

Date: 09/28/21

Meeting Title: 2021 September Washington State Council on Aging Meeting

Location: Zoom Meeting

	Members Present	Appointment			Appointment
✓	Jean Kindem	At-Large East	✓	Art Swannack	Association of Counties
✓	Beth Anderson	AAAD Southwest WA Advisory Council		Joe Sharkey	O3A Advisory Council
	Sherry Appleton (Shannon Turner)	WA House of Representatives	√ √	Ron Vivion Dennis Wheeler	Snohomish County AAA
✓	Sharon Curley	At-Large West	✓	Karol Stevens	Kitsap AAA Advisory Council
√	Georgiann Dustin	NWRC Advisory Council	✓	Arlen Washines	Yakama Golden Eagle Advisory Council
	Vacant	Central AAA		Guests Present	
√ √	Lynn Ford Michele Horaney	Lewis Mason Thurston AAA Advisory Council	✓	Susan Engels	ALTSA
✓	Sandra Miles	At-Large West	✓	Walt Bowen	Senior Lobby
	Ava Frisinger	ADS King County Advisory Council	✓	Cathy Knight	W4A
√ ✓	Marty Johnston Bob Scarfo	Aging & Long-Term Care Eastern Washington Advisory Council	✓	Cathy MacCaul	AARP
	Sen Karen Keiser	WA State Senate	✓	Melanie McGuire	ALTSA
✓	Michele Blythe	Association of Cities	✓	Kelsey Bang-Olsen	Snohomish County Human Services
✓	Kathy Medford	Southeast WA Aging and Long-Term Care	✓	Shelly Baldwin	WSTSC
	Rep. Kelly Chambers	WA House of Representatives	✓	Cameron Akita	ALTSA
√ ✓	Patricia McIntyre Bruce Dougherty	Pierce County Connections Advisory Council	✓	Ana Maria Pinto da Silva	Public
	Karen Kiessling	At-Large East	✓	Launa Ambrose	Yakama Nation AAA
			✓	Laura White	Snohomish County AAA



Торіс	Key Points and/or Decisions Made
 Member/new member Welcome Review/approve agenda Review/approve minutes Review of current action items Member Updates, COVID 19 Response, Senior Center reopening status 	Meeting called to order at 8:33 AM. Chairperson Lynn Ford welcomed new and returning members. Members and guests introduced themselves. New to the meeting were Bob Scarfo, appointed by Aging and Long-Term Care Eastern Washington, Dennis Wheeler, appointed by the Snohomish County AAA, Michele Horaney, appointed by Lewis Mason Thurston AAA, and Bruce Dougherty, appointed by Pierce County AAA. The September agenda and June's meeting minutes were reviewed, and motion made to approve. Current action items reviewed to include Snohomish County reporting of their Senior Center Survey.
Snohomish County COVID Senior Center Survey	Lynn Ford welcomed Kelsey Bang-Olsen from Snohomish County Human Services to present. Kelsey Bang-Olsen, Human Services Program Manager from the Planning Evaluation Division provided a brief overview of the Snohomish County survey. As an effort to provide recommendations to divisions across the department, residents 55 and older were surveyed about unique challenges seniors face during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Survey findings were presented. Impacts on seniors were measured in 6 categories: Health and Wellbeing, Financial Impacts, Kinship Care, Risk of Infection, Technical Abilities, and Emergency Preparedness. A total of 14,500 surveys were mailed to seniors using addresses provided by



local senior centers, and 600 more were sent through a Home-Delivered Meal program from December 2020 through January 2021. The survey was published in 5 languages.

A total of 7.3% of seniors in Snohomish County received this survey, and it had a response rate of 20%. Responses included 9.3% from BIPOC seniors, of which 80% were Asian. The resulting question from this data was how to improve future outreach efforts to senior BIPOC communities.

Most respondents were between the age of 70-79, and 70% of all respondents were female. 38% of respondents had a disability.

One in four respondents reported financial impacts from the Pandemic, while 8% were struggling with housing payments. 32% of the seniors reported worrying about savings.

78% of seniors responded as eating nutritious meals daily, and of the 22% who did not eat nutritious meals daily, 47% have been financially impacted by the Pandemic.

