

All Ages, All Stages NC

A Roadmap for Aging and Living Well

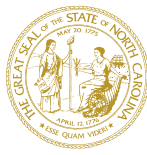


All Ages, All Stages NC Year One Report

2025-2026



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Aging



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

JOSH STEIN
GOVERNOR

DEVPUTTA SANGVAI
SECRETARY

October 12, 2026

A Message from the Secretary

Dear North Carolinians:

North Carolina is experiencing a significant demographic shift that will shape our state for decades to come. More people are living longer, and the decisions we make today about health, housing, transportation, employment, caregiving, financial security, and our communities will influence how North Carolinians live, work, and age for generations.

All Ages, All Stages NC (AAAS-NC) provides a framework for responding to this opportunity together. As North Carolina's 10-year multisector plan for aging, AAAS-NC recognizes that aging is not the responsibility of one agency, one system, or one generation. It is a shared responsibility across state government, local government, communities, businesses, nonprofit organizations, and residents.

The Year One report reflects an important first step in that work. During 2025-2026, North Carolina moved from planning toward implementation by establishing cross-sector governance structures, activating 12 implementation subgroups, advancing 41 strategic action steps, and developing tools to track progress and strengthen accountability. Across the state, partners also advanced work related to home and community-based services, caregiving, workforce development, financial security, housing, transportation, social connection, adult protective services, and other factors that shape quality of life across the lifespan.

Just as important, Year One demonstrated what is possible when organizations work beyond traditional program and agency boundaries. State agencies and community partners contributed to shared priorities through both AAAS-NC-led initiatives and work already underway within their own missions. This approach reflects the intent of Executive Order 280 and reinforces the importance of continued collaboration across state government and throughout our communities.

The work ahead is substantial. North Carolina's aging population, workforce needs, demand for home and community-based services, caregiving responsibilities, and changing community needs require sustained attention and coordination. No single agency can address these issues alone. The systems that influence how people age are interconnected, and our response must be as well.

As AAAS-NC moves into Year Two and continues toward its 10-year vision, our focus will increasingly shift from establishing infrastructure to strengthening alignment, measuring outcomes, and coordinating implementation across agencies and sectors. We will continue to build stronger connections among health and human services, housing, transportation, workforce, economic security, technology, community development, and other areas that affect the lives of North Carolinians across the lifespan.

WWW.NCDHHS.GOV

TEL 919-855-4800 • FAX 919-715-4645

MAILING ADDRESS: 2001 MAIL SERVICE CENTER • RALEIGH, NC 27699-2000

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

This report is both a reflection on what we have accomplished and a foundation for the work ahead. Continued progress will require sustained leadership, shared accountability, strong partnerships, and the participation of more sectors of North Carolina's government and communities.

I thank the state agencies, local governments, organizations, professionals, advocates, older adults, family caregivers, and community members who contributed to Year One. Their participation demonstrates that preparing for North Carolina's future is a shared effort.

Together, we can continue building a North Carolina where people of all ages have opportunities to live healthy, connected, productive, and meaningful lives in the communities they call home.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Sangvai', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Devdutta Sangvai, MD, JD, MBA
Secretary

Executive Summary

Building the Foundational Progress Across Four Goals

[All Ages, All Stages NC \(AAAS-NC\)](#) entered its first year of implementation in 2025-2026, beginning the transition from a statewide aging strategy to coordinated action. As North Carolina's 10-year multisector plan for aging, AAAS-NC brings state agencies, local governments, community organizations, businesses, and other partners together around a shared goal: creating communities, systems, and policies that support people of all ages as they live, work and age in North Carolina.

Within this context, AAAS-NC achieved foundational progress across all strategic focus areas, functioning as a coordinating infrastructure to align disparate initiatives under a unified strategic framework in Year 1. Rather than treating aging as the responsibility of a single agency or program, AAAS-NC established a cross-sector, whole-of-government approach, engaging state agencies across sectors, and whole-of-community approach, engaging local governments, community organizations, businesses and residents to advance priorities that span health and well-being, housing, workforce, financial security, caregiving, transportation and community supports.

Establishing the Infrastructure for Collective Action

During Year 1, the initiative established the governance and coordination structures needed to support implementation over the full 10-year planning period. Twelve cross-sector implementation subgroups were activated to advance priority actions, bringing together partners from across state government and the broader community.

This structure created a mechanism for partners to move from shared priorities to coordinated action. It also provided a way to identify areas where existing programs and initiatives could be better aligned, reduce duplication, strengthen partnerships and identify opportunities for additional action.

