

**Kronkosky Charitable Foundation  
Roundtable Discussion**

**Topic:** Elderly Services

**Date:** March 27, 1998

**Prepared by:** Liz Ostendorf

**Participants**

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**Invited Agency Representatives**

Sister Ann Birmingham	Executive Director	Sisters Care
Margie Rust	Director	Retired Seniors Volunteer Program
Bob Schoffner	Executive Director	Senior Community Services
Pat Scrivano	Director	Young at Heart Association
Kim Sheffield	Program Coordinator	Elder Resource, Family Service Association
Judith Werking		AACOG

**Foundation Staff and Trustees**

Palmer Moe	Executive Director
Megan Kromer	Director of Program and Evaluation
Alan Patterson	Trustee
Michael Bacon	Grants Manager
Mark Carmona	Grants Manager
Liz Ostendorf	Student Intern

**Overview of Organizations**

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**Senior Community Services (SCS)**

The focus of this organization is transportation, social, and recreational services for the elderly.

- Transportation
  - A. Provided via three vans (two fifteen passenger and one seven passenger) owned by the agency which were donated by USAA after they had accumulated 60,000 miles; Currently the vans have between 85,000 and 90,000 miles.
  - B. Transportation is provided for grocery shopping, outings, and occasionally for doctor s visits.
- Social and Recreational Services
  - A. Foster Grandparents Program
    1. There are 114 foster grandparents involved currently who work at Goodwill Industries, the Juvenile Detention Center, Any baby Can, etc.
    2. All are paid a stipend of \$2.40 per hour and bus fare as needed. This money comes from school districts, Any Baby Can, Mission Road, The Children s Shelter, etc.
    3. The limitation on enrollment in this program is the funding; there are many volunteers and children on the waiting lists.
  - B. Older Workers Program
    1. The National Council on Aging gives money directly to SCS for this program. This is an annual renewal contract.
    2. There are 135 people employed through this program, 30% are in the private sector (as per the grant guidelines). Many go through an extensive "on the job" training period.
  - C. RSVP (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program)

1. Objective is to recruit people to do volunteer work in hospitals, museums, senior centers, nutrition sites, etc around San Antonio.
2. There are 3000 volunteers enrolled in the program, 2000 actively participate per month. The average age is 74.
3. RSVP volunteers give over 700,000 hours per year in San Antonio.
4. The program numbers are limited by the staff restraints; there is only a small budget for reimbursements.
5. People participate because it gives them a reason to get up and get dressed in the morning, some chose not to participate because they do not want to receive credit for their volunteer work.
6. Many of these volunteers do not want to work directly with children.

### **Sisters Care**

The focus of the agency is to serve the frail elderly throughout San Antonio by providing companionship and personal care services.

- The services provided include housekeeping, laundry, accompanying clients on errands, personal care, including bathing, grooming, exercise, monitoring of medications, and spiritual care which includes validation of the clients life story through listening.
  - A. Socialization is very important in this program because the caregiver is there to do more than a job, need to socialize and provide companionship.  
The caregivers are licensed by the state to perform personal care. To be licensed, they go through a course provided by Hill and Sorenson that is paid for by Sisters Care
  - B. The program seeks to meet the needs of the clients where they are, services change as needed as does the payment program
- Financing
  - A. Clients pay 20% of the cost of operation:  
10% of clients pay nothing, 50% pay less than \$5 per hour
  - B. 85% of the costs of operation are raised in San Antonio
    1. 10% from grants
    2. No federal funds or Medicare/Medicaid reimbursements
    3. The original funding was from a \$10, 000 grant from the Archdiocese, now they give \$5,000 annually
- Clients
  - a. There are currently 190 on the waiting list, 82 clients are being served. Federal tax laws prevent them from further expanding the program.
  - b. When the agency was founded they used research from a student at Incarnate Word College to determine the pockets of elderly in San Antonio in an effort to determine which areas needed to be served. (Note: We have been unable to obtain a copy of this report.)
  - c. The religious distribution of the clients mirrors the San Antonio community: 50% Catholic, then Baptist, Methodist, Lutheran, etc.