Health and Wellbeing

44% of seniors reported going on walk at least 3x a week,

41% leaving home 2-4 times per week, 66% felt safe leaving home when wearing a face covering, and 69% worried about contracting COVID-19.

Kinship Care and Visitation

8% of seniors were providing childcare for friends/family, and 82% of seniors were kept from visiting a loved one.

Health and Wellbeing

80% of seniors reported having social supports, 28% started a new hobby, 5 out of 6 seniors had someone to talk to every day, and 1 in 4 seniors felt lonely. 32% of seniors reported worsening sleep during the Pandemic with 26% of those respondents reporting being worried about getting



COVID-19. 39% of seniors had their medications delivered instead of in-person pick up, and 5 out of 11 reported not having had their teeth cleaned in the past 6 months.

Technical Abilities

55% of seniors had recently used telehealth services, 14% reported not having reliable internet at home and 17% were not comfortable using technology.

Emergency Preparedness

82% of seniors stayed informed by watching/reading/listening to the news, and 22% reported not having an emergency kit at home.

Conclusion

Overall, 80% of seniors felt hopeful that life would return to pre-COVID conditions. Of the 20% who were not hopeful, 72% watched, read, or listened to the news regularly. Kelsey noted that it is important to keep seniors informed, reading this quote from a respondent: "Stay in touch with us!"

Open for discussion.

Dennis Wheeler – complimented Kelsey on the excellent work, noting that the involvement was amazing with a 20% response rate.

Kelsey - mentioned the help that Senior Centers provided in assisting with policy, programs, and grant writing development to substantiate their objectives.

Arlen Washines – asked if Kelsey had any numbers on Indigenous populations.

Kelsey - noted that 6% of seniors identified as American Indian.

Arlen – inquired why this may be so low.

Kelsey - responded that most addresses were provided by senior centers, which may have less visitation from Indigenous populations.

Arlen – commented on the challenges of reaching Indigenous seniors even through snail mail.



Dennis – shared that a meeting of tribes at an Edmonds senior center provided many on the spot responses by Indigenous seniors.

Michele Blythe – asked if there were any plans for a follow up survey. Kelsey – expressed hopes of doing a follow up, which depends on funding. Michele – expressed interest in seeing this follow up.

Lynn Ford– found it interesting that some respondents thought they didn't have nutritious meals. Kelsey –these respondents possibly only received senior center meals a few times a week, reiterating that 22% indicated they weren't getting nutritious meals.

Ron Vivion – introduced Laura White to the meeting, AAA Director from Snohomish County. Laura White – expressed thanks for being at the meeting. Laura has been with Snohomish County AAA since 2000; noted how wonderful it was to hear all these questions and feedback and appreciates the input & introduction.

Jean Kindem – asked if Kelsey could provide a copy of the survey. Kelsey – responded that yes, she could. Ron - suggested sending to Cameron to distribute.

Art – shared that 8% responding as financially impacted seemed like a low number. Kelsey – referenced the housing crisis in Snohomish County, and with people who are cost burden—meaning spending more than 30% on housing—she agreed that 8% was low in comparison. Kelsey offered that maybe those visiting senior centers have higher savings/earnings. Providing the survey online may have contributed to this figure. She suggested that finding a way to get a higher volume of addresses to distribute the survey through the mail may have changed this figure.

Lynn – thanked Kelsey for her presentation.



ALTSA Update

Susan Engels - Reviewed the topics of discussion to include ALTSA's final decision packages going to the Office of Financial Management, the vaccine mandate and its effect on the provider network, the acute hospital surge, Consumer Directed Employer (CDE) pilots beginning this week, and outreach/marketing for the WA CARES Fund.

Opened the floor for other topics to discuss.

Art Swannack – asked if there were any impacts from last session's law enforcement discussion regarding welfare checks.

Susan – replied that she would add this to today's discussion.

Decision Packages (DPs)

In most supplemental years there are not as many DPs, but because of a 10% FMAP increase this year there are also more DPs.

One of the bigger DPs is to provide funding (\$9M) for improving case management for AAAs due to increased caseloads. W4A will be requesting a higher amount in hopes that this will make the Governor's budget.

