

# A.A.I.

## Aging Action Initiative



## FACT SHEET

### Aging in Marin: 30% by 2030

Our county has the oldest population in the Bay Area, aging more than one-and-a-half times faster than the rest of the state. By 2030 more than 33% of Marin's citizens will be over 60 years old and about 14% of us will be over 75. Soon, for the first time in history, there will be more people on this planet over the age of 65 than under the age of 5.

### Launch of the Aging Action Initiative

In the fall of 2014, to address the needs of Marin's rapidly aging population, the Marin County Board of Supervisors launched the **Aging Action Initiative (AAI) to promote a county-wide age-friendly environment, especially for those in need, collectively created by a strong network of service providers and funders through public education, policy advocacy, and service coordination.** As the name implies, the focus of the initiative is on action. The unique implementation strategy, however, is all about coordinated and collective effort and strengthening inter-agency relationships.

### A.A.I. BY THE NUMBERS

85 Individuals  
65+ Organizations

1 Steering Committee  
4 Workgroups  
9 Action Items  
15 Events and Programs

6 Months of Planning  
1 Year of Implementation

Together, as a strong network of support, we can create an age-friendly county, especially for those in need.

- Public Education
- Service Coordination
- Policy Advocacy

For more information or to join an A.A.I. Workgroup:

#### EMAIL

[support@agingactioninitiative.org](mailto:support@agingactioninitiative.org)

#### CALL

MarinSpace - collaboration support services

**415-492-9444**

# Steering Committee

Workgroups

Information Assistance & Referral Network

Mental Health & Dementia

Food & Nutrition

Economic Security

MarinSpace: coordination support services

Inform & Connect

A workshop for front-line info assistance and resource referral volunteers and staff

"High Touch"

Digital Info Exchange Tools

A pilot project to assess challenges and opportunities in shared technology solutions

"Hi Tech"

Detect & Connect<sup>2</sup>

A workshop on mental health and dementia issues in older adults

Detect & Connect<sup>2</sup> Quick Reference Guide

A handy, publication outlining the key take aways from the Detect & Connect workshop

Nutrition Education Cooking Class

A fun, hands-on cooking demonstration tailored for older adult cooking and nutrition needs

Access to Age Friendly, Fresh Food Markets

Programs and services to help older adults access and afford farm-fresh, healthy food

CalFresh & SSI Reform

A Legislative Action Trip to Sacramento with CAASSI to advocate for changes to food assistance programs

Awareness & Outreach Campaign

Publications and media to raise awareness about elder economic issues

Education Workshops

Community events to help older adults to connect to financial tools and resources

Actions

## IMPLEMENTATION DETAILS

The Aging Action Initiative is a cross-sector collective effort of more than 65 different agencies, grassroots organizations, and commissions, funded by the County of Marin, and coordinated by MarinSpace.

A Steering Committee guides the overall direction of the initiative while each of the four workgroups oversee the implementation of action items, delegating the tactical work of the projects to smaller task force subcommittees. MarinSpace provides process facilitation, administrative coordination and behind-the-scenes project management services.



## Workgroups & Action Items

### Information Assistance & Referral Network Workgroup

This workgroup adopted a two-pronged “High Tech,” “High Touch” strategy. Its goal, with both the Inform & Connect trainings and the Digital Information Exchange pilot, is to help organizations more effectively coordinate and share information about their programs and services so that clients can more readily find and access the services they need.

### Mental Health & Dementia Workgroup: Detect & Connect<sup>2</sup> Workshops and Field Tool

This project brings together Mental Health and Dementia professionals to co-create tools for community members who regularly interact with older adults. Through the Detect & Connect workshops and companion Field Tool, community members and professionals will be better equipped to understand and compassionately connect with older adults experiencing cognitive impairment, memory loss and other mental health issues.

### Food & Nutrition Workgroup

This workgroup brings together food- and senior-focused organizations to improve older-adult nutrition. Projects include:

- Producing hands-on cooking classes tailor made for older-adult nutritional needs
- Coordinating local legislative advocacy efforts with a state-wide initiative to address hunger issues among SSI/SSP (Supplemental Security Income/State Supplemental Payment) recipients
- Improving access to age-appropriate, healthy, farm-fresh food markets through financial, transportation, information and other support strategies.

### Economic Security Workgroup

Members from the Marin Women’s Commission and the Commission on Aging have come together to highlight the unique economic issues faced by Marin’s older adults who live within the elder economic index gap (i.e. above the poverty level, but below financial sustainability). Through community awareness and outreach campaigns as well as workshops, trainings and events, this workgroup will both shed light on economic security issues as well as enhance access to financial tools and resources.

# BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

## Six-Month Planning Process & Initiative Goals

During the initial six-month planning process, the initiative focused on four issue areas (Mental Health, Dementia, Food & Nutrition, and Care Coordination) and leveraged local expertise to:



- Cultivate a shared understanding of the county's aging landscape, community needs, program/service strengths and challenges, and future opportunities
- Develop plans for collective actions that 1) meet important community needs, 2) are "doable" within a one-year time frame, and 3) build and strengthen interagency relationships

## Aging in Marin: Initial Issue Area Findings

### Mental Health

- Complex spectrum of issues from clinically diagnosed "mental illness" to non/pre-clinical disruptive or self-destructive behavior due to loneliness, grief and loss, anxiety, social isolation, and other emotionally challenging situations
- Not well funded through the healthcare and insurance systems and tends to fall through "support service" cracks
- Marginalized due to stigma and denial associated with both mental health and ageism
- Non/pre-clinical personality disorders, disruptive behaviors and mental wellness issues represent the largest "gap area" of need

### Dementia & Memory Loss

- Our bodies outlive our minds - rates of dementia, Alzheimer's, and other memory issues are on the rise
- Need greater awareness and sensitivity to reduce shame, denial and stigma
- All types of caregivers, from first responders and medical professionals, to families and in-home support staff need to become more informed, sensitive, and better equipped with tools and referral resources

### Food & Nutrition

- "Foody, Organic Marin" has numerous opportunities and existing resources for healthy, fresh food
- Key issues include: access equality, stigma, and barriers (policy, geography, transportation, income)
- One big challenge is connecting the need with available food through an improved resource referral and information assistance system

### Care Coordination

- Complex spectrum of issues from basic one time referrals to follow-up assistance, care coordination, and case management
- Involves interagency exchange of program/service information as well as referral and assistance process information and eventually coordination of wrap-around client care
- Starts with improving the information referral and assistance end of the coordination spectrum