### **Young at Heart**

The goal of this program is to create an intergenerational program to provide benefits for all ages within the community.

- The program seeks to recruit people 55 and older to work in day care centers primarily utilized by single parent families, teen mothers, and other non-traditional families.
- Benefits
  - A. Seniors:
    1. Provided the opportunity to get out of the house and share their abilities, talents, and life skills.
    2. Participating in this program will not negatively impact Social Security benefits, etc.
  - B. Children: Get one-on-one interaction and benefit from having an older person interested in their activities.
- Currently this program is sponsored by the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services but the goal is for them to establish the program and then have a local non-profit take it over. Groups serving both children and the elderly have already expressed interest in the program.

- As a result of the current status, the program is not budgeted. The City of San Antonio is housing the administrative offices and the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services is covering the cost of postage, printing, etc.

### **Family Services Association**

This agency provides three programs for the elderly including an assessment program, a personal care program, and a resource and referral program.

- Assessment Program-Assess the behavior, health needs, and personal care needs of the elderly.
- Personal Care Program-Assist with homemaking including cooking meals, cleaning, personal care and grooming, and running errands. There are six full-time staff members, three part-time, and three additional substitutes to fill in as needed.
- Resource and Referral Program Consists of a database of the services available to the elderly in San Antonio.
  - A. As a resource service, they provide consultation about the different programs, legal issues, costs, etc. In addition, they also provide seminars to corporations and the community about these issues.
  - B. It is financed through corporate contracts via the human resources departments of major corporations such as Citicorp. Despite this contract program, they rarely charge for helping people even if a corporation does not cover a client.
  - C. There are 500-600 services listed in the database
    1. 200 specifically related to home health
    2. Includes less obvious services like lawn maintenance, basic handyman services, etc

### **Alamo Area Council of Governments, Division of Aging**

This public agency receives all of the government dollars designated for elderly services and distributes them through Bexar county and the surrounding eleven counties. The state gives little money in this area except for ombudsmen services. Consequently, the balance comes from federal funds.

- Distribution of Funds
  - A. Agencies apply to the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) which determines whether the program should be funded or not.
  - B. This process is becoming increasingly difficult for the smaller agencies because of the increasingly bureaucratic processes and regulations.
    1. Auditing procedures
    2. Computer requirements
- Goal: Assessment on what needs to be done for the elderly. This should be collected as used in a manner similar to the assessments already published on children s issues and domestic violence.
  - A. Examine social policy, laws that are needed to protect the elderly from fraud, abuse, etc. This examination should be on Texas and other states' laws.
  - B. Will provide a leverage point from which further legislation and policy can be formulated and pushed through the legislature. Also provides a basis upon which to ask for increased funding.
  - C. The earlier assessment that was conducted on children had a variety of committed advocates, who took the information, drafted legislation, lobbied the legislatures, and forced its passage. These served to enhance the protections legally provided for children and brought the issues to the forefront of the legislative agenda.

### **Transportation**

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- Transportation was cited as a major issue by all of the agencies.
- An issue for the elderly is that some need extra time to get into and out of vehicles and often cannot wait for a long time outdoors for transportation to arrive.
- Caregivers are prevented from providing transportation in many cases because of the assumed liability.
- In addition to driving someone to the site, a companion is often needed to sit or shop with the elderly person.
- Christian Assistance Ministries provides limited transportation.

### **Housing**

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- Affordable housing is becoming increasingly difficult to find in San Antonio.
- Many senior citizens own their own houses but are living in poverty because they do not have cash readily available.
  - A. Selling a house to pay for moving into a nursing home is not cost effective because living in the nursing home will end up being more expensive in the long run.
  - B. Assisted Living places are also very expensive (\$2000 to 3,000 per month).
  - C. People also want to maintain their independence for as long as possible and staying in their house is a way to do this.