Another DP involves raising the Personal Needs Allowance (PNA) to 300% of the Federal Poverty Level, which provides for a greater ability to maintain standard of living and still receive services.

There is a DP on home care agency parity taxes to fix a statute that went in to play in July of 2020. This would fix home care agencies' ability to allow family members to have tax exclusions.

A DP for the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program, a program that provides eligible seniors with \$40 of check vouchers to spend on produce during the market season, would provide funding to find a new banking solution, as well as to expand \$350K in funding of participant benefits. This may entail moving to a benefit card from checks, or a different solution.



MAC/TSOA Programs – recent update from CMS that 1115 demonstration waiver is set to expire, which requires due diligence in notifying tribes and other clients that this program could end. Currently 4500 clients use these services.

There are two operations in play, one being a 6-year extension for the waiver, and the other for expansion of service package to allow for community integration. ALTSA is also looking towards the renewal of the MAC/TSOA program.

A pilot program in Snohomish County, a 20-year cluster pilot, provided a great model where a home care agency who has enough clients in a building could offer bundled services to those who opted in. This allows for help to be provided in real time. The challenge with this pilot was in electronic visit verification. A proposal of new services called coordinated care would waive this for the 1115 renewal package.

Request Legislation

There are several statutes DSHS is putting forward. One involves tribal nations being able to determine eligibility for Medicaid program participants, as HCS and AAAs currently do.

For the Consumer Directed Employer, there is a self-directed care fix that would adjust the definition of "self-directed care" and would allow for the continuation of care under this statute for 1,200 clients.

ALTSA would also like to develop a designated fund to receive excess funds if they were to come through.

Finally, there is request legislation regarding developing an appeals process to the registry.

Open for questions



Ron Vivion – asked if there has been any discussion into the crisis from several years ago regarding guardianships, and any related legislation from that.

Susan – DSHS was tasked for training with guardian ad litem and worked with King County, Washington courts, and DDA for revised training. Fixes could potentially come through but has not heard anything.

Art – asked whether the tribal legislation conflicted with federal law.

Susan – in Washington State this is how statutes are constructed. For example, Yakama Nation and Colville Tribes developing as AAAs; some tribal nations didn't have populations to be their own AAA, but now some have expressed interest in coming into this space to better serve their elders. The CMS Money Follows the Person Tribal Initiative is an example of a federal initiative in this area.

Kathy Medford – questioned if tribal affiliates would be the front door and case management portion.

Susan – clarified that they would be both the eligibility and case management portion.

Vaccine Mandate

Susan explained that state employees fell under the mandate, and some state contractors may be subject, including skilled nursing facilities, assisted living facilities, or those that operated on state-owned properties. The October 18th deadline to be fully vaccinated is approaching, and DSHS is working with staff to show status, applying for exemption, or deciding to separate from service. There is concern among nursing and assisted living facilities about staff shortages. There are some reports of stopping admission at facilities due to staff shortages. DSHS has six teams ready to go in to assist these facilities in need. There is also a volunteer program for retired professionals that can provide some assistance.

Acute hospital surge

The Transition Care Center of Seattle (which DSHS bought early in the Pandemic) has a census of 41 and is experiencing staffing difficulties. The delta variant has causes hospitals to be over-



capacity, and DSHS is assisting with discharging patients more quickly. Since the beginning of the Pandemic, DSHS has helped over 12,000 people discharge more quickly. During the last surge, DSHS has assisted through incentives the transition of 534 clients to other facilities, with 416 successes.

Social Isolation

There are currently three projects that are receiving input from State Council (Cathy MacCaul and Cathy Knight). These pilot projects include a robotic pet program which is on the cusp of a contract, GetSetUp—a program that helps clients with tech issues, and Trualta.

Welfare checks for seniors

These depend on service areas.

Art – law enforcement agencies have had to weigh the risk of welfare checks and ride-alongs, and these depend on which county is involved.

Susan – expressed hopes of improving the clarity of language in this program.

Art – requested further information as available.

Susan – noted that she would check with APS.

Kathy Medford – commented that this could be EMTs going in for welfare checks, and that you could check with your local fire/EMT departments.

