

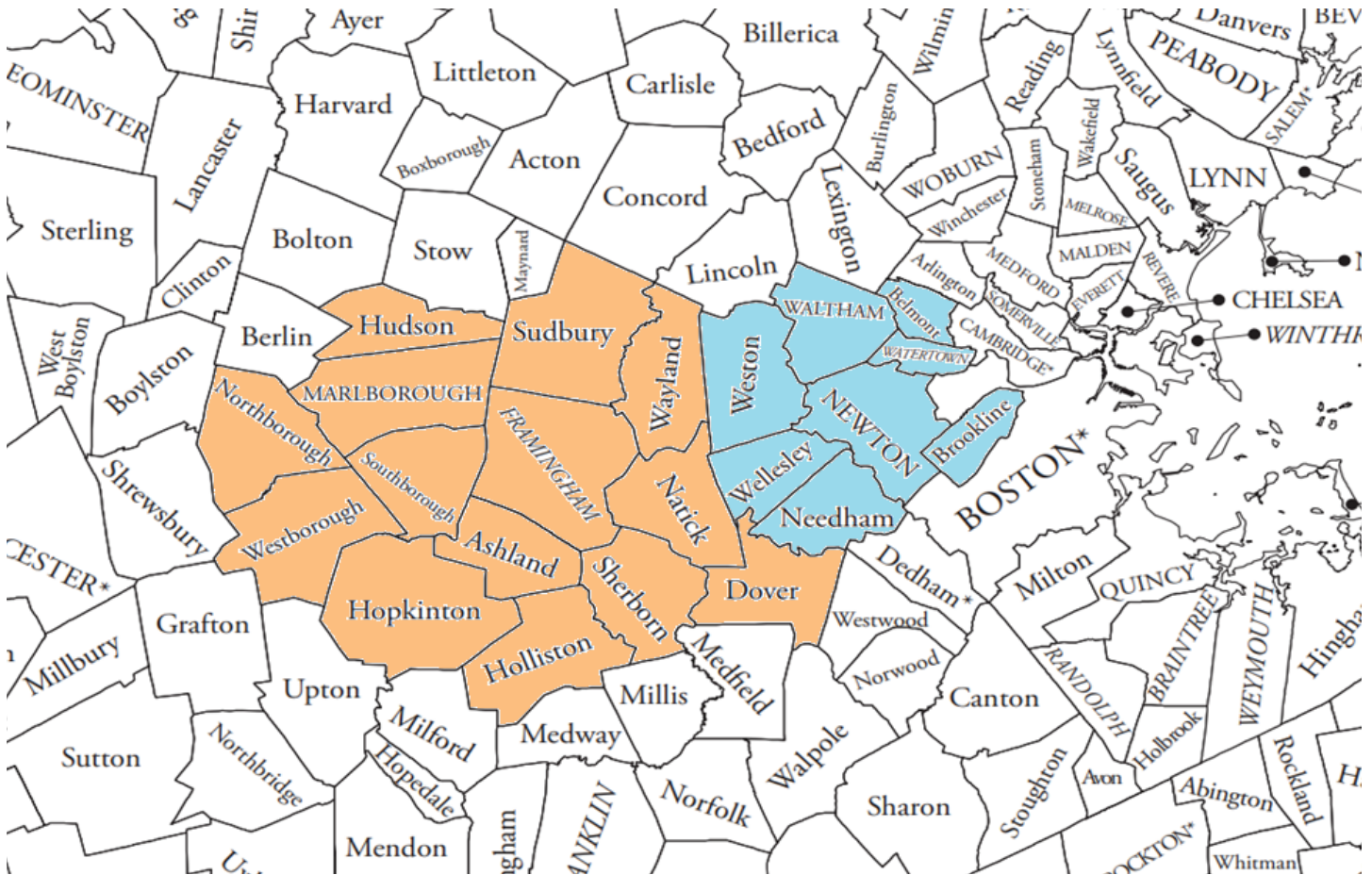
Springwell, Inc.
Area Plan on Aging
For Federal Fiscal Years 2026-2029
(October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2029)

Area Agency on Aging for
Ashland, Belmont, Brookline, Dover, Framingham,
Holliston, Hopkinton, Hudson, Marlborough, Natick,
Needham, Newton, Northborough, Sherborn,
Southborough, Sudbury, Waltham, Wayland,
Watertown, Wellesley, Westborough, Weston

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Planning & Service Area Map



MetroWest Area

Ashland
Dover
Framingham
Holliston
Hopkinton

Hudson
Marlborough
Natick
Northborough

Sherborn
Southborough
Sudbury
Wayland
Westborough

Greater Boston Area

Belmont
Brookline
Needham

Newton
Waltham

Watertown
Wellesley
Weston

Executive Summary

Introduction:

The Older Americans Act:

The Older Americans Act (OAA) was originally signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1965 and continues to be the primary federal legislation for supporting older Americans. In addition to creating the Administration on Aging, now called the Administration for Community Living (ACL), the OAA authorized grants to the states for community programs and planning, as well as for research, demonstration and training projects in the field of aging services. The OAA has been amended several times in response to the growing population of older adults and their diverse needs. Some of the services funded by the OAA include, but are not limited to, nutrition programs, services targeted at low-income minority older adults, health promotion and disease prevention workshops, in-home services for frail older adults, services which protect the rights of older persons such as the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, and programs to support family caregivers.

Title III categories and services funded by each category:

- Title IIIB— Supportive services, which includes in-home and community-based services, as well as services designed to help seniors access those supports, such as transportation.
- Title IIIC— Nutrition services, which includes home delivered meals, congregate meals, and nutrition education and counseling.
- Title IIID— Disease Prevention and Health Promotion services such as chronic disease self-management and fall prevention workshops.
- Title IIIE— Family Caregiver Support Program to provide caregivers of older adults with the support they need to continue to provide care.

