

HISTORY OF PLANNING FOR AN AGE-FRIENDLY NORTH CAROLINA

North Carolina has a long and strong history of planning for our aging population. Many organizations and individuals have contributed to help identify and address challenges and opportunities relevant to older adults, as well as their families and communities.

This timeline highlights milestones to support aging well in North Carolina. It is incumbent on us to build upon this work and ensure that North Carolina is age-friendly from Manteo to Murphy.

YEAR MILESTONE

- 1950** – President Harry Truman initiated the first National Conference on Aging
- 1956** – Special Staff on Aging was established within the Office of the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare (Federal Council on Aging) to coordinate responsibilities for aging.
- 1961** – The first White House Conference on Aging was held in Washington D.C.
- 1965** – The Older Americans Act was signed into law and called for the creation of State Units on Aging.
- 1971** – Second White House Conference on Aging was held.
- 1972** – Older Americans Act was amended to create a national nutrition program for older adults.
- 1973** – Older Americans Act was amended to establish Area Agencies on Aging, with a role in planning for an aging population.
– Governor's Advisory Council on Aging was established.
- 1977** – North Carolina Division of Aging was established in State law.
- 1980** – NC Division of Aging held its first annual Summer School of Gerontology to increase participants' knowledge and skills to better serve older North Carolinians.
- 1981** – Third White House Conference on Aging was held.
- 1983** – NC General Assembly established a Bill of Rights for residents of nursing homes and enacted legislation creating the Nursing Home and Adult Care Home Community Advisory Committees.
- 1984** – NC General Assembly established a Bill of Rights for residents of adult care homes (assisted living).
- 1985** – NC Division of Aging developed Performance Based Contracting System for the Area Agencies on Aging (working with consultant Alan Ackman).
- 1986** – North Carolina Insurance Commissioner created the Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) as one of the nation's first efforts to link older adults with information about their health insurance.

"A quiet revolution has taken place in the age structure of American society.... Increased life expectancy is one of the greatest social achievements of our times... The problems of aging are universal....Aging is not something that happens to somebody else."

– Excerpts from statement of leading gerontologists endorsing Senator Kennedy's "Positive Response to the Challenge of Aging" [October 1960]

- 1987** – NC General Assembly established the North Carolina Study Commission on Aging. [Article 21 of Chapter 120 of the NC General Statutes]
 - NC General Assembly supported the first major infusion of State funds into the Aging Network to strengthen community-based assistance.
- 1988** – The UNC Center for Aging Research and Educational Services produced *Warmth in Their Winter*, a policy document to guide Social Services in assisting older adults and adults with disabilities.
- 1989** – NC General Assembly called for a regularly updated plan for serving older adults [State Law 1989-52] and an inventory of data sets to support such planning [State Law 1989-695].
 - NC General Assembly called for the State Department of Human Resources to create an Advisory Committee on Home and Community Care.
 - NC State Center for Health Statistics issued a report on Health of the Elderly in North Carolina: Population at Risk and Patterns and Trends in Mortality.
- 1990** – The Americans with Disabilities Act was signed into law.
- 1991** – First state-mandated Aging Plan was completed (1991-1993).
- 1992** – Funded by the Kate B. Reynolds Health Care Trust, a report was completed on strategic planning for aging projects in Cleveland, Durham, Pamlico and Surry counties.
 - NC General Assembly established the Home and Community Care Block Grant, which includes a local planning component.
- 1993** – The second State Aging Plan, *A Unified Social and Health Services System for Older Adults*, was released.
 - NC Division of Aging began collecting and presenting data from various state agencies to support local planning for the aging population and to help guide use of the Home and Community Care Block Grant funds.
 - NC General Assembly created the North Carolina Senior Tar Heel Legislature to help assess the legislative issues and needs pertaining to older adults.
- 1995** – NC General Assembly moved the State Aging Plan from every odd numbered year to every other odd numbered year. [State Law 1995-253]
 - The third State Aging Plan, *An Opportunity to Shape Our Future – A Guide for Successful Aging* in the 1990s, was released.
 - The fourth White House Conference on Aging was held. Regional and local forums were held in North Carolina prior to the conference to help inform North Carolina’s delegates.
- 1996** – The NC Division of Aging’s website debuted, the first site within the Department of Health and Human Services. The division was also the 9th State Unit on Aging to have a presence on the Internet and received a 1st Choice rating from the US Administration on Aging.
- 1997** – UNC Center for Aging Research and Educational Services produced a series of reports for the NC Division of Aging focused on baby boomers: *Baby Boomers at Mid-Life – The Future of Aging in North Carolina* and *Future of aging in North Carolina: Responding to the Challenges and Opportunities Presented by Baby Boomers at Mid-Life*. Numerous stakeholder meetings were held across the state to share the reports’ information.
- 1998** – The NC Agency for Public Telecommunications dedicated one of its *Inside NC* programs to *Aging Issues*.
 - NC’s first four-year state aging plan, *North Carolina, A Leader in Aging*, was completed.
 - NC Governor’s Advisory Council on Aging held a forum and produced report on *Information and Assistance*.
 - The National Academy on an Aging Society produced its report *Demography Is Not Destiny*. Revised 2005.
- 1999** – NC joined in celebrating the *International Year of Older Persons* with an informational and educational campaign, a seminar for journalists on “Life in an Older America” and a conference.