Lynn – thanked Susan for the updates.



WSTSC

Shelly Baldwin introduced herself Director of the Washington Traffic Safety Commission and thanked Walt for the invitation to present.

Shelly outlined the WTSC noting its mission of reducing traffic fatalities and serious injuries to zero by 2030. The WTSC is a commission agency consisting of 10 commissioners (many who are heads of state agencies), many of which are appointed by the governor, as well as a small agency staff. The Target Zero Plan has come together from a combination of stakeholders with the goal to reduce traffic deaths.

Shelly reviewed traffic data from the WTSC. Total traffic deaths are up by about 100 since 2010, noting that distraction involved deaths is also up from the 2010-2015 period. A distracted driving law passed in WA state in 2015. Key factors include driving while impaired (50-60% of deaths), with combinations of alcohol and drugs being a concerning trend, as well as speeding (about 1/3 of crashes). The high-risk factor of driving without a safety restraint has increased during the Pandemic.

Research indicates that it takes 7 seconds after putting a phone down to regain eyesight on traffic.

Older drivers were noted in the presentation, as data often focuses on the negative aspects, particularly in that older individuals are overrepresented in crashes, less likely to discuss driving issues, and more susceptible to injury.

Shelly discussed the Pandemic impacts referencing an NHTSA study. Traffic deaths are typically conveyed as a rate per miles travelled, and although people traveled less during COVID, traffic deaths have increased. This may be due to higher rates of speed being recorded (with fewer cars on the roadway), lower seatbelt use in crashes, increases in alcohol/drug use, reduction in law enforcements' traffic stops, or possibly due to an overlap between "traditional" risk taking groups and those taking more trips during the Pandemic.



The "Cooper Jones Active Transportation Safety Council" works on promoting safety for walkers, bikers, and other non-vehicle methods of transportation. This council has showed interest in allowing "Due Care" standard to apply to people who walk or roll on roadways.

Shelly wrapped up the presentation with a PSA ("Together We Get There") and by noting the proactive safety culture within Washington. A vast majority—93% of Washingtonians—buckle up, and most people don't drive after drinking or cannabis use. A new PSA is in the works that is specific to walkers, bikers, and vulnerable roads users.

Open for questions

Pat McIntyre - asked for Shelly to talk about roundabouts.

Shelly- noted that roundabouts are more of a DOT/engineering task and spoke to their goal of reducing risk of injury due to the nature of roundabout impacts—crashes are less severe and less frequent.

Pat – referenced hearing about people still zooming through roundabouts and wondered if there was continuing education for those over 40.

Shelly – described how roundabouts are designed to be confusing and are intended to slow down drivers, which explains why crashes decrease. Referencing continuing education, she noted that the driving test is limited, and would like to improve continuing education with Europe as a model example.

Sandra Miles – mentioned that she works in Seattle and noticed that the focus of data was on drivers doing unsafe things but felt that bicyclists don't abide by rules. She asked if any education focuses on bicyclists as well.

Shelly – remarked that advocates speak to the disparity in damage a motorist can do versus a bicyclist. She acknowledged that her dream would be to have a K-9th grade curriculum for related safety issues.



Georgiann Dustin - asked if newer car safety features were being taken into consideration (such as lane departure, automated beeping..).

Shelly – acknowledged that vehicle safety has improved a lot, yet pedestrians remain vulnerable. Congress is developing language surrounding rules to these systems.

Georgiann – asked if this was considered in the survey, or if insurance companies use this data for their rates.

Shelly – commented that she was unsure if insurance companies consider this technology, but noted the state is looking into automated vehicles.

Michele Blythe – observed that 80% of the deaths included people not following the rules, and asked what plans were in place if the state is moving to a target of 0.

Shelly – noted that impairment is a key factor and expressed hope for new vehicle technology to prevent these drivers from ever hitting the road. She also noted that factors involving the people surrounding impaired drivers is key in preventing these accidents.

Walt – commented on the topic of walking, and that traffic safety meetings have discussed intersection crashes, hearing loss, and peripheral vision deficits. He advocates for having walking buddies and noted appreciation for intersections with lights and bells to cue individuals. Walt thanked Shelly for presenting.