Implementation also began across the 41 action steps identified for the first phase of the plan. The launch of an implementation tracker and dashboard provided additional tools for monitoring progress, communicating activities and strengthening accountability over time.

Administrative and Policy Context

Year 1 implementation occurred within a dynamic policy environment shaped by:

- Evolving federal aging and Medicaid policy expectations
- State-level priorities under Executive Order 280 (Age-Friendly NC)
- Workforce constraints across health and human services sectors
- Increasing demand for home and community-based services (HCBS)
- Growing need for integrated data systems and cross-sector service navigation

Within this context, AAAS-NC functioned as a coordinating infrastructure to align disparate initiatives under a unified strategic framework.

Executive Visibility and Cross-Agency Alignment

A major milestone during Year 1 was the Older Americans Month proclamation event, led by Governor Josh Stein, state Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Dev Sangvai, and the Governor's Advisory Council Chair, Bill Lamb. This event served as a formal reinforcement of aging policy as a statewide executive priority and strengthened interagency alignment across cabinet-level departments.

This executive engagement contributed to:

- Increased visibility of aging priorities within state planning processes
- Strengthened cross-agency accountability for implementation actions
- Reinforcement of AAAS-NC as a shared governance framework across state government

Year 1 System-Level Outcome

By the end of Year 1, AAAS-NC had established the core infrastructure needed to support long-term implementation. Key accomplishments included:

- Activated 12 cross-sector implementation subgroups and launched progress tracking across 41 strategic action steps.
- Engaged students statewide through the Future Self Contest to combat ageism and convened more than 270 participants for a statewide Ageism Awareness Day event, which spotlighted best practices for addressing ageism from all 16 Area Agencies on Aging/100 counties.
- Launched the Money Monday financial education webinar series (April 2026), delivering accessible financial tools that strengthen economic stability across the lifespan.
- Collected statewide workforce data from 199 agencies through the National Core Indicators State of the Workforce Survey, giving North Carolina clear benchmarks to understand critical workforce needs and compare performance with other states.
- Advanced stronger alignment of NC policies with the Older Americans Act Final Rule Update, improving consistency and strengthening protections for older North Carolinians across programs and services.
- Leveraging existing work with DIT as well as promoting the Social Bridging NC website, which has already received over 1,100 unique visitors in 2026.
- Expanded the NC Caregiver Portal to over 3,400 registered users.
- Published Phase 1 of the Universal Design Housing Toolkit to advance accessible community housing.
- Partner-led AAAS-NC recommendations:
 - Delivered 203 SHIP Medicare 101 presentations, reaching 3,078 participants with cost-saving coverage education.
 - Reduced Adult Protective Services (APS) county response times by over half (from 3.8 days to 1.6 days), serving 13,000+ vulnerable individuals.

Looking Ahead to Year 2

In Year 2, AAAS-NC will build on the foundation established during its first year by focusing on greater alignment, coordination, and collective impact across state agencies and partners. The initiative will move from establishing the structures needed for implementation toward strengthening collaboration and advancing key priorities, including greater coordination across health, housing, workforce, caregiving, financial security and service navigation systems. This next phase will emphasize measurable progress and continued system-level change to support North Carolinians across the lifespan.

AAAS-NC Strategic Framework

AAAS-NC organizes North Carolina's multisector approach to aging around four interconnected goal areas. Together, these areas recognize that the experience of aging is shaped by economic security, health and well-being, family and community support and the places where people live.

Strategic Goal Area	Focus Priorities	Intended Direction
Affording Aging	- Potential of All Older Adults - Workforce Integration - Financial Security & Stability	Strengthen economic security and opportunities for older adults to remain engaged in the workforce, contribute to their communities and achieve financial stability across the life course.
Optimizing Health & Well-Being	- Long-Term Services & Supports (LTSS) - Workforce	Strengthen access to coordinated, affordable health and long-term services and supports while addressing workforce capacity and system-level barriers.
Supporting Older Adults & Families	- Home & Community-Based Services (HCBS) - Family Caregiver Support	Expand access to community-based supports, strengthen caregiver resources and improve coordination across systems that serve older adults and families.
Strengthening Communities for a Lifetime	- Housing - Adult Protective Services (APS) - Age-Friendly/Livable Neighborhoods	Support safe, accessible, and affordable communities where people can remain connected, independent and engaged throughout their lives.