“The aging of the state’s population represents an unparalleled, but urgent, policy and program challenge to both public and private organizations to ensure that the needs of the aged and their human resource potential are adequately addressed.” – Remarks from Governor Hunt’s 1999 proclamation

- 2000 – NC Governor’s Advisory Council on Aging held a forum and issued report on *Serving Older Adults in Rural North Carolina: Meeting the Challenge*.
- 2001 – NC Institute of Medicine’s Task Force on Long Term Care (LTC) completed its report, prompting the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services to develop and institute a methodology that evaluated local home and community-based services and supports to aid in developing county LTC services plans.
 - WUNC-FM held a series of 17 programs focused on *North Carolina Voices: The State of Aging*.
 - The NC Agency for Public Telecommunications dedicated an *OPEN/net* program to Aging.
 - NC Division of Aging and Adult Services initiated the *Ann Johnson Institute for Senior Center Management*.
 - NC Division of Aging and Adult Services was funded by the US Administration on Aging to participate in a multi-year national demonstration *Performance Outcome Measures Project (POMP)* focused on Older Americans Act-funded services.
- 2002 – NC Task Force on Aging and Developmental Disability: *A Blueprint for Change* – led by Appalachian State University.
- 2003 – State Divisions of Aging and Adult Services and Public Health produced in-depth publication, *A Health Profile of Older North Carolinians*.
 - NC Aging Services Plan for 2003-2007, *The Aging of North Carolina*, was released.
- 2005 – The *fifth White House Conference on Aging* was held.
 - UNC Institute on Aging produced a report on *Gender, Race, and Class: Enduring Inequities in Later Life – A North Carolina Perspective*.
 - NC Division of Aging and Adult Services presented *Adult Protective Services Task Force report* to NC Study Commission on Aging.
 - NC Division of Aging and Adult Services, Area Agencies on Aging and some local aging providers produced and supported use of various tools to aid livable and senior-friendly planning.
- 2006 – NC Division of Aging and Adult Services and UNC Institute on Aging held a State Conference on Aging.
 - NC Department of Correction issued *Aging Inmate Population Study*.
 - NC Division of Aging and Adult Services provided an overview to Regional Aging Advisory Councils on NC’s *Development of Comprehensive and Integrated Planning for Aging*.
 - NC Division of Aging and Adult Services worked with the NC Association of County Commissioners to promote participation in a nationwide survey, *The Maturing of America – Getting Communities on Track for an Aging Population*.¹
- 2007 – NC Aging Services Plan for 2007-2011, *Putting the Pieces Together*, was completed.

“Our collective goal is to meet the challenges of an aging society by drawing upon the talents and resources of active seniors, enhancing services for vulnerable seniors, valuing diversity while addressing disparity, being responsible stewards of resources, and helping baby boomers prepare for their future.”

– Remarks of Carmen Hooker Odom, Secretary, NC Department of Health and Human Services, in introducing the 2003 Plan.

“Some may view the unprecedented growth of the older population as a risk to the State... Still, a mature population also brings with it knowledge, experience, civic-mindedness, and other resources critical to the State’s social capital for improving the well-being of all.” – Excerpt from 2007 State Aging Plan

- NC Division of Aging and Adult Services began producing a series of “Aging Planning Bulletins” to share vital information with local citizen leaders to help bring about significant progress.

- 2008 – NC Division of Aging and Adult Services promoted “Building Livable and Senior-Friendly Communities” and presented eight essential components to help communities and organizations assess their readiness for an aging population: physical and accessible environment; healthy aging; economic security; technology; safety and security; social and cultural opportunity; access and choice in services and supports; and public accountability and responsiveness.
 - At the request of the NC General Assembly, the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services examined, profiled and offered recommendations on the aging population of six counties, using its livable and senior-friendly conceptual framework.

- The *North Carolina Medical Journal* dedicated its September/October issue to the topic “[Healthy Aging in North Carolina](#).”
- Governor’s Advisory Council on Aging’s report on [North Carolina’s Aging Workforce](#) was produced by the UNC Institute on Aging.
- NC Department of Health and Human Services’ [Respite Care Study Report](#) was released.
- NC Division of Medical Assistance issued a report on [Pilot Program/Medicaid Dual Eligible Special Needs Plan](#).

“North Carolina is in the midst of a significant demographic transition as the baby boomers approach retirement age in the latter part of this decade. The time to chart an effective course for Livable and Senior-Friendly Communities is NOW... The future interests of older adults, their families, and communities are at stake.”