Art – pointed out that vehicle controls work less well in rural areas with gravel roads. Law enforcement has a limited ability to enforce some infractions. In the freight mobility council, large trucks are discussed as difficult road obstacles as well.

Shelly – commented that there is a need for better infrastructure for these things to co-exist.

Art – considered whether there is viability of funding for transportation through the state highways. Shelly – noted that there is not a section for safety in infrastructure funding.

Art – shared that he is a volunteer firefighter, and there are often high speeds that contribute during crashes.



Shelly – agreed that speed control is a key component for safety and commented on the body's ability to absorb the force of crashes being reduced with high speeds.

Kathy Medford – asked whether data includes trucks/truck speed, commenting that no truck goes 60.

Shelly – acknowledged that commercial vehicle traffic is increasing. During Kingdome construction, there was a series of truck turnovers with limited shoulders during this time. Camera use in these construction zones is helpful.

Shelly thanked everyone and would make her phone number and email available to Council

Break until 10:51



Partner Updates AARP Senior Lobby W4A

Senior Lobby

Walt Bowen – Re-introduced himself as not member of SCOA, but a big fan. Expressed appreciation for new member comments and their review of their experience.

The Fall Conference will be held October 21st virtually, which usually had around 400 participants. This acts as an orientation and launch pad for the Council.

Walt reviewed the format of the Fall Conference and that it runs complimentary to the W4A Conference the day prior. The agenda would include a message from the Governor, Regional CMS Director, updated data from the most recent census, a presentation from Annie Shoemaker regarding funding, and a presentation from Insurance Commissioner Mike Kreidler. Other topics of discussion will include the Long-Term Care Trust Act, updates from DSHS, dental benefits for older adults, reporting on broadband availability, and COVID-19 related discussions in terms of advocacy for caregivers.

W4A

Cathy Knight – talked about speaking more to the W4A priorities in the Legislative Committee breakout room.

Partnerships with case management is needed as home case managers care for the largest and most complex cases.

Reminder for State Council members to fill out the W4A survey, thanking those who had already filled them out.

Noted that Ron Vivion will be the MC at the October Joint Conference, and that it will be slightly different in format. Finished with noting that the Legislative priorities would be part of the October meeting.



AARP

Cathy MacCaul – review of federal policy priorities and state level priorities, to include the WA CARES Act.

The Prescription Drug Affordability Board was vetoed by the Governor due to COVID-19. AARP is hoping to pass this board to help in pricing through the state and insurance companies.

Noted the increasing burden of property taxes on older adults, with housing needs as a priority issue.

Broadband funding was secured during the last budget but still need funding, referencing setting up in-home internet access. AARP has merged with OATS (Older Adults Technology Services) and is looking for available funding and grants through the Dept. of Commerce.

State level priorities include advocacy for vaccine boosters with prioritization for residential care facilities, and homebound seniors. Acknowledged that DOH and DSHS have done a great job with the booster, and AARP would like to ease the process.

Federal level priorities include prescription drugs, vision/dental, Caring Act – caregivers on average spend \$7000 out of pocket for services provided. Congresswoman Herrera Beutler signed on to the Caring Act, which provides a \$5,000 tax credit for those providing family caregiving.

Pat McIntyre – asked if rising prices of gas and other items for those living on fixed income was a state funding concern.

Cathy MacCaul – AARP is looking at this in a concentrated way, with housing as the most substantial issue. Washington is a top place for people to relocate and there is a limited supply of housing. They are looking at how to address development and growth management, and how to



balance housing issues at all levels. Other issues involve accessory dwellings units to support caregivers, rising costs of prescription drugs and the related cost burdens.

Sandra Miles – shared that she is in charge of an adult family home with 10 empty beds and offered the connection for those needing housing.

Lynn Forde – shared that TeamViewer, a software program allows access to another person's computer; can help assist those in need of technological assistance.

Lynn - addressed later arriving attendees to the meeting: Beth Anderson, Ana Maria Pinto da Silva, and Launa Ambrose all introduced themselves.