Springwell's role as an Area Agency on Aging:

The ACL oversees a national aging services network of State Units on Aging (SUA) and local Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) to develop and provide community-based services that meet the needs of older adults and their caregivers. In Massachusetts, the SUA is the Executive Office of Aging & Independence (AGE), which oversees the twenty AAAs statewide.

Springwell works to heighten awareness among other agencies, organizations and the public Greater Boston & MetroWest area, about the needs of older adults, and to educate older adults and their caregivers about the benefits and services available to help them. Springwell endeavors to address the needs of all seniors and family caregivers in our area. Additional resources are utilized to reach and prioritize the delivery of services to the following populations:

1. Living Alone (Isolated) Older Adults

2. Low Income Older Adults
3. Minority Older Adult Populations
4. Rural Older Adult Populations (where germane)
5. Socially Isolated Populations (i.e., geographic in nature; LGBTQ+; limited English proficient older adults; separations from friends and family; and other socially isolated populations)
6. Native American Populations

Springwell does this by engaging in advocacy for seniors, family caregivers and their concerns, directly providing services such as nutrition, and ensuring that other critical services such as transportation and legal assistance are available through contracts with vendors, or grants awarded to other agencies.

About Springwell:

For more than forty-five years, Springwell has been creating, managing and coordinating services for older adults age sixty and over living in the communities of Belmont, Brookline, Needham, Newton, Waltham, Watertown, Wellesley, and Weston. In 2022, Springwell merged with Baypath Elder Services resulting in the addition of the communities of Ashland, Dover, Framingham, Holliston, Hopkinton, Hudson, Marlborough, Natick, Northborough, Sherborn, Southborough, Sudbury, Wayland, and Westborough. These communities make up Springwell's Planning and Service Area as an Area Agency on Aging. Springwell is a private, not-for-profit agency that recognizes our public responsibility to the communities we serve by offering our expertise, resources, leadership, and advocacy in ways that strengthen and enhance the network of aging and related services. We value our competent, dedicated, and consumer-oriented staff of professionals and volunteers. To this end, we foster a workplace environment that promotes their individual and collective growth. We are committed to the continuous improvement of all that we do. Consumer satisfaction and the objective evaluation of our efforts are primary measures of our success.

Springwell's AAA activities are specifically focused on individuals 60 years of age and over who live in its AAA Planning and Service Area (PSA) communities of Ashland, Belmont, Brookline, Dover, Framingham, Holliston, Hopkinton, Hudson, Marlborough, Natick, Needham, Newton, Northborough, Sherborn, Southborough, Sudbury, Waltham, Watertown, Wayland, Wellesley, Westborough and Weston. Title III funded programs supporting these individuals include:

- Information and Referral services
- Caregiver Consultation
- Caregiver Subsidies
- Caregiver Lending Library
- Nutrition services such as home delivered meals, community dining sites and nutrition counseling
- Volunteer-based friendly visiting, and grocery shopping assistance programs

- Long-Term Care Ombudsman visits at each rest home and nursing home in the PSA on a regular basis
- Outreach
- Legal services
- Transportation
- LGBTQIA+ Coordination
- Financial Assistance
- Evidence Based Health Promotion Programs

Springwell is designated by AGE as an Aging Services Access Point (ASAP). In this capacity, we act as a single point of entry for state-subsidized elder services for the twenty-two communities that make up our PSA. The state-subsidized programs include the Home Care Program, the Enhanced Community Options Program, and the Community Choices Program. Services provided through these programs include, but are not limited to, homemaking, personal care, and adult day health.

As an ASAP, we are also a state-designated adult protective services (PS) agency, investigating and resolving reports of elder abuse, neglect, self-neglect or financial exploitation.

Additionally, the Money Management Program at Springwell provides bill pay and representative payee services to help at-risk seniors and adults with disabilities remain independent, for as long as possible.

Lastly per ASAP designation, Springwell supports nursing home residents who want to return to the community through the Community Transitions Liaison Program (CTLTP). Community Transitions Liaisons and nurses at Springwell assist nursing home residents in their transition by providing assessments, attending discharge planning meetings, and coordinating community-based services and/or appropriate housing.

As part of ongoing efforts to support community-based living, Springwell offers on-site service coordination through the CareConnections program for public and private housing sites within the PSA. Springwell currently has two congregate housing and five supportive housing contracts with AGE, and additional contracts with private housing entities. Springwell Care Coordinators connect residents of housing programs with government-subsidized or private in-home services or supports, to assist with aging in place. Care Coordinators also build community in residences by offering regular social activities and special events.

Springwell is contracted to provide the Geriatric Support Service Coordination (GSSC) for the Senior Care Organizations (SCO) serving the PSA. The GSSCs conduct assessments for SCO clients, collaborate with SCO staff members as needed to ensure comprehensive care delivery, and coordinate

additional community-based services to support aging in place. Springwell is also contracted to provide similar service coordination for younger persons, who are dually eligible for both Medicare and MassHealth, through the state's One Care program.

Springwell continues to be a leader in local efforts to initiate and sustain partnerships with health care providers who recognize the importance of addressing the social determinants of health to promote well-being and quality of life. Springwell has a contract with Atrius Health for Community Health Workers (CHW) to address the needs of their medically complex and socially vulnerable patients at primary care offices. CHW go out into the community and advocate to help at-risk patients access resources and local programs.

