



**Robert G. Bethell and KanCare Oversight Committee  
July 2024**

We appreciate the opportunity to highlight the interrelationship of the Area Agencies on Aging and long-term services and supports. The Kansas Association of Area Agencies on Aging and Disabilities represents the network of eleven Area Agencies on Aging serving older adults and caregivers in all 105 Kansas counties.

As a designated local planning and service area (PSA), an Area Agency on Aging is mandated by the Older Americans Act to “serve as the advocate and focal point for older individuals within the community (in cooperation with agencies, organizations, and individuals participating in activities under the plan) by monitoring, evaluating, and commenting upon all policies, programs, hearings, levies, and community actions which will affect older individuals” (42 U.S.C. 3001; § 306(a)(6)(B)). Each AAA coordinates services to meet the specialized needs of older adults and simultaneously contracts with KDADS for the Administrative Case Management (ACM), the Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) for options counseling, assessments, and a statewide call center to support long-term supports and services as Kansans desire to age in place, and CARE Level I Assessments.

The Area Agencies on Aging are more than a “provider” of services. In fact, the Aging Network is the “Gold Standard” in America’s health system of community-based services and support. In maintaining this standard, it is with greatest urgency that Area Agencies on Aging receive adequate funding to sustain programs and services to meet the demand of older Kansans wanting to age in place and avoid premature institutionalization. The Area Agencies on Aging appreciate support from legislators who understand that “the aging of our society demands rigorous problem-solving today and, in the years ahead, requiring a spirit of innovation equal to, if not greater than” (Becker’s Hospital Review, June 2024) the inception of the “Great Society” initiative that created the Older Americans Act. In addition to the Older Americans Act core services, Area Agencies on Aging contract with the State of Kansas to deliver supplemental services, including:

**Administrative Case Management** started in May 2020. Unlike Targeted Case Management, the ACM is a service exclusively for individuals functionally eligible for the BI, FE, PD waivers and PACE program, but need assistance navigating the financial eligibility process. Currently, the ACM is assisting KDHE with redeterminations of BI, FE, PD waiver beneficiaries and PACE participants, and upon the offers to individuals on the PD Waiver waiting list, the ACM will further demonstrate the benefits to the State of Kansas and KanCare beneficiaries. Currently, the ACM provides an average of 8,600 hours of service to 3,800 individuals requesting assistance.

The **Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC)** operates a statewide call center: averaging 2,277 contacts per month and provides Information/Referral and Assistance, Options Counseling, and performs BI, FE, PD waiver and PACE functional eligibility assessments: averaging 15,000 annual assessments. As Area Agencies on Aging are mandated by the Older Americans Act to implement a “single intake, assessment, and eligibility determination process,” since 2012, as an element of the No Wrong Door System, the Kansas ADRC has “enhanced consumer choice and control and helped [the State] create more consumer-driven, more efficient, and more cost-effective LTSS systems” (<https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/programs/2016-10/NWD-National-Elements.pdf>). With Kansas transitioning to new managed care contracts, the ADRC can minimize confusion, enhance individual choice, and support informed decision-making.

**Client Assessment, Referral and Evaluation (CARE)** – was created by the Kansas Legislature K.S.A. 39-931a (amended) and K.S.A. 39-968; K.A.R. 26-9-1 and K.A.R. 120-1-2 with the legislative purpose of data collection and individual assessment and referral to community-based services and appropriate placement in long-term care facilities,” pursuant to federal law. The Area Agencies on Aging are the statutory contractors for the Level I Assessments and perform all the initial assessments, except in some circumstances. Considering that more than 5,500 individuals aged 80 years and older received a Level I CARE Assessment in FY 2022, it is appropriate for Area Agencies on Aging to hold the CARE contract with the State of Kansas.

Until March 2024, the assessment rate made it difficult for the Area Agencies on Aging to deliver contractual services. The addition of the Level I assessment to the Medicaid consensus caseload resulted in a rate proportionate to program requirements and now enables the State to track trends and numbers based on the monthly average number of clients covered by Medicaid.

**Senior Care Act (SCA)** – was created in 1989 by Kansas Legislature K.S.A. 75-5926 to divert an older Kansan from costlier services or premature nursing facility stay. The hallmark program monthly maximum expenditure (cost cap) amount of \$1,445 in K.A.R. 26-8-7(a) must be amended to increase provide rates that support older Kansans’ desire to age in in place with supports and services. As a hallmark program of the Area Agencies on Aging, clients financially contribute to the cost of their care. However, with the recent Medicaid HCBS rate increases, SCA providers have raised their reimbursement rates for HCBS services and plan to negotiate higher SCA rates. Unless the cost cap is raised, the end result is that fewer in-home services can be authorized, and the client receives less service from providers. We urge you to help remedy this critical situation and support the increase to the current monthly maximum expenditure amount.

This year’s Older Americans Month national theme was “Powered by Connection,” which recognizes the profound impact that meaningful relationships and social connections have on our health and well-being. Area Agencies on Aging delivered more than 2,533 hours of case management; and funded 1,619 hours of legal services; 65,118 hours of in-home services; 21,294 hours of in-home respite and 293 overnight hours; and 3,619,099 meals to your constituents last year. There are more than 650,000 older Kansans, half of which have been served by an Area Agency on Aging. The “Gold Standard” of a 50-year history is further illustrated by high levels of customer satisfaction from “boots on the ground” organizations serving low-income and socially isolated Kansans.

This testimony is bittersweet since some of you have decided not to return to the legislative body. It is important for the Committee members to know that your support and interest in aging issues have been truly valued. Thank you for your service to Kansas, the Aging Network, and older Kansans and their caregivers.

Leslie A. Anderson  
Executive Director