



## **GOAL 1: Use policy, advocacy, education, and a multidisciplinary approach to protect the rights of older North Carolinians from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.**

- North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS), Adult Protective Services expanded its Learning Management System (LMS), growing instructor-led training by 33% and eLearning offerings by nearly 9%, resulting in a 63.7% increase in user participation. These efforts reflect a strong commitment to professional development for adult services and Adult Protective Services (APS) staff.
- The Targeting Program actively participates in the goal of gaining full compliance with the Olmstead Settlement Agreement. There are two dedicated staff that work directly with the Olmstead Department in the Office of the Secretary and the Local Management Entities/Managed Care Organizations (LME/MCOs) with the Transitions to Community Living (TCL) population and have a vital role with the TCL Pilot Project.
- As of June 2025, 75 out of the 100 counties are represented by a delegate or alternative for the Senior Tar Heel Legislature (STHL).
- NCDHHS Adult Services in partnership with county DSS agencies and the APS Improvement Design Team for Community Collaboration and Education, progress was made toward ensuring that all 100 counties implement communication distribution plans using the customizable APS outreach brochure.

## **GOAL 2: Support programs and partnerships that improve the health and well-being of older North Carolinians.**

- From October 2024 through September 2025, there was expansion in all areas of the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program, with 9,795 sets of vouchers distributed to agencies, 55 participating counties (up from 52), 43 participating aging services agencies (up from 42), and 81 SFMNP-certified farmers' markets (up from 74).
- Forty-one new organizations that were offering transit services were onboarded to the NCCARE360 network in the past year, bringing the total to 407.
- The DA and Area Agencies on Aging continued advancing access to evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention (EBHP/DP) programs. A survey was done for aging specialists to identify the areas of most need and there were efforts to identify underserved populations and develop targeted outreach strategies.
- North Carolina continues to implement the 2021-2025 Falls Prevention Strategic Action Plan, with a growing emphasis on the shared risk and protective factor framework. Planning for the next statewide Falls Prevention Summit is underway in partnership with the Mountain Area Health Education Center (MAHEC), with the event to be held in Western North Carolina.
- Division of Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DSDHH) staff have completed about 50 presentations, events, or educational opportunities at senior centers or senior focused events throughout the state to raise awareness about hearing loss, technology, and services. They also provided a presentation to the Ann Johnson Institute on April 25, 2024, focusing on improving access to senior center activities for Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and DeafBlind populations.
- Through Social Bridging NC and NCCARE360, collaboration with community partners has strengthened to expand the range of available social engagement resources, ensuring timely and relevant connections for individuals identified through screening.

### **GOAL 3: Adopt an equity-centered housing lens approach to enable older adults to age in their place of choice with the appropriate services, supports, and housing opportunities.**

- Implemented Choosing Home program to supplement HHI funding and these funds are being utilized by several AAA regions. Over 1,270 individuals received services through Housing and Home Improvement (HHI) programs.
- The Division continued to administer the ESG and Rapid Rehousing programs. Two rounds of federal Rapid Unsheltered Survivor Housing (RUSH) funding were secured to support households affected by Hurricane Helene in Western NC, totaling nearly \$5 million.
- DA Staff participate in the 'Housing Development Workgroup' for the NC Strategic Housing Plan. This work group meets to strategize assessing the affordable housing stock in NC for people with disabilities, determining the need to increase the development of more affordable housing for people with disabilities. A focus is the draft of the Permanent Supportive Housing Framework, which is close to completion and being approved as the model for Permanent Supportive Housing in North Carolina.

### **GOAL 4: Advance equity, accessibility, and inclusion through informal and formal caregiving support.**

- There was continued investment in North Carolina's caregiving infrastructure, with a focus on workforce development, family support, and dementia-friendly initiatives. Despite the depletion of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds in many regions, 214 caregivers received respite and 485 received supplemental services funded through ARPA. Through the Family Care Support Program (FCSP) 777 caregivers received respite totaling 39,824 units, and 916 caregivers received supplemental services totaling 16,070 units.
- As of March 2025, there are 2,450 registered caregivers on the NC Caregiver Portal. Social Isolation grant funding was used to continue supporting the NC Caregiver portal through the 2025 Calendar Year.
- North Carolina's Dementia Friends Information Session materials and Dementia Friends Champion Training materials were updated to ensure the Dementia Friends Information Session curriculum was more inclusive. Some of these materials were reformatted in March of 2025 to be user friendly and use fewer resources to produce hard copies. From July 2024 through March 17, 2025, AAA staff across the state trained 20 new Dementia Friends Champions who can now provide Dementia Friends Information Sessions.
- DA staff continue to collaborate with North Carolina Community Health Workers (NCCHW) by developing a proposal for a new grant opportunity and providing a letter of support. The funding decision is still pending. A survey was also sent to the governance body to gain a better understanding of how things are going from their perspective and how the Division of Aging can support involvement moving forward.
- The DA also supported Medicaid's Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) expansion efforts, while there are still 11 PACE Organizations, 2 new centers have been added bringing the number of centers to 13 and increasing service area coverage.

## **GOAL 5: Incorporate innovative practices learned through COVID-19 and create reliable systems and infrastructures that will have the capacity to serve the growing aging population, all while recognizing the need for communication equity to foster involvement from all stakeholders.**

- The DA completed the rollout of the updated Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) 101 Client Registration form and advanced the development of the NC Online Aging and Adult Services Information System (OAASIS). A review of internal policies and procedures is underway to align operations with the OAA Reauthorization and strengthen performance-based outcomes.
- ARPA program evaluation is ongoing, with results informing a statewide sustainability plan. Local pilots and community innovations were supported through flexible implementation approaches. DAAS also strengthened cross-division education efforts through presentations at The Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Use Services, the Division of Public Health and the Division of Social Services, and continued to engage in statewide emergency preparedness efforts, including the Communication, Maintaining Health, Independence, Support and Safety, and Transportation (CMIST) Advisory Committee and the NC Emergency Management Registry Workgroup.
- Aging services remained closely linked with digital equity, access, and inclusion. Collaboration with the Center for Digital Equity, AAAs, and DSDHH supported the expansion of digital navigator programs and accessible communications across rural and underserved areas. Aging-related content and inclusion efforts were embedded into agency-wide Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives.
- Progress continued on the All Ages, All Stages NC plan, with the plan being officially released in September 2024 and implementation kicked off with a retreat held in April 2025. Cross-sector partnerships grew through efforts like Age My Way NC and the National Core Indicators- Aging and Disability (NCI-AD) survey. Planning also began for a Medicare-Medicaid integration education initiative to support dual-eligible individuals and providers statewide.