Finally, Springwell is a key member of both the regional Metro Boston Aging & Disability Resource Consortium (MBADRC) and the MetroWest Aging & Disability Resource Consortium (MWADRC). MBADRC & MWADRC provide information and assistance to individuals needing either public or private resources, professionals seeking assistance on behalf of their clients, and individuals planning for their future long-term care needs. Through the MBADRC & MWADRC, Springwell provides Options Counseling to individuals of all ages, disabilities and incomes who are in need of long term services and supports, to ensure a "no wrong door" approach. Options Counselors discuss with consumers their personal goals, functional capacity, informal supports and finances, as well as explore with them the long-term care options available to meet their goals and best fit their personal circumstances.

The goal of all our efforts is to assist older persons in leading independent, healthy, meaningful and dignified lives in their own homes and communities, for as long as possible.

Arriving at Area Plan Focus Areas

ACL has established focus areas for the 2026-2029 planning period which are used to direct efforts and resources, including programs which serve the priority populations identified in the OAA. The AGE also has strategic goals in place, which are informed by ACL. As a local AAA, Springwell's Area Plan on Aging complements and supports the ACL and AGE goals, examines local needs as determined by the needs assessment findings, and considers the needs of priority populations. The ACL and AGE focus areas and Springwell's corresponding goals and strategies are as follows:

ACL FOCUS AREAS:

1. Older Americans Act Core Programs: includes Title III Supportive Services, Nutrition Services, Disease Prevention/Health Promotion and Caregiver Programs and LTC Ombudsman and Elder Rights/Protective Service Programs, and serve as the foundation of the national aging services network.
2. Greatest Economic Need and Greatest Social Need: services to be targeted to older individuals and family caregivers including older adults who are low-income, those from minority populations, LGBTQIA+, those with limited English proficiency, and those at risk of institutional care.
3. Expanding Access to Home- and Community- Based Services:
4. Caregiving

AGE GOALS:

1. Support aging in community, including supporting age-friendly and dementia-capable communities;
2. Prepare for evolving demographic trends and support the care-force;
3. Empower healthy aging;
4. Prevent injury, violence and exploitation of older adults;
5. Strengthen a "no wrong door" approach to aging and disability services;
6. Ensure quality, person-centered and community-based care through data driven, evidence-informed methods.

Springwell conducted Needs Assessment activities in the Fall of 2024 (FFY24/25). 352 people, composed of 286 older adults and 66 caregivers, responded from 21 communities within Springwell's PSA. Of these respondents, 27 language in addition to English were represented with Chinese and Russian being the largest language groups. Close to 50% of respondents reported being MassHealth members with close to 40% reporting annual income under \$20,000.

Summary of Results from Needs Assessments Conducted by Springwell in FFY2024:

The needs most commonly identified were:

Older Adults:

- In-Home Support for Maintaining Independence;
- Transportation Access & Availability;
- Access to Health Care & Affordable Health Care;
- Access to Services.

Caregivers:

- In-Home Care Services: Access to professional in-home care services to assist with caregiving tasks;
- Respite Care: Temporary relief from caregiving responsibilities;
- Financial Assistance: Help with costs related to caregiving;
- Information and Resources: Access to information and resources about caregiving and available services.

Of these needs, the needs ranked as the most important were:

Older Adults:

- In-Home Support for Maintaining Independence
- Access to Services
- Affordable Health Care

Caregivers:

- In-Home Support for Maintaining Independence
- Access to Health Care
- Affordable Health Care

Focus Areas for the 2026-2029 Area Plan on Aging
and Springwell's Goals and Strategies in support of those areas

Older Americans Act Core Programs: OAA core programs are found in Titles III (Supportive Services, Nutrition, Disease Prevention/Health Promotion and Caregiver Programs), VI (Native American Programs), and VII (Elder Rights Programs) and serve as the foundation of the aging services network. Using the NA Project data in support of programs and services, AAAs should describe plans to strengthen and expand Title III and VII services and continue integration of these core programs across the older adult network. All core programs under Title III and VII must be addressed.

- Provide information about services and benefits, and assistance with benefit applications, so that elders, adults with disabilities and their family caregivers can make informed decisions about care options and receive supports for which they are eligible.
 - Directly operate an Information & Referral department that offers a “no wrong door” experience for consumers seeking information about services and benefits for adults with disabilities, older adults and their caregivers.
 - Connect elders and adults with disabilities to the Serving Health Information Needs of Everyone (SHINE) and a Mass Health specialist to help them understand their health insurance options (i.e. Medicare).
 - Through the Family Caregiver Support Program, directly provide information, outreach and education events targeted to family caregivers. Inform family caregivers of available support groups and health education programs.
- Provide Title III D funding to empower seniors with information and tools for healthy aging, falls prevention and/or self-care strategies for caregivers.
 - Work with sub-grantees receiving Title III D funds from Springwell in maintaining evidence-based programming available to elders in various locations
- Enhance outreach efforts and increase accessibility of services to Socially Isolated and Minority Elders.
 - Outreaching to community organizations such as, Councils on Aging and Housing Authorities among others to reach social isolated and minority elders.
 - Ensure all sub-grantees receiving Title III B funds from Springwell conduct outreach to minority groups and are prepared to deliver linguistically and culturally competent services.