These four goal areas are interconnected. Progress in one area can affect outcomes in others. For example, access to affordable housing can influence health, financial security, and the ability to remain in the community. Workforce participation can affect financial security while also strengthening the workforce needed to provide health and caregiving services.

For this reason, AAAS-NC implementation is designed to encourage coordination across priorities rather than treating each goal area as a separate workstream.

Year 1 Milestones and Key Accomplishments

Whole-of-Community: Subgroup Implementation Updates

The 41 recommended action steps, linked in the All Ages, All Stages NC Takealong Document, were advanced through 12 implementation subgroups, bringing together public and private stakeholders to support coordinated, community-level solutions.

Goal: Affording Aging

- The **Ageism and Engagement** subgroup organized its work into three tactical areas and used focus groups to shape action plans around volunteer engagement and employment opportunities. The subgroup also leveraged existing resources, including the 100th Day of School Curriculum, and launched Phase II of the “I’m Still Here” public awareness campaign.
- The **Financial Security** subgroup focused on advancing strategies to improve long-term financial security and retirement readiness. In Year 1, the subgroup advanced groundwork related to the NC Work and Save framework and launched the Money Monday webinar series to increase financial literacy and benefits awareness.

Goal: Optimizing Health and Well-being

- The **Long-Term Care Costs and Medicare** subgroup expanded educational networks for older adults and family members, successfully delivering 203 SHIP Medicare 101 presentations to 3,078 participants to increase understanding of Medicare coverage and available cost-saving resources.

- The **Health and Well-being** subgroup began development of a statewide website to house a resource guide for people living in North Carolina and managing chronic conditions that makes programs more visible and supports greater awareness of available resources.

Goal: Supporting Older Adults and Their Families

- **Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS):** Drafted administrative policy guidelines and operational standards that align North Carolina aging programs with modernized federal Older Americans Act (OAA) rules. These guidelines ensure state compliance while expanding flexibilities for older adults.
- **Caregiver:** Secured ongoing funding to maintain the NC Caregiving Portal, ensuring 3,400 families can easily find reliable, vetted localized resources.
- **Referrals and Access:** The No Wrong Door governance body is working to make it easier for people to find and access the services and supports they need, regardless of where they enter the system. It established two supporting workgroups: one focused on person-centered counseling, and another focused on connecting referrals and information technology systems so referrals and information can follow the person across access points.

Goal: Strengthening Communities for a Lifetime

- The **Housing** subgroup published Phase 1 of the Universal Design Housing Toolkit in May 2026, providing developers, builders, and local planning partners with guidance for incorporating accessibility and age-inclusive design into housing.
- The **Age-Friendly** subgroup focused on the critical, interconnected impact of transportation and food access. The group launched an internal preliminary environmental scan to map food assistance programs and transit barriers across rural and urban communities. This subgroup also continues to work with counties and AARP to support more communities in becoming age-friendly destinations.
- The **Social Bridging** subgroup leveraged existing work with the NC Department of Information Technology (DIT) to advance digital connection for older adults. The subgroup developed promotional flyers for community-based organizations and consumers, contributing to more than 1,100 unique visitors to the Social Bridging NC website, a central hub of information resources and programs available in North Carolina.
- The **Adult Protective Services (APS)** subgroup: Through leadership of NCDHHS Division of Social Services (DSS), the APS Design team optimized practice measures across county DSS, reducing average response times by more than half, from 3.8 days to 1.6 days, while serving over 13,000 vulnerable individuals.

Whole-of-Government: Cabinet Agency Contributions & Cross-Sector Progress

In alignment with Executive Order 280 (Age-Friendly NC) signed by former Governor Roy Cooper, state cabinet agencies advanced cross-sector collaboration and incorporated aging-related priorities into ongoing programs, initiatives, and planning efforts. Year 1 demonstrated how agencies can contribute to AAAS-NC priorities through their existing missions, resources, and partnerships:

AAAS-NC Directly Led

Initiatives where AAAS-NC or an AAAS-NC subgroup had a direct leadership role:

- **My Future Self Contest:** AAAS-NC launched a creative contest encouraging young people to envision their future selves and consider how communities can support well-being across the lifespan. Department of Public Instruction supported this initiative by sharing information about the My Future Self Contest with students across North Carolina.

