

Report on the Response of The Department For The Aging To House Bill 110 (2006) Concerning the Impact of The Aging Population

PREFACE

The 2006 General Assembly enacted legislation to amend the *Code of Virginia* relative to state agency strategic plans. Provisions in Chapter 54 of the 2006 Acts of Assembly were intended to establish criteria for those plans, including content, measurements and timeframes. The amendment (§ 2.2-5510-A.4) expands those criteria as follows:

A. Each agency shall develop and maintain a strategic plan for its operations. The plan shall include:

“.....4. An analysis of the impact that the aging of the population will have on its ability to deliver services and a description of how the agency is responding to these changes. Based on guidance from the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, each agency shall report by October 1 of each year to the Governor and to the General Assembly its progress for addressing the impact of the aging of the population in at least five specific actions.”

In accordance with additional guidance from the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, this report contains an analysis of the impact of the aging population on the Virginia Department for the Aging and the agency's response.

INTRODUCTION

Projected changes in the demographic profile of Virginia into the early decades of the 21st century will impact every facet of life for both the young and old, particularly in the areas of health care, education, transportation, employment, and retirement. By the year 2020, 25% of all Virginians will be age 60 and older. Many --- but not all --- will be healthier, better educated, and more financially secure than their parents and grandparents and will be able to use their wisdom and experience to help the generations that follow. On the other hand, there will be three times as many Virginians age 85 and older, a group most likely to need community support at home or high quality, cost-effective care in long-term care facilities.

THE DEMOGRAPHIC IMPERATIVE

The 2000 population census reported 1,065,502 persons age 60 and over in Virginia, comprising 15.1 percent of the total population. Older Virginians' share of the total population varies across the Commonwealth among the 25 local Area Agencies on Aging (AAA), ranging from 7.6 to 23.7 percent of the total population. The oldest, most frail group of older Virginians (age 85 and older) comprises roughly 8 percent of the total

population age 60 and older. However, the oldest group's share of the total older population ranges from a low of 5.5 percent in Prince William County to a high of 11 in Alexandria.

Virginia's older population (those age 60 and over) increased by 17.1 percent between 1990 and 2000, from 909,906 to 1,065,502 persons. The number of older Virginians of racial and ethnic minority groups (i.e. all non-whites and white Hispanics) grew at twice the rate of older white, non-Hispanic Virginians over the decade, reflecting the increasing diversity of the total population. Virginia's population age 60 and under is comprised of a higher percentage (68.4 percent) of minority and Hispanic persons than the population over the age of 60 (80.1 percent), reflecting greater racial and ethnic diversity in Virginia's younger population. As Virginia's population continues to age, the racial and ethnic composition of its older population will more closely resemble the greater racial and ethnic diversity of today's younger population.

Almost 20 percent of Older Virginians are a racial or ethnic minority. However, the racial and ethnic diversity of Virginia's older population is unevenly distributed geographically among the 25 AAAs. The black, non-Hispanic population comprises the largest minority group among the elderly (15.5 percent of the total), followed by the Asian, non-Hispanic population (2.1 percent). The black, non-Hispanic minority population comprised greater than 95 percent of the older minority population in "Southside" Virginia and on the "Eastern Shore". In contrast, in the far Southwest part of the state and much of Northern Virginia, black non-Hispanic elderly make up less than 50 percent of the minority elderly population, while the Asian non-Hispanic elderly make up much larger shares.

VIRGINIA'S CHALLENGE

A tidal wave is approaching Virginia! A virtual tsunami of aging citizens will sweep over the Commonwealth by 2030. It is projected that by the year 2030 we will have 1.3 million more older Virginians than we had in 2000. This will be an increase of 120%. Today, older citizens comprise 15% of the Commonwealth's population, but this will increase to 22% by 2020 and to 25% by 2030. This means that one in every four Virginians will be age 60 or older with the greatest growth rate among those persons 80 years of age or older.

So what does this growth mean for the Commonwealth, particularly for those state agencies that provide services most often used by older and disabled citizens? The raw numbers suggest that an aging population will likely increase the demand and the cost of currently-provided state (as well as local) agency services. Yet today, state and local agency staff report being unable to meet even current levels of service demand much less an increase in future demands. And on top of that, agency staff as well as older citizens, characterize Virginia's approach to service delivery as a "patchwork" or fragmented system of care.

A series of studies over the past decade have documented the fragmentation of services for older Virginians. These include studies by the Secretary of Health and Human Resources in 1992, the Joint Commission on Health Care in 1998, and the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission in 1999 and 2006.