- Offer trainings for Springwell staff to build awareness about the cultural needs of minority groups within the PSA, especially with regard to Chinese, Latinx and Russian elders, who (respectively) represent the largest racial and linguistic minority groups served by Springwell.
- Ensure Springwell's services are accessible to consumers with limited English proficiency (LEP) by:
 - Contracting with vendors who employ direct care staff who are bi-lingual
 - Contracting with in-person and telephonic interpreters
 - Having a TTY phone and utilizing the Mass Relay service agency-wide
 - Having translated written materials available in print and on the website
 - Having bi-lingual and bi-cultural staff
 - Having prompts on the phone system in languages other than English, especially Spanish and Russian.
- Expand access and use of digital technologies
 - Assess Springwell's website accessibility and implement changes in color contrast, alt text, captions, accessible online forms, and increased keyboard navigation as needed.
 - Work to make consumers aware of the availability of technology and the training required to utilize the technology.
 - Use technologies as a means for minimizing social isolation
- Coordinate, fund and/or operate high quality, efficient transportation programs within the PSA.
 - Explore and expand upon transportation offerings to provide handicapped- accessible transportation for all seniors in the PSA, including those who need a caregiver to accompany them, to medical and/or non-medical appointments throughout PSA and in the Boston area.
 - Contract with vendors to provide medical and adult day health transportation to priority populations, especially frail, isolated, and/or low-income seniors who qualify for the various publicly subsidized and contracted programs operated by Springwell.
- Strengthen and grow health partnerships to allow for elders to access well-coordinated, affordable healthcare.
- Enhance the Nutrition Programs to reach socially isolated and minority populations.
 - Maintain and expand outreach initiatives for the congregate dining and home-delivered meals programs.

- Maintain and expand therapeutic and cultural meals offered throughout the PSA.
- Explore and expand upon cultural programs and special event offerings both at congregate dining sites and within the HDM program to encourage participation from the most socially isolated groups.
- Continue to be an active advocate for elder's rights through direct work and collaboration.
 - Directly operate the Adult Protective Services (PS) program in the Springwell PSA.
 - Receive and investigate reports of abuse, neglect, exploitation and self-neglect in these seventeen communities.
 - Provide and coordinate supportive services to elders to resolve situations putting elders at risk.
 - Collaborate with community partners, such as local police, emergency services, domestic violence agencies, local hospitals and the District Attorney's office, among others, to resolve and prevent situations of abuse, neglect or exploitation.
 - Conduct public education throughout the service area to build awareness about the signs of abuse, neglect and exploitation.
 - Maintain and expand upon outreach efforts to help prevent abuse and promote safety-plans for elders who are at-risk for exploitation.
 - Provide Title III B funding to a sub-grantee to provide legal advice, counseling and representation for low-income, minority and at-risk elders, to conduct free legal clinics at Councils on Aging in the PSA, and to offer informational presentations in the community about legal issues affecting older adults.
 - Directly operate the Long-Term Care Ombudsman program to advocate effectively for residents of all assisted living residences, nursing homes and rest homes in the PSA.
 - Maintain and enhance the Money Management Program to help resolve and prevent financial exploitation of vulnerable elders and adults with disabilities.

Greatest Economic Need and Greatest Social Need: The OAA requires services to be targeted to older individuals and family caregivers with the greatest economic need and greatest social need. Area Plans must address activities to reach those in greatest economic need and greatest social need.

- Continue to raise sensitivity and awareness of the unique needs of the LGBTQIA+ elder population.
 - Facilitate programming for the LGBTQIA+ elder population.
 - Utilizing best practices to ensure LGBT-friendly and culturally competent service delivery in all programs.
- As a member of the MWADRC & MBADRC, provide Options Counseling to persons of all ages, disabilities and incomes, providing streamlined access to person-centered information, care and services, in order to educate and empower individuals to develop and implement their own care plans for current and future needs.
- Support the growing age-friendly and dementia-capable initiatives within Springwell's PSA, by offering needs assessment data, attending listening sessions and building awareness about related events and trainings, and the benefits of age-friendly and dementia-capable communities.
- Directly operate housing-with-services sites, offering care coordination, in-home services and community-building to all residents, regardless of income or age, and operate congregate housing sites.
- Maintain and expand integrated care programs that facilitate care coordination between health care providers, Springwell, and other home and community-based services.
- Provide person-centered Geriatric Social Service Coordination to consumers living in the PSA who are enrolled in a SCO program, which are for persons who are low-income, and also serve a high percentage of minority elders and those who have limited English proficiency. Participate in interdisciplinary case conferences with these consumers' health care teams.
- Maintain and expand the Friendly Visitor Program, matching consumers with volunteers who share their interests and can provide one-on-one social support and assist with consumer-directed activities.

Expanding Access to Home- and Community-Based Services (HCBS): HCBS are fundamental to making it possible for older adults to age in place.

- Through the Vendor Services Liaison team continue to strengthen and build upon provider relationships to allow for a better understand of consumer needs to facilitate a more efficient service implementation process for consumers

- Expand upon Outreach efforts to strengthen Community Partnerships including those with Councils on Aging, Housing Authorities, etc. to best connect older adults to services that support aging independently
- Through the Benefits Support Program, assist consumers with accessing or maintaining MassHealth benefits in order to enroll in and maintain Medicaid covered HCBS.
- Continue to offer homemaking and chore services through contracts with vendors and/or provide information and referral services for low-income older adults who need assistance with sorting and removing clutter, in order to maintain their independence, quality of life and home setting of choice.
- Maintain and expand opportunities for consumers to plan and direct their own care by growing the numbers of consumers served through the consumer-directed care model of state subsidized home care and SCO programs.
- Promote the values and support the model of consumer-directed care through the Community Transition Liaison program by helping older adults and younger persons with disabilities who are transitioning from nursing homes to their community-based setting of choice.
 - Educate consumers so they can make informed decisions about alternative community options. Provide case management and nursing assessments (i.e. find suitable housing and set up services) for consumers who wish to return to the community
- Maintain and expand the Grocery Shopping Assistance program, utilizing volunteers to shop and deliver the requested groceries, or drive elders to the grocery store of their choice and provide one-on-one assistance with their shopping.