- **Aging Education in Schools:** All Ages, All Stages NC leadership initiated strategic discussions with DPI partners about opportunities to incorporate aging, longevity, and intergenerational perspectives into school curricula.
- **National State of the Workforce Survey:** NCDHHS participated in the first-ever [National Core Indicators State of the Workforce Survey for Aging and Disability Services](#) led by ADvancing States, providing data to inform workforce policy and support efforts to address wage, recruitment, retention, and reimbursement of direct service workers.

AAAS-NC Partnered On

Initiatives where AAAS-NC collaborated with another agency or organization to advance a shared priority.

- **Workforce Act of 2026 Proposal ([House Bill 1163](#)):** Department of Commerce (DOC), NCDHHS, and the NC Community College System collaborated on legislative efforts to invest \$8.45 million in health care and caregiving apprenticeships.
- **Homestead Tax Exemption Advocacy:** Aging advocacy partners collaborated to provide data supporting legislative efforts to raise the property tax exemption for seniors and individuals with disabilities.
- **Veterans Services Partnership:** NCDHHS partnered with state, local, and federal organizations to improve coordination and access to benefits and services for aging veterans.
- **Caregiving Workforce Strategic Leadership Council:** Worked with DOC to address the direct care worker shortage. A major accomplishment was the development and launch of public-sector accountability metrics launched in January 2026 to track workforce improvements.
- **[Executive Order No. 36](#)** elevates North Carolina's Multisector Plan for Aging as a statewide housing framework, establishes a Senior Advisor for Housing Policy, and strengthens All Ages, All Stages NC by advancing priorities such as aging in place, accessible and affordable housing, universal design, supportive community environments, caregiver considerations, transportation connectivity, and alignment with home and community-based services.

Partner-Led Efforts Aligned with AAAS-NC Priorities

Initiatives led independently by cabinet agencies and other partners that advance priorities identified through AAAS-NC.

- **Department of Information Technology:** Ageless Access Initiative and Digital Equity Grants
- **Department of Transportation:** Complete Streets and expanded transit planning efforts
- **Department of Natural and Cultural Resources:** Accessible parks and trails and lifelong learning resources for older adults
- **Department of Adult Correction:** Fair Chance to Advance initiative
- **Department of Environmental Quality:** Weatherization Assistance Program
- **Department of Military and Veterans Affairs:** State Veterans Homes modernization

Public Engagement and Reach

Public engagement is an important component of AAAS-NC's approach to implementation. During Year 1, the initiative used digital platforms, community presentations, partner outreach, and public awareness efforts to share information, connect North Carolinians with resources, and keep partners informed of implementation activities. Together, these efforts expanded awareness of AAAS-NC initiatives and provided opportunities to engage older adults, family caregivers, professionals, community organizations, and other partners across North Carolina.

Digital Engagement

Digital platforms provide an important way for AAAS-NC and its partners to connect North Carolinians with information, resources, and opportunities for engagement. Year 1 digital engagement included public-facing websites, the NC Caregiver Portal, the AAAS-NC newsletter, and other online communications.

- **AAAS-NC Newsletter:** Reached **765 subscribers**, serving as a key communication tool to keep partners and stakeholders informed of implementation progress, emerging resources, partner accomplishments, funding opportunities, and upcoming events.
- **AAAS-NC Digital Platforms:** Website analytics were used to assess how North Carolinians and partners interact with AAAS-NC's online resources. From November 2025 through June 2026, the website recorded 2,528 page views, with 52% of traffic coming from organic search and 32% from direct links. The most common search term leading users to the site was "NCDHHS," while "Supporting Older Adults and Their Families" was the most visited page. Moving into Year 2, continued monitoring of website analytics will help inform future content development, outreach strategies, and opportunities to make AAAS-NC resources more accessible and useful to audiences.
- **Social Bridging NC:** Provides resources and information to support social connection and help individuals and communities identify opportunities to build meaningful connections. The website received more than 4,800 unique visitors during Year 1, demonstrating growing public interest in resources related to social connection and community engagement for older adults.
- **NC Caregiver Portal:** Provides family caregivers with access to educational resources and localized support. During Year 1, the portal reached more than 3,400 registered users. The platform has also generated a calculated \$8.8 million+ return on investment, reflecting the value of caregiver education, training, and support in helping families navigate caregiving and potentially delay or avoid higher-cost institutional care.

Community Presentations and Outreach

In addition to digital engagement, AAAS-NC used presentations, meetings, conferences, and partner events to share information about the initiative and engage organizations working with older adults, caregivers, and communities.