THE CURRENT CAPACITY OF THE AGING NETWORK

The Virginia Department for the Aging (VDA) is the Commonwealth's designated state unit on aging as required by the Older Americans Act and the federal Administration on Aging. As one of 57 state units on aging in the nation, the department is responsible for planning, coordinating, funding, and evaluating programs for older Virginians made possible through funding from both the Older Americans Act and from the Virginia General Assembly. These programs, provided by the 25 local AAAs (see list and map attached) and their subcontractors include a range of nutrition, transportation, health, education, and social services to improve the quality of life for older Virginians. The department also provides counseling, assistance, and referral related to legal issues, consumer fraud, and long-term care.

Total Clients Served

As one network within the long-term care service system, VDA and the 25 local AAAs provided services to 59,196 Virginians aged 60 and older during the fiscal year which ended 9/30/05. At the request of the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, we are also providing numbers of clients served for the following specific age categories:

Ages 65-74	15,829 clients
Ages 75-84	25,531 clients
Ages 85 and older	16,042 clients

Note that both federal and state funding for services to older Virginians use 60 as the age of eligibility.

Critical Services Provided

The AAAs reported providing the following units of service to the following clients for eight (8) critical community-based services for the fiscal year ending 9/30/05:

<u>Service Activity</u>	<u>Clients Served</u>	<u>Service Units</u>	<u>Service Costs</u>
Home Delivered Meals	13,827	2.63 million meals	\$10,716,000
Congregate (Group) Meals	16,818	905 thousand meals	\$7,474,000
Transportation	8,236	529,720 one-way trips	\$5,065,000
Information & Referral	19,471	150,823 contacts	\$3,455,000
Care Coordination	2,649	43,682 hours	\$2,770,000
Homemaker Services	2,404	159,654 hours	\$2,385,000
Adult Day Care	375	156,539 hours	\$2,199,000

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Personal Care	1,157	163,958 hours	\$2,108,000
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Unmet Demand for Services

The demand for services from AAAs continues to rise each year and the demand continues to exceed the capacity of the network to provide the needed services. AAAs submit regular reports to VDA of the demand for six core services which they are unable to meet due to insufficient funding. This “unmet demand” report lists the numbers of actual persons who have applied for one of six core services, been determined to be eligible and in need of the service, but who were placed on a waiting list or otherwise failed to receive the amount of needed service because the AAA did not have the funding. The most recent report for the single month of April, 2006 provided the following figures on unmet demand:

Adult Day Care	88 persons unserved and 39 underserved
Home Delivered Meals	894 persons unserved and 3,236 underserved
Homemaker Services	1,206 persons unserved and 635 underserved
Personal Care Services	309 persons unserved and 396 underserved
Residential Repair Services	627 persons unserved and 7 underserved
Transportation	520 persons unserved and 755 underserved

Current Agency Programs

VDA and the AAAs provide a range of services designed to meet the unique needs of the older citizens living in the various and diverse regions and communities found throughout the Commonwealth. As a result, services may vary from Northern Virginia to Southwestern Virginia or Southside Virginia. The aging network provides the following general categories of services depending upon the location:

- *Health Care/Wellness* services include Personal Care services, Nutrition services (congregate and home delivered meals), Homemaker services, Adult Day Care services, Case Management/Care Coordination services, Residential Repair and Renovation services, Disease Prevention and Health Promotion services, Ombudsman services, as well as services through the Virginia Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program (VICAP) including prescription drug assistance counseling and Medicare Part D counseling.
- *Education* services include Information, Referral, and Access services, Counseling and Referral around the Senior Citizens Higher Education Act, and counseling through VICAP.
- *Public Safety* services include Crime Prevention Counseling, Education, and Outreach programs. The network also provides limited legal assistance services and counseling.

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- *Recreation* services include Recreation and Socialization services at congregate nutrition sites, community centers, and adult day care centers.
- *Financial Security (including Housing)* services include Money Management services, Public Guardianship services, Home Equity Conversion counseling, general counseling and referral around safe & affordable housing, and counseling through VICAP. The network also provides limited legal assistance services and counseling.
- *Transportation* services include both fixed route and on-demand transportation programs that carry older persons to the doctor, grocery store, pharmacy, and other locations in their community.

Publications and Websites

VDA provides more than forty publications targeted to the needs of older Virginians and their families including:

- A Consumers Guide to Long-Term Care in Virginia.
- Tools for Life Planning (Wills & Advanced Directives).
- Guardianship and Conservatorship in Virginia booklet.
- Choosing a Dementia Special Care Unit booklet.
- Long-Term Care Provider Directory (list of licensed health care facilities, assisted living facilities, adult day care centers, and home health agencies).
- Preventing Suicide Among the Aging in Virginia brochure.
- Preparing for Severe Weather pamphlet.
- West Nile Virus pamphlet.
- Retirement and Finances booklet.
- Monthly Personal Health Care Journal.
- A Guide for Grandparents Caring for their Grandchildren.
- Dementia and Driving brochure.
- Tax Relief for Older and Disabled Virginians.
- A Resource Guide to Home Care in Virginia.