Caregiving: Address enhancing services and supports for caregivers that provide a range of support services to family and informal caregivers to assist in caring for loved ones. Focus on promoting person-centered supports and developing tools and services that address caregivers needs.

- Provide outreach to Councils on Aging, Housing Authorities and other community partners across Springwell's 22-community service area to increase awareness of the Massachusetts Family Caregiver Support Program.
- Connect with Community Health Workers and certified home care services to educate medical staff on ways to incorporate family caregivers into the care process.
- Increase respite opportunities for caregivers by identifying providers such as assisted livings, skilled nursing facilities, and home care providers providing short-term opportunities

- Through sub-grantees provide evidence-based workshops throughout the PSA to empower caregivers with information and tools for self-care strategies, including but not limited to, the Empowered Caregiver series and Powerful Tools for Caregivers.
- Distribute the Caregiver's Notebook to family caregivers who are seeking tools to help them better coordinate the elder's in-home, formal, informal, and medical care.
- Update resources on area support groups available to family caregivers

DRAFT

Attachment B: Area Agency on Aging Information Requirements

Area Agencies on Aging must provide responses, for the Area Plan on Aging (2026-2029) in support of each Older Americans Act (OAA), as amended 2020, citation as presented below. Responses can take the form of written explanations, detailed examples, charts, graphs, etc.

1. OAA Section 306 (a)(4)(A)(i)(I)

Describe the activities and methods that demonstrate that the AAA will:

- (aa) set specific objectives, consistent with State policy, for providing services to older individuals with greatest economic need, older individuals with greatest social need, and older individuals at risk for institutional placement;
- (bb) include specific objectives for providing services to low-income minority older individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas;

AAA Response:

Springwell utilizes multiple mechanisms to assure that services are targeted to older individuals with the (a) greatest economic needs and (b) greatest social needs; and who are (c) at risk for institutional placement, (d) low-income minorities; (e) limited in their English proficiency; and (f) residing in rural areas.

Those mechanisms are as follows:

1. Springwell directly operates several programs and services that are funded by the Older Americans Act, which have goals that are established through the agency's annual planning process. In addition to monitoring the sub-grantees, the AAA Planner conducts reviews at least once per federal fiscal year with all program managers and/or department heads to determine how they are conducting outreach to and serving priority populations. Title III-funded direct service programs at Springwell are as follows:
 1. Under our Nutrition Department, the Home Delivered Meals program provides Chinese or kosher meals for some consumers, to help meet their nutritional and cultural needs. Consumers who live alone and/or are homebound benefit from the regular well-being check that comes along with having a home-delivered meal. The Springwell community dining locations offer important socialization opportunities for consumers who live alone or who are otherwise socially isolated.
 2. The Information and Referral Department maintains information about a wide variety of providers and services including those with expertise serving priority populations, such as the LGBT Aging Project or the Greater Boston Chinese Golden Age Center. Information

sheets are also available in different languages, such as Armenian, Chinese, Russian and Spanish, to ensure access for the largest linguistic minorities in our PSA and include topics such as public benefits, MassHealth Programs, etc.

3. The Family Caregiver Support Program provides counseling and respite for family caregivers, who often help prevent or delay long-term care placement for consumers with complex needs.
 4. The Volunteer Services program includes friendly visiting and grocery shopping assistance, all of which are critical to serving those who are socially isolated due to language or cultural barriers, race/ethnicity, disability, or sexual orientation.
 5. Springwell's Long-term Care Ombudsman Program represents vulnerable older individuals and adults with disabilities in nursing homes and assisted living residences, who are often of great social and economic need. Ombudsmen provide advocacy to support residents in their goals, whether that is to receive better quality of care, to be discharged back to the community, etc.
 6. Springwell solicits proposals for sub-grantee funding under Title III of the Older Americans Act as funding permits to specifically meet the interests and needs of priority populations. All sub-grantee proposals are required to address how they will conduct outreach to and serve priority populations. Specific goals for serving priority populations are also included in each sub-grantee service agreement. Monitoring is conducted at least once per federal fiscal year with all sub-grantees to determine how they are conducting outreach and how many older individuals from priority populations are being served.
2. Springwell also directly operates many programs not funded by Title III, which all primarily serve priority populations. Each of these programs has goals established through the agency's annual planning process and guided by funding source expectations. These programs have income eligibility guidelines and are targeted to: low-income frail older individuals who need assistance with their activities of daily living (ADLs); persons who are clinically eligible under MassHealth (Medicaid) for nursing home level of care, and/or those financially eligible for MassHealth. These programs are also a critical way for Springwell to serve minority racial, ethnic and linguistic populations, who are often at-risk for long-term care placement and eligible for these programs due to lifelong health and financial disparities. These programs are as follows:
1. State funded Home Care Program serves low-income older individuals who need assistance with their ADLs.
 2. State funded Enhanced Community Options Program serves low-income older individuals who are at-risk for nursing home placement.
 3. Community Choices program is specifically for older individuals on MassHealth who are clinically eligible for nursing home placement.