### **Nutrition**

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- The resources around the city are not deemed to be adequate enough to meet the needs of the community.
- Many of the elderly have special dietary needs because of diabetes, high blood pressure, etc. They need to be taught what and when to eat in order to prevent these from becoming larger problems.
- Meals on Wheels is a great program but some clients
  - A. Forget that a meal has been delivered
  - B. Do not know how to reheat weekend meals or are unable to remove the packaging.
  - C. Are unclear about the cooking directions
  - D. Do not like the food or don't want to eat alone so they do not eat
- Improper nutrition promotes dementia, which leads to memory loss and confusion.
- The slower metabolism of the elderly leads to an increased time that consumables, such as medications and alcohol are in the system. This can lead to broader problems if the person is not eating enough or properly.

### **Medical Needs/Insurance Issues**

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- Often times the elderly are unable to read prescriptions because of a vision problem or because they do not understand the directions. Someone is needed to provide this information.
- Lifeline This is a service that provides the elderly with a voice activated or button activated device that contacts a monitoring service when set off. The monitor then calls the individual to confirm the need and sends out a responder or EMS as needed. (See attachments)
- The majority of the elderly population is relatively healthy. An active lifestyle is more likely to help them to maintain their health. Thus, wellness clubs have been started through HMOs to encourage seniors to work together to be active.
- President Clinton is working to provide National Insurance coverage for people ages 55 to 62 because a large percentage of this population is uninsured. Because they lack insurance, members in this group are not getting preventative treatment and their incidence of major health issues is increasing.
- Medicare coverage is not comprehensive because it does not provide for prescriptions, which are very expensive.
  - A. Medicine Co-op If medications were purchased in bulk, they would be less expensive for individual consumers.
  - B. The AARP has a vitamin co-op; perhaps this could be used as a model.
  - C. Cema is an insurance plan that will cover what Medicare does not, like prescriptions, and a life insurance plan.

### **Other Issues**

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#### **Fraud**

- The elderly are highly susceptible to fraud; thus, this is a major focus with education of the elderly and service providers.
- Groups to protect against this:
  - A. Triad Lawmen and service providers working together to prevent fraud
  - B. Health Department Documents all complaints when visiting clients
  - C. Guardianship Services and Adult Protective Services

### **Communication between Agencies**

- In the past the agencies serving the elderly met once per month to discuss issues and problem cases. This was sponsored by AACOG but was discontinued because of budgeting concerns. Several agencies expressed interest in renewing these meetings.
- Senior Needs Network for Aging Persons (SNAPP)
  - A. This is a cooperative effort of Family Service Association and Warm Springs Rehabilitation Center to provide information about the services available to developmentally disabled adults in Bexar county.
  - B. Exact statistics are not known for this population, but the need appears to be significant in the San Antonio area.

### **Abuse**

- The Greater San Antonio Hospital Council has a protocol manual for recognizing abuse and/or neglect in elderly people which is based on the child abuse manual.
- Many different agencies provide a presentation of the rights of the elderly to their clients.

### **Education**

- Volunteers need to be taught how to interact with the elderly and to be given training as to what signs to look for and what procedures to follow if they suspect there is an issue.
- The community needs to be made aware of the benefits that the elderly bring to the community such as the number of hours and the type of volunteer work provided, etc.

### **City Year Program Ideas**

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- Home repair and upgrading to make them safer and more accessible for the elderly.
- Staff the recognition banquet (Already used by RSVP)
- Yard services for the elderly who are no longer able to do heavy work
- Simple household tasks such as changing light bulbs, fixing drippy faucets, etc.
- Special activities at nursing homes to promote intergenerational interaction and socialization
- Taking pets to the veterinarian or being a companion for an elderly person who needs to do this.
- Providing obedience training for dogs at the Humane Society. This will help the animals to be adopted.
- Take the oral histories of the elderly in nursing homes or in the community. This could provide the basis for books detailing Hispanic or female role models, which are needed in the San Antonio community. A local author could teach the students how to take these histories.

### **Attachments**

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- Lifeline Analysis
- Sister Care of San Antonio Elderly Needs Assessment
- Articles:
  - Financial Betrayals by Family and Friends
  - Making the Perpetrators Pay: Collecting Damages for Elder Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation
  - Bunco Unit Teams Up with Aging Network to Protect Elderly
  - Teaching Banks How to Protect Their Older Customers
- Statistics: Selected Characteristics of the Total Elderly population by Councils of Government, 1990