Committee meetings	[Breakout rooms for the Legislative, Public Relations, Social Isolation and Engagement committees]
Committee Updates	Legislative Art Swannack – discussed in the committee the different agenda's funding requests. The committee also talked about the Governor's vaccine mandate and the possibility of negative impacts. Art - asked about the possibility of writing an advisory letter to the Governor. Lynn Ford – asked for clarification of vaccine mandate letter.



Art – explained that the letter would speak to the issue of people leaving positions due to the mandate.

Michel Blythe – mentioned the workforce crunch of some industries because of a workforce shortage.

Sandra Miles – shared that they are dealing with this at SeaMar, and also dealing with people on quarantine due to COVID-19, noting that there are shortages from both sides. Voiced preference for having a building full of vaccinated individuals.

Kathy Medford – asked about the liability of employers with unvaccinated employees in relation to vulnerable clients.

Sandra – shared that employees have to have flu shot in these settings of vulnerable populations.

Lynn - mentioned that in health care, staff always had to be vaccinated.

Art – noted that the concern is primarily whether they are ready for the impact, asking if 6 response teams would be sufficient.

Sandra – stated that very few employees in health care are choosing not to stay, and questioned what the numbers looked like.

Lynn – stated that she thinks the Council should be supportive of the Governor and his mandates.

Kathy Medford – shared that through the lens of health care and through the politic lens, she is understanding of hesitancy. DOH and CDC have made some mistakes with vaccine and felt the need for a better push to promote education and understanding of the scientific process.



Cathy Knight – the letter could encourage the Governor to anticipate workforce impact, with a tone to include concern of workforce impact.

Michele – noted that the letter would not advise against/for the mandate, but to provide awareness for impacts.

Sandra – felt that the Council should advocate for mandate.

Walt Bowen – shared that committees have sent letters to the Governor and that he has reviewed these. Noted that the Governor has made contracts with the federal government for strike teams for health care facilities. Felt that the Governor has heard the message and has addressed actions

Karol Stevens – expressed concerns from Kitsap County, regarding outbreaks in long-term care facilities from staff members.

Public Relations

Kathy Medford – shared that November was family caregiver month, noting that letters to the editor needed to be tailored.

Bob Scarfo - volunteered to draft/edit/write for a standard letter.

Kathy - mentioned that letters to new legislators were needed for December/January. For these letters, the committee would work on creating stories to share with legislators. Kathy noted that she will be absent from October meeting, and requested for a prompting of November's Family Caregiver Month



	Social Isolation and Engagement Karol Stevens – shared that the committee will be continuing its monthly Zoom meetings 2 nd Tuesdays of month. The focus of this committee is on aging in place, public policy, legislation, and identifying obstacles for State of Washington. Bob Scarfo – requested link for Zoom meeting
Excellence in Action Awards	Kathy Medford - thanked Cathy Knight and W4A for the nomination of Senior Nutrition Providers for the Excellence in Action Organization Award. The Dennis Mahar Individual Award remained open without a nomination. Kathy explained the purpose of these awards at the request of Lynn Ford, explaining to new members the innovative actions and positive change created by award recipients. Senior Nutrition Providers have gone above and beyond over the last year. Kathy described Dennis Mahar as a dynamic individual and great advocate for seniors. Lynn - stated that these winners are recognized at the annual conference in October.



Election of Officers	Ron Vivion, on behalf of the Nominatir candidates for Chairperson, Vice Chair Candidates included Georgiann Dustir Karen Kiessling as Secretary. No additional nominations were recomwas seconded and carried.	rperson, and Secretary. In for Chairperson, Kathy Medford	for Vice Chairperson, and		
New Business Public Comment	Art - asked if there was support by the vaccine mandate. Kathy Medford - voiced no issues in se Georgiann - agreed in writing a letter letynn- responding to the question of well Secretary could.	Kathy Medford - voiced no issues in sending a letter to address the Council's concerns. Georgiann - agreed in writing a letter letting them know that the Council is watching this issue. Lynn- responding to the question of who should write the letter, Lynn suggested that Karen as Secretary could. Lynn – thanked Ron for his work this year and in all his six years previous.			
ACTION ITEMS		Assignee	Due Date		
Send survey presentation	n materials to members	Cameron Akita	ASAP		
Send out award informa	ion to new members	Cameron Akita	ASAP		