4. Senior Care Organization (SCO) programs help older individuals who are low-income and dually eligible for MassHealth and Medicare.
 5. Community Transitions Liaison Program (CTLTP) to assist nursing home residents (or their families or representatives), who express a direct interest in returning to the community.
 6. Health care provider partnerships that address the needs of the medically complex and socially vulnerable patients within medical settings.
 7. Public Benefits Support engages low-income, socially isolated older individuals by providing in-home assistance with accessing public benefits.
 8. State and private contracts with affordable housing entities to provide on-site care coordination of in-home services to assist with aging in place, and to offer socialization opportunities for residents who are culturally or socially isolated.
3. For all Springwell services, regardless of funding source, translation and interpreter services are available, to ensure equal access to information for consumers who have limited English-speaking ability. Springwell contracts with American Translation Partners to provide in-person interpreting and translation services, and we contract with Catholic Charities for telephonic interpreting services. Some Springwell vendors hire bilingual staff who speak a variety of different languages. Springwell also directly hires bilingual and bicultural consumer services staff to help meet linguistic and cultural needs, especially within the Chinese, Russian and Spanish-speaking populations in our PSA. Springwell also solicits sub-grantees who are proficient in non-English languages prominent within the service area.

2. OAA Section 306 (a)(4)(A)(ii)

Describe the activities and methods that demonstrate that the AAA will:

(ii) provide assurances that the area agency on aging will include in each agreement made with a provider of any service under this title, a requirement that such provider will –

- (I) specify how the provider intends to satisfy the service needs of low-income minority individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas in the area served by the provider;
- (II) to the maximum extent feasible, provide services to low-income minority individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas in accordance with their need for such services; and
- (III) meet specific objectives established by the area agency on aging, for providing services to low-income minority individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas [as germane] within the planning and service area;

AAA Response:

Springwell's provider agreements are comprehensive and detail how providers (I) intend to satisfy the needs; (II) provide services; and (III) meet specific objectives established for providing services to low-income minority individuals, older individuals with limited English proficiency, and older individuals residing in rural areas. In order to ensure how and if providers are satisfying agreements made with Springwell does the following:

1. Requires monthly reporting that includes:

- a. The number of new older individuals served
- b. The communities in which new individuals reside
- c. Demographics that include the following:
 - i. Ethnicity
 - ii. Gender
 - iii. Non-English speaking
 - iv. Low-Income
 - v. Frail/Disabled
 - vi. Social Isolated
 - vii. Rural

2. Conducts, at a minimum, annual monitoring to ensure that outreach is occurring, goals are being met, and both administrative and financial records are accurate

3. OAA Section 306 (a)(4)(B)

Describe how the AAA will use outreach efforts that will:

(i) identify individuals eligible for assistance under this Act, with special emphasis on –

- (I) older individuals residing in rural areas;
- (II) older individuals with greatest economic need (with particular attention to low-income minority individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas);
- (III) older individuals with greatest social need (with particular attention to low-income minority individuals and older individuals residing in rural areas);
- (IV) older individuals with severe disabilities;
- (V) older individuals with limited English proficiency;
- (VI) older individuals with Alzheimer's disease and related disorders with neurological organic brain dysfunction (and the caretakers of such individuals); and
- (VII) older individuals at risk for institutional placement, specifically including survivors of the Holocaust;

AAA Response:

Springwell conducts outreach that is targeted at older individuals (I) residing in rural areas; (II) with the greatest economic and (III) greatest social needs; (IV) with severe disabilities; (V) with limited English proficiencies; (VI) with Alzheimer's Disease and related neurological organic brain dysfunction; and who are (VII) at risk for institutional placement.

Springwell does this by:

1. Increasing volunteer recruitment in rural communities within the PSA to connect socially isolated older adults with friendly visitors and grocery shopping assistance.
2. Ensuring contracts with providers who are able to service non-English speaking older adults.
3. Employing an Outreach Manager at Springwell who is focused on meeting with stakeholders to understand how to best serve targeted older individuals. This is done by meeting with staff at Councils on Aging, Housing Authorities, Department of Public Health, Food Pantries, and other organizations across Springwell's PSA.
4. Participating in regional health fairs and conferences including the Massachusetts Independent Living Conference.
5. Providing education to targeted older individuals on programs such as state subsidized home care, caregiver support, and money management among other resources available.
6. Providing care coordination within Housing sites. Care Coordinators reach out to every resident by distributing newsletters that highlight resources available and distributing new residents a 'new resident' handout that provides education about the Care Coordinator's role and assistance available.
7. Hosting the Community Transitions Liaison Program that conducts weekly visits to long-term care facilities with a focus on individuals who desire to transition into a community setting. Needs of these individuals include, but are not limited to, support for substance use, mental health needs, and potential immigration issues among other needs.
8. Educating community professionals on MassHealth programs such as Senior Care Options.
9. Presenting to various elder care professionals such as senior housing, hospital staff, and elder justice groups on elder abuse and neglect. Presentations to include indicators of abuse/neglect and how to report.

4. OAA Section 306 (a)(6)

Describe the mechanism(s) for assuring that the AAA will:

- (A) take into account in connection with matters of general policy arising in the development and administration of the area plan, the views of recipients of services under such plan;
- (B) serve as the advocate and focal point for older individuals within the community by (in cooperation with agencies, organizations, and individuals participating in activities under the plan) monitoring, evaluating, and commenting upon all policies, programs, hearings, levies, and community actions which will affect older individuals;

AAA Response:

Springwell takes into account the views of older individuals and service recipients in the following ways:

1. Every four years, Springwell conducts a community needs assessment throughout the PSA, to solicit input from older individuals, caregivers, and other members of the public. Needs Assessment methods include focus groups, listening sessions and surveys, to learn what older individuals need assistance with or information about, to remain in their homes and communities. The qualitative and quantitative data collected is then used to inform Springwell's Area Plan on Aging.
2. Springwell also seeks input on the Area Plan itself by posting the Plan on Springwell's website and having an open comment period, and getting feedback from AAA Advisory Council members.
3. Recipients of services directly operated by Springwell are invited to share their feedback through consumer satisfaction surveys. The survey mechanisms vary by service, but all consumers are given this opportunity. Many consumers receive a written survey, while some surveys are done over the phone or in-person.