During Year 1, AAAS-NC staff and partners engaged with a range of organizations and audiences, including:

- AARP Age-Friendly NC Communities
- Age-Friendly Forsyth Conference
- American Society on Aging Conference
- Bringing It Home Conference
- NC Association of Regional Councils of Government
- NC Association on Aging Bootcamp
- NC Coalition for Older Adult Transportation
- NC Coalition on Aging
- National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE)
- NC State Employees' Credit Union (SECU)
- Triad Retirement Living Association
- UNCG Time Out Workshop
- WakeMed Cary Trauma

These engagements provided opportunities to:

- Share information about AAAS-NC priorities and initiatives
- Connect partners with available resources
- Gather feedback and identify emerging needs
- Strengthen relationships with community and private sector partners
- Increase awareness of statewide efforts related to aging

Public Awareness and Communication

Launched the *Back in the 20s* video series to envision what aging and communities could look like in 2040 if actions taken today through All Ages, All Stages NC help create lasting change. The campaign uses a future-looking storytelling approach to illustrate the potential long-term impact of the multisector plan for aging and reflects on the early efforts that helped launch All Ages, All Stages NC. The campaign videos have generated more than 1,000 total views, providing an accessible way to communicate the vision and build awareness around AAAS-NC.

Measuring Progress, Accountability, and Lessons Learned

Tracking Implementation

- **Data Dashboard:** North Carolina developed a data dashboard to support data-informed planning and decision-making across the MPA. The dashboard brings together relevant demographic, county, regional, and statewide data to provide a shared understanding of the populations and communities the MPA is intended to serve. This tool helps partners identify needs, resources, and gaps, understand geographic differences, and monitor trends that can inform priorities and future investments.
- **Implementation Tracker:** To promote transparency, strengthen accountability, engage partners, and showcase the work through the MPA, North Carolina launched an Implementation Tracker Dashboard. The tracker provides a centralized view of MPA action steps and implementation progress, helping state leaders and partners understand where work is advancing, where additional coordination or support may be needed, and where promising approaches can be shared and expanded. Implementation of a multisector plan requires sustained coordination across state agencies, local governments, community organizations, and other partners. The tracker provides a foundation for continuing to identify opportunities, address barriers, and use lessons learned to strengthen implementation over time.

What We Learned in Year 1

Year 1 demonstrated that successful implementation of a multisector plan needs more than isolated initiatives. It requires active Cabinet-level agency support, clear ownership, consistent cross-sector communication, shared metrics, and reliable data. While the initiative successfully mobilized a broad coalition of collaborators, including 72 community partner agencies, 18 state public agencies, 13 academic institutions, and 41 health care and service organizations, sustaining this momentum requires stronger executive buy-in and direct support from Cabinet agency leadership to drive policy alignment and operational delivery across departments. Establishing explicit roles and accountability structures at the agency level eliminated implementation bottlenecks and accelerated project execution. Standardizing data collection and reporting early across regions significantly improved our

ability to measure service delivery, demonstrate real outcomes, and identify emerging community needs. By actively aligning subgroup milestones with broader statewide policy priorities, AAAS-NC minimized overlapping efforts, eliminated duplicate work, and maximized the collective impact of existing state resources. Moving beyond simple output counts to shared cross-agency performance measures provided a clearer picture of system-level change across health, housing, and financial security sectors. Finally, creating formal mechanisms to share successful regional approaches across agencies built lasting, sustainable partnerships that extend beyond single funding streams or grant cycles.

Conclusion: Year 2 Implementation Strategy and Priorities

In Year 2, AAAS-NC will transition from establishing foundational infrastructure to executing coordinated system-wide priorities across all 12 implementation subgroups. Strategic focus will center on unifying data systems to measure cross-sector outcomes and tracking progress against the plan's 41 priority action steps. Additionally, partners will advance key legislative initiatives supporting caregiving workforce development and retirement security. Together, these steps align strategy, funding, and service delivery to move the initiative from siloed activities to measurable, statewide execution.

All Ages, All Stages NC is a 10-year commitment to improving how North Carolinians live, work, and age. Year 1 established the operational foundation – building cross-sector governance, launching progress tracking tools, and directly serving thousands of older adults and caregivers statewide. The years ahead will build on this infrastructure through continued interagency collaboration, shared accountability, and practical action across every community.



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**
Division of Aging

ncdhhs.gov/divisions/division-aging

NCDHHS is an equal opportunity employer
and provider. • 10/2026

**All Ages,
All Stages NC**
A Roadmap for Aging and Living Well