– Remarks of Dennis Streets, Director of NC Division of Aging and Adult Services, 2006-2014

- 2009** – [North Carolina Disability and Elderly Emergency Management report](#) was completed and presented through statewide training. This work was led by the NC Department of Crime Control and Public Safety and NC Department of Health and Human Services.
- NC Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing issued report on [Impact of Hearing Loss in Older Adults in North Carolina](#).
- NC Department of Health and Human Services’ report on [Group Respite Study](#) was completed.
- NC Division of Public Health reported on [Burden of Unintentional Falls in NC](#).
- NC Center for Public Policy Research published journal issue on aging: [The Art of Aging, Our Elders, Our State](#).
- NC Department of Health and Human Services reported on the [Public-Private Long-Term Care Partnership Program](#).

- 2010** – Governor Perdue issued executive order (#54) asking state agencies to assess their [readiness to serve and work with NC’s aging population](#) and encouraged local governments and the private sector to do the same.
- NC Division of Public Health released report on [Older Adult Injuries in North Carolina: 2004-2007](#).

“The challenge of an aging population requires creative solutions – and innovative thinking... Our seniors and families are doing their part to make NC better – day in and day out. So we must continue to do our part in making NC the state for Living Wise and Aging Well.”

– Remarks of Governor Perdue at the 2010 Governor’s Conference on Aging

- 2011** – NC General Assembly ended NC Study Commission on Aging. [SL 2011-291, Section 1.6]
- [NC Conference on Aging](#) held with the theme, “The Community Response: Implementing the Plan for a Livable, Senior Friendly North Carolina.”
- NC Aging Services Plan for 2011-2015, [Living Wise and Aging Well](#), was completed
- NC Division of Aging and Adult Services produced [A Profile of People Age 60 and Over \[in\] North Carolina](#).
- New [NC Mental Health and Aging Coalition](#) held its first meeting.
- NC Department of Health and Human Services reported on [Project CARE \(Caregiver Alternatives to Running on Empty\)](#).

- 2012** – NC State Center for Health Statistics reported on [Trends in Key Health Objectives for North Carolina and the Nation: A Report from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System](#).

- 2014** – NC Institute on Aging held series on [Aging in Community: Planning for Our Future](#).
- NC Division of Public Health reported on [Elder Suicide in North Carolina \[2010-2014\]](#).
- NC General Assembly Program Evaluation Division report: [Overnight respite pilot at adult day care facilities perceived as favorable, but lacked objective measures of success](#).
- NC Division of Medical Assistance’s [PACE Program Initial Study Report](#) was released.

- 2015** – NC Aging Services Plan for 2015-2019 was completed. Theme: [Booming Forward: Working Together to Improve Lives](#).
- The sixth [White House Conference on Aging](#) was held.
- NC Department of Health and Human Services' Final Report on the [PACE Program \(Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly\)](#) released.

"We have to work to do more to ensure that every older American has the resources and the support that they need to thrive.... [W]e need to recommit ourselves to finishing the work that earlier generations began – make sure this is a country that remains one where no matter who you are or where you started off, you're treated with dignity, your hard work is rewarded, your contributions are valued, you have a shot to achieve your dreams whatever your age....That's the America we're all working for." – Remarks of President Obama in beginning the 2015 Conference

- 2016** – The NC Institute of Medicine's Task Force on Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias completed [A Strategic Plan for Addressing Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias](#).

- 2018** – NC Department of Health and Human Services reported on [Pilot Program/Increase Access to Public Benefits For Older Dual Eligible Seniors](#)
- NC Department of Health and Human Services reported on [PACE Program Expansion Study](#).
- NC Division of Aging and Adult Services launches Adult Protective Services (APS) Improvement Plan with stakeholder Envisioning Sessions

- 2019** – NC State Aging Plan (2019-2023) was released, with theme of *An Age of Opportunity*.
- NC Division of Public Health presented report on [Elder Suicide in North Carolina \[2013-2017\]](#).

- 2020** – [BOLD Act Grant](#) enabled NC to pursue the federal CDC BOLD – Healthy Brain Initiative and to build a NC public health infrastructure that addressed Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias.
- UNC School of Government published manual on [Legal Framework for North Carolina's Elder Protection System](#).
- NC Institute of Medicine released [Assuring Accessible Communication for Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and DeafBlind Individuals in Health Settings](#).
- NC Division of Aging and Adult Services produced [Dementia-Capable North Carolina: Progress Report](#) and [North Carolina Dementia-Friendly Communities: Standards & Information for Those Interested in Starting or Growing a Dementia-Friendly Community](#).
- COVID identified in Washington State nursing homes. Declared a pandemic. NC Division of Aging and Adult Services, as guided by the DHHS Secretary, launches information campaign aimed at older adults

- 2021** – When vaccine is developed, NC DAAS continues information campaign. DAAS, in partnership with AAAs, launches a vaccine at home program. Federal relief funds are used to serve older adults with added flexibilities

- 2022** – [Age My Way NC Summit](#) is held.
- The Divisions of Aging and Adult Services and Health Benefits are selected to participate in a 10-state learning collaborative to develop a Master Plan on Aging.

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