In addition, all Title III sub-grantees are required to conduct annual surveys with their consumers. The grantees must submit to Springwell a copy of the survey instrument and a summary of the results. Consumer satisfaction surveys are part of grantee service agreements and are also discussed during on-site monitoring visits.

Springwell serves as an advocate and focal point for older individuals in the PSA through the following activities:

1. Springwell staff and/or Board members meet with local legislators as opportunities arise, to advocate for additional program funding, new services to support older individuals, or other issues impacting the senior population within the PSA. Legislative advocacy may take place at the Massachusetts State House or local sites. Springwell's Chief Executive Officer also provides legislative testimony before key committees, when applicable.

2. Springwell Board and Advisory Council members are kept informed about pending bills, votes or funding changes that could impact programs or services for older individuals. Information is also shared about how to contact local legislators to advocate for the needs of older individuals.
3. Springwell works closely with the Councils on Aging in the PSA to advocate at the municipal level about local funding for senior services, the development of new centers or services, etc.
4. Springwell maintains membership in Mass Aging Access who leads advocacy efforts of the Aging network across Massachusetts.

5. OAA Section 306 (a)(6)(I)

Describe the mechanism(s) for assuring that the Area Plan will include information detailing how the AAA will:

(I) to the extent feasible, coordinate with the State agency to disseminate information about the State assistive technology entity and access to assistive technology options for serving older individuals;

AAA Response:

Springwell is committed to ensuring older individuals are aware of the assistive technology options available, as well as, how to access these options.

1. Springwell is a member of both the MetroWest Aging & Disability Resource Consortium and the Metro Boston Aging & Disability Resource Consortium. Through this ADRC membership, Springwell staff participate in trainings provided by the Massachusetts Office of Aging & Independence and MassAbility to remain up to date on what is available and how to access it.
2. By partnering with healthcare providers, Springwell will be able to advise older adults on adaptive equipment available through health insurance.
3. Springwell's Information & Referral Department maintains resources on assistive technology including REquipment, Easterseals, and MassAbility among others.

6. OAA Section 306 (a)(7)

Describe how the AAA will address the following assurances:

(7) provide that the area agency on aging shall, consistent with this section, facilitate the area-wide development and implementation of a comprehensive, coordinated system for providing long-term

care in home and community-based settings, in a manner responsive to the needs and preferences of older individuals and their family caregivers, by –

(A) collaborating, coordinating activities, and consulting with other local public and private agencies and organizations responsible for administering programs, benefits, and services related to providing long-term care;

(B) conducting analyses and making recommendations with respect to strategies for modifying the local system of long-term care to better –

(i) respond to the needs and preferences of older individuals and family caregivers;

(ii) facilitate the provision, by service providers, of long-term care in home and community-based settings; and

(iii) target services to older individuals at risk for institutional placement, to permit such individuals to remain in home and community-based settings;

(C) implementing, through the agency or service providers, evidence-based programs to assist older individuals and their family caregivers in learning about and making behavioral changes intended to reduce the risk of injury, disease, and disability among older individuals;

AAA Response:

Springwell collaborates with numerous local agencies that provide long-term services and supports, which include the following:

1. Springwell has an extensive network of contracted vendors who deliver a wide variety of services to older individuals in the PSA, including adult day health, homemaking, personal care services, transportation, adaptive equipment, respite care for family caregivers, personal emergency response systems, shopping, laundry, heavy chore services, etc.
2. Springwell frequently collaborates on individual cases with local visiting nurse associations, hospice agencies and other health care providers who deliver services in the home of older individuals who are also receiving services from Springwell.
3. The local Councils on Aging and other municipal departments such as health departments or housing authorities, are also collaborative partners for coordinating services.
4. Springwell works with many local organizations that offer specialized services, such as bi-lingual/bi-cultural providers, disease or disability-specific organizations like the Alzheimer's Association, and/or faith-based community centers. Through our case management or information & referral departments, contracts or Title III grantees, Springwell refers and links consumers and family caregivers to these specialized providers.
5. Springwell partners with local providers, who offer evidence-based disease prevention and health promotion programs in the PSA to provide opportunities for consumers to learn different techniques for maintaining their health, preventing injury or hospitalizations, or reducing their

level of disability through exercise or healthy eating. Workshops are offered both in-person and virtually throughout the PSA at physician offices, Councils on Aging, housing sites and other accessible locations.

Springwell conducts analyses and make recommendations with respect to strategies for modifying the local system of long-term care to better in multiple ways.

1. Springwell's Quality & Compliance Department, inclusive of the Vendor Services Liaison team, analyzes survey data, constituent feedback forms, requests for services and service deliveries while working with other departments and the vendor agencies to increase service provision and ensure it's provided in a consumer-centered manner.
2. Springwell's Options Counseling program reviews trends in consumer needs to determine resources and supports that will allow older adults to remain in home can community-based settings.
3. Through surveys in both the caregiver program and options counseling program, Springwell will identify the needs and preferences of older individuals and caregivers to drive service delivery within the programs.

Springwell solicits proposals for sub-grantee funding under Title III of the Older Americans Act to implement evidence-based programming.

7. OAA Section 306 (a)(10)

Provide the policy statement and procedures for assuring that the AAA will:

(10) provide a grievance procedure for older individuals who are dissatisfied with or denied services under this title;

AAA Response:

Springwell has a written policy and procedure in place for eligible individuals who are dissatisfied or denied services that are funded under Title III, whether those services are directly delivered by Springwell or by its Title III grantees. Springwell requires its Title III sub-grantees to have a written grievance policy, as part of their service agreement.

