

Senior Community Services Final Report on SCS' Caregiver Support Program
Prepared for the Friends Foundation for the Aging

1. What problem were you addressing? What solution did you propose to address it?

Senior Community Services (SCS) is seeking to provide caregiver support resources to a more diverse group of caregivers and care receivers, resulting in greater equity and inclusion in the agency's Caregiver Support Program. SCS is striving to increase the program's caseload and identify a group of care receivers who better reflect Delaware County's cultural diversity. While 80% of the Caregiver Support Program's participants identify as non-Hispanic white individuals, this demographic group makes up only 60% of the county's population. To promote greater participation in the program among Delaware County's residents who are Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC). SCS has begun to expand marketing, communications, and targeted outreach efforts to institutions and community organizations trusted by people of color, to translate documents into foreign languages, and to improve the cultural competency of staff.

2. What actions did you take? What worked and didn't work toward your objectives? Please share any unanticipated benefits or barriers encountered.

1. Planned and Executed the Caregiver Academy: In April 2022 SCS held its ninth Caregiver Academy in person for the first time since the pandemic-related closure led the agency to offer the Academy on ZOOM. The caregiver support program staff held the event in a hybrid format to accommodate caregivers and care receivers in various situations. While some needed the respite care provided to attend in person, others found it safer and more convenient to participate from the comfort of their homes. This resource continues to be a staple of the Caregiver Support program's offerings, and while the hybrid approach worked for some this previous year, staff intends to survey caregivers to determine their interest in an in-person academy.

2. Translated Marketing and Outreach Materials: SCS translated Caregiver Support Program materials into several popularly spoken languages used by immigrant populations making their homes in Delaware County, including Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean. The translated material provided by Para-Plus Translations have been shared with appropriate community organizations and were also distributed by SCS staff at the annual Senior Living Expo at Harrah's Chester Casino and Racetrack on Friday, May 6th, 2022. SCS staff participate in the Expo every year to provide seniors with information about all of the resources that are available to older adults. The attached rack cards were distributed to every senior that passed by the SCS main table. Additionally, downloadable versions of the cards were included in the agency's weekly newsletter for three weeks. While these cards have not captured overwhelming engagement in SCS' weekly email newsletter, many physical copies were distributed in person at the Expo.

3. Established Partnerships with Organizations that Serve Immigrant Populations:

Caregiver Support Program staff has begun outreach to churches, schools, and other community organizations that provide settlement assistance to immigrant families. Building trust with new

partners is a time-consuming process. Despite strong relationships with community organizations, the agency has not yet identified a significant corps of BIPOC caregivers and care receivers to take part in these programs.

3. How did you measure success--both quantitative and qualitative? Please include numbers and demographics of people touched by the work.

Wellsky, a specialized care management database, allows us to see the “green shoots” of a shift in the demographic profile of participants in the program, as well as changes in Caregiver Assessment Scores (CAS), which quantify changes in stress levels associated with caregiving over time. The data indicate that efforts to match the demographics of the program participants with the county’s demographics are beginning to have an impact.

- 74.2% of program participants are Non-Hispanic White
- 23.6% of program participants are Black or African American
- 2.2% of program participants are Asian

While both the percentages of Non-Hispanic White and Black/African American program participants have made progress toward reflecting Delaware County’s the demographic profile suggested by census data (68.5% Non-Hispanic White and 22.7% Black or African American), SCS continues to face a big challenge when it comes to recruiting caregivers of Asian descent, and especially Hispanic/Latinx caregivers, who are significantly under-represented. Community partners have suggested that Hispanic/Latinx caregivers may be reluctant to participate in government-funded programs due to a fear of being reported as undocumented.

The average CAS score in the period prior to receipt of this grant was 28, which can be interpreted as a moderate level of stress. The slight uptick to 31 during the grant period, while not ideal, is not unexpected, given the ongoing threat of COVID-19 and the emergence of other stressors, such as inflation and neighborhood violence, among others.

SCS is committed to overcoming these obstacles and providing valuable resources and services to the most vulnerable populations in Delaware County.

4. How did partnerships/collaborations enhance or challenge the project?

SCS’ Caregiver Support Program will continue to partner with Link/ADRC to fund the annual Caregiver Academy. This long-time partnership greatly enhances the Caregiver Support Program’s ability to serve caregivers and care receivers in Delaware County. This annual lecture series is also a great chance to form new and nurture existing collaborations with industry experts. Local Licensed Clinical Social Workers, Psychologists, hospice professionals, and legal experts will continue to provide their knowledge and experience to the program. Additionally, reaching out to (and maintaining relationships with) municipal leaders, faith-based organizations, and culturally-specific agencies, will continue to be a crucial aspect of serving the caregivers of Delaware County.

5. Include a budget and actual for the project during the reporting period.

Please see attachment for full budget.

6. What conversations have you had on how to sustain the project after the grant, and do you have plans to share your results with other organizations?

The grant has funded the creation of documents that share program information for non-native English speakers and has provided the basis for SCS to engage in community outreach to culturally-specific service providers. By engaging translators for live, in-person activities and for recordings of Caregiver Academy programs, SCS will make services continue accessible to Delaware County seniors and their caregivers, regardless of their preferred language. As previously mentioned, the Caregiver Support Program will rely on senior centers in Delaware County to distribute information. SCS will also work alongside local municipalities to distribute materials and share resource information within their respective communities. SCS' Marketing Committee is currently planning to hold a meet and greet breakfast with local municipal leaders to share information on all SCS programs, including the Caregiver Support program.

SCS will advocate for greater government funding for marketing and outreach to underserved BIPOC communities as part of the program with the Delaware County Office of Services for the Aging (COSA), as well as with the PA Department of Aging. The hardships associated with caregiving affect low-income families from every cultural, racial, and social demographic. With a five-year contract with COSA securing SCS' ongoing role as the administrator of the Caregiver Support Program, SCS remains confident in its ability to change how the Caregiver Support Program meets the needs of the community's most vulnerable residents and change in whose needs the program meets. Assembling the tools, materials, and community relationships to accomplish these changes is the hardest and costliest part of the process, but is worth the investment of time, effort, and funding

7. Feedback on your interaction with FFA would be helpful. How have we helped? Made it harder? What else can we do to facilitate your work?

FFA leadership has been incredibly patient, kind, and understanding as the SCS team requested an extension on this project. SCS also appreciates FFA's continued patience as the SCS email service was victimized by hacking and phishing attacks. The email and video-chat communications were a great chance to gather the SCS team members, and we look forward to the chance to work together moving forward.

8. Additional comments:

Please see additional attachments for Caregiver Support Program documents available in various languages.