Publications are available by calling VDA's toll free phone number (1-800-552-3402), through the VDA website, or by FAX or written request.

VDA has two websites for older Virginians and their families. The VDA website at www.vda.virginia.gov which contains information about Virginia's aging network and the various programs and services available to older Virginians. It also contains a downloadable copy of all our publications.

VDA also sponsors www.GrandDriver.net. This website has information about aging and driving and is designed to help older drivers, their families, and their health care providers with information about staying safe and mobile.

THE FUTURE OF AGING IN VIRGINIA

The following critical actions should guide Virginia's preparations to serve an aging Commonwealth:

- **Virginia will implement a No Wrong Door approach to federal and state-funded long-term care services**
 - ✓ VDA, working with the Secretary of Health and Human Resources, will lead the development of a No Wrong Door approach to long-term support services for aging and disabled Virginians (as recommended in HJR 657 from the 2005 legislative session).
 - ✓ To achieve this goal, VDA will work with the Secretary to provide leadership to the Statewide Advisory Council for the Integration of Community-Based Services (SACICS).
 - ✓ Working with the members of SACICS, VDA will coordinate the Commonwealth's efforts to address the impending barriers to a No Wrong Door approach (including confidentiality issues, data sharing, multiple funding streams and eligibility requirements, etc.).
 - ✓ VDA will continue to provide leadership and coordination for the *Aging and Disability Resource Center* (ADRC) grant that provides funding to pilot test a No Wrong Door Approach in selected local communities.
- **Virginia will provide funding for local Area Agencies on Aging to address their waiting lists for critical services.**
 - ✓ Many of Virginia's 25 local AAAs have more eligible frail older persons apply for services than they can afford to serve. Once an AAA has filled all its available service slots, eligible applicants are placed on a waiting list for services. .
 - ✓ AAAs are seeking additional state general funds to address these waiting lists. Additional funding would be used to provide additional meals for frail, homebound older persons (nutrition services) and core community-based services to support independent living and avoid inappropriate institutionalization.
- **Virginia will encourage all citizens to plan for their future to assure a healthy and financially secure old age.**
 - ✓ Research shows that many younger and middle-aged persons do not want to think about their future long-term support needs and therefore fail to

plan appropriately. If individuals and families are more aware of their potential need for long-term support and services as they age, they are more likely to take steps to prepare for their future.

- ✓ From a public policy perspective, increased planning for long-term support will likely increase private financing for services, and may reduce the burden on publicly-funded programs.
- ✓ Virginians can “own their future” by preparing for their future long-term support needs. They can purchase long-term care insurance or otherwise engage in financial planning activities that will ensure their ability to purchase needed long-term support services when the time comes.
- ✓ VDA will promote personal responsibility for planning for one’s aging and retirement through the Own Your Future educational campaign.

IMPACT OF THE AGING OF THE POPULATION ON VDA’S WORKFORCE

VDA employee demographics are compared with statewide-classified demographics. The comparison reflects the nature and level of the work performed by VDA staff, as well as the level of experience and expertise required for staff to perform that work effectively. The average length of state service of current classified employees statewide in January 2007 was 11.6 years. The average length of service for VDA employees is 13.8 years down from 15.2 years in July 2005. Fourteen or 67% employees have less than 25 years of service; seven employees or 33% have 25 or more years of service. This is up from only 5 employees having 25 years or more years of service in July 2005.

Based on current service, VDA has five employees that are eligible for retirement at an unreduced benefit this year. Within 5 years (2012), nine (43%) current employees will be eligible for retirement. Fortunately there is a gap where no employee between 5 (2013) and 10 years (2018), will be eligible for an unreduced retirement benefit. VDA’s percentage is significantly higher than the state average where in June 2006, 8.8% of the state workforce was eligible for retirement with unreduced benefits.

VDA has five employees with more than 30 years of service. It is reasonable to expect some of them to seek retirement within the next few years. When an employee leaves the agency, the Commissioner, Chief Deputy, Division Director including the Director of Administrative Services if different, meet to establish/review the staffing needs of the Department. This review includes the identification of work to be performed and skill sets needed.

The Department has identified five key positions. They are the Commissioner – Linda Nablo, the Chief Deputy Commissioner – Debbie Burcham, and division directors Tim Catherman, Kathy Miller, and Leonard Eshmont. These positions meet regularly to

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ensure everyone is aware of important activities, they cover each other when one is out of the office and regularly review each other's work.