8. OAA Section 306 (a)(11)

Describe the procedures for assuring the AAA will:

(11) provide information and assurances concerning services to older individuals who are Native Americans (referred to in this paragraph as "older Native Americans"), including –

(A) information concerning whether there is a significant population of older Native Americans in the planning and service area and if so, an assurance that the area agency on aging will pursue activities,

including outreach, to increase access of those older Native Americans to programs and benefits provided under this title;

(B) an assurance that the area agency on aging will, to the maximum extent practicable, coordinate the services the agency provides under this title with services provided under title VI; and

(C) an assurance that the area agency on aging will make services under the area plan available, to the same extent as such services are available to older individuals within the planning and service area, to older Native Americans;

AAA Response:

Springwell will provide information and assurances concerning services to older Native Americans including whether there is a significant population in the PSA and if so, will pursue activities including outreach, and assurances of coordination of services.

1. Through the Nutrition Program, Springwell will provide home delivered meals and congregate dining opportunities to older Native Americans.
2. Through the State Home Care Program, Springwell will provide services to older Native Americans.
3. Through the Information & Referral Department, Springwell will connect older Native Americans to resources and referrals as requested.
4. Springwell will explore outreach opportunities to older Native Americans through organizations such as Native Life Lines, North American Indian Center of Boston, and the Massachusetts Center for Native American Awareness.

9. OAA Section 306 (a)(17)

Describe the mechanism(s) for assuring that the AAA will:

(17) include information detailing how the area agency on aging will coordinate activities, and develop long-range emergency preparedness plans, with local and State emergency response agencies, relief organizations, local and State governments, and any other institutions that have responsibility for disaster relief service delivery;

AAA Response:

Springwell has a number of policies and procedures in place that outline how Springwell will coordinate activities with other agencies and organizations that are involved in providing emergency response and disaster relief. These were developed in conjunction with workgroups chaired by the local health departments in the PSA, and included first responders and other agencies in the community that serve at-risk populations. The policies were also informed by guidelines and

regulations issued by the MA Department of Public Health, the Executive Office of Aging & Independence (AGE), and the Executive Office of Health and Human Services. The documents cover Springwell's role throughout different stages, from advance planning to response during an emergency, to providing disaster relief, and address times when Springwell is a primary responder or a secondary or on-call responder. These policies and procedures combine to form our Emergency Preparedness Plan and include the following:

1. Springwell staff is available in case of an emergency 24-hours per day. As a standard practice, Springwell has an on-call system in place. During regular business hours there are designated on-call staff. When an older individual or caregiver calls the office after 5pm, an answering service with trained personnel will answer and assess the situation. If it is an emergency situation, the person on-call is notified and gets in touch with the caller and responds appropriately, up to and including going to the caller's home if necessary.
2. Originally designed to be activated in the event of a widespread Flu pandemic, the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) also includes Contingency Plans and Resources for other types of Disasters, which details Essential Functions, Order of Succession, Delegation of Authority, Personnel Responsibilities and more. Springwell's COOP also includes a communications plan with consumers and the general public, and measures to protect vital records and ensure continuity of computer operations.
3. Springwell has risk identification procedures in place per AGE regulations to identify consumers ahead of time who may need education from their Case Manager regarding emergency preparedness. The at-risk consumers receive assistance with developing back-up care plans in the event of an emergency, which can include the provision of shelf-stable meals from Springwell's nutrition program. Contracted vendor agencies are made aware of the priority consumers and their priority needs. The consumers are contacted directly by their Case Manager in times of active or potential emergencies, including but not limited to emergencies caused by extreme heat or inclement weather.
4. Springwell has a back-up plan in the event that SAMS, the web-based consumer database, shuts down or is otherwise not accessible. While the SAMS provider takes primary responsibility for protecting their servers, Springwell has taken additional steps to ensure that staff have procedures in place to continue to support consumers.
5. Springwell has written Mutual Aid Agreements in place with other ASAP/AAAs, including Minuteman Elder Services, in case our staff and/or building are not available.
6. Building Evacuation, Emergency Communications and Remote Work policies and procedures can be implemented if there is a localized issue preventing staff from entering the building, returning to the building from the field, and/or leaving their neighborhood to report to work. All staff work

on a Virtual Desktop which allows for working from any location, at any time when a secure internet connection is available.

10.OAA Section 307 (a)(11)

In alignment with State Plan assurances, the AAA assures that case priorities for legal assistance will concentrate on the following:

(E) ...contains assurances that area agencies on aging will give priority to legal assistance related to income, health care, long-term care, nutrition, housing, utilities, protective services, defense of guardianship, abuse, neglect, and age discrimination.

AAA Response:

Springwell has practices in place, to ensure that legal assistance providers prioritize income, health care, long-term care, nutrition, housing, utilities, protective services, defense of guardianship, abuse, neglect, and age discrimination.

Springwell solicits proposals from legal service providers that are able to address issues such as eviction, credit issues, etc. Recipients of grants are asked to report on the types of assistance they are providing to older individuals and this is logged to ensure that priority is given. During annual monitoring visits of legal assistance providers, they are asked to expand upon the types of assistance they are providing and their outreach efforts and explicitly state that they provide legal aid to seniors on priority topics.

Excerpt from Council on Aging Newsletter:

METROWEST LEGAL SERVICES LEGAL CLINIC On the last Thursday of each month (this month on April 24) from 12:00-3:00 pm, schedule a private, FREE half hour legal appointment PHONE consultation. MetroWest Legal Services provides free legal aid to seniors on housing, public beneuts and social security matters; durable power of attorney, health care proxy and simple probate matters; Medicaid, nursing home issues, limited domestic relations; consumer issues and bankruptcy.