**

Key Contacts

Questions for the Allegheny County Health Department

- https://www.alleghenycounty.us/healthdepartment/index.aspx

Questions for DHS about Covid-19 or to Request a Lock Box for a Client

- DHS-COVID19Planning@alleghenycounty.us
- Use the subject field to indicate **the category of your question (e.g., child welfare vaccine requirements, behavioral health masking policy, lock box request).**

Key DHS staff

- Payment inquiries: Dan Evancho Dan.Evancho@alleghenycounty.us
- Contract inquiries: Jennifer.Wernert@alleghenycounty.us or Laura.Brigido@alleghenycounty.us
- **Provider Briefing Questions:** DHS-OEE@alleghenycounty.us

United Way 2-1-1

- For basic needs assistance or general COVID-19 inquiries call the 24/7 COVID19 Hotline at 1-888-856-2774. Language services available.