



Date: February 27, 2025
Organization: Mercy Care for the Adirondacks
185 Old Military Road
Lake Placid, NY 12946
TIN & Formal Organization Name: 20-8720121; Mercy Care for the Adirondacks, Inc.
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Amount Requested: \$10,000
Friends Foundation for the Aging

Summary Description:

Provide social care and healthcare access to improve health and well-being of older adults, navigate complex social care systems, and connect them to community services.

1. What is the problem you have identified?

It is with love of God and love of neighbor that the Sisters of Mercy sponsored the establishment of Mercy Care for the Adirondacks in 2007 to respond to the emergent need to relieve isolation and loneliness of elders living in their rural Adirondack Communities.

Older adults living in our rural, mountain communities experience unique challenges--often cold and severe winters and fewer family caregivers, as many of our young people leave the area for education or career, leaving their elder parents behind. A CBS News clip recently referred to these individuals as "Elder Orphans." Many of our older adult neighbors live alone and can no longer drive. Mercy Care's services are often referred to as those which might be provided by a friend or family member, if they were available.

According to the New York State Office for the Aging, the only population growth projected for the years 2015-2040 in Essex County (home to Mercy Care for the Adirondacks), Franklin County, and Clinton County is in the 60+ age demographic.

2. What is the solution you propose to address the problem?

Mercy Care will scale up and strengthen its Friendship Model of providing social care, access to health care, and spiritual care for older adults. Mercy Care Friendship Volunteers will foster social

cohesion with their elder care receiver friends. Helping to ease isolation and loneliness, the Friendship Model of assistance to elders is somewhat unique--building friendship between the caregiver volunteer and the elder friend they are assisting to create more equitable relationships.

Mercy Care will enhance and increase its Direct Service capacity to keep up with the rapidly growing aging population and their more complex needs in New York's Tri-Lakes Adirondack Region of Lake Placid, Saranac Lake, Tupper Lake, and surrounding communities.

Mercy Care will seek and attract funding to help more elders age in place more successfully and inspire their communities to become more age friendly.

To serve more elders, Mercy Care will continue to host Friendship Volunteer Trainings, launch its new Spiritual Care Companion Volunteer Program, and collaborate with local and state health, human, and aging services organizations.

Mercy Care's social care, age-friendly education network, and engagement programs in 2025 include:

- Recruit and Train Friendship Volunteers and Spiritual Care Companion Volunteers
- Technology Assistance Workshops for elders and volunteers in February, June, August, and November
- In-service programs for volunteers on the topic of disaster preparedness in February
- Mercy Care Community Garden Planting in May
- Annual Educational Forum in June on the topic of *Growing Up, Growing Older, and Living Well*
- Friendship Picnic in September
- Spirituality Retreat in September
- Holiday Craft Workshop in November
- Host and facilitate the Caregiving Working Group of the North Country quarterly meetings

3. What actions will you take?

Mercy Care is scaling up its programs to position our organization to meet the growing and complex needs and collaborative response required to enhance health care access and the social care network of whole person care – social, physical, and spiritual – mind, body, and soul. Need is not defined by economic status but by all the dimensions of a holistic person. Isolation and loneliness can and often does impact everyone. Social Determinants of Health now include social care and social relationships.

Mercy Care is launching its newly developed Spiritual Care Companion Volunteer Program to accompany an elder on their spiritual journey who is experiencing loss, grief, or joys in their life.

Mercy Care has expanded its Age Friendly Education and Social Network events by inviting members of the community to participate, in addition to Mercy Care's enrolled Elder Friends in its services and Mercy Care Volunteers.

To be implemented in 2026, Mercy Care is developing a plan to create volunteer informal health care navigators to assist Elder Care Receivers on their health care journey to access health care services more effectively. The Volunteer might attend medical appointments with their elder friend (with the elder's permission), provide them with transportation to medical, lab, and therapy

appointments, and provide them with a permanently loaned iPad and train their elder friend on how to use the device to participate in telehealth appointments or access or implement their personal health care provider portal.

4. Describe the population to be served.

According to Dr. Vivek H. Murthy, former Surgeon General of the United States, Loneliness, and isolation hurt whole communities. According to the Regional (Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton, Warren & Washington NY Counties) Community Health Assessment Report, ALICE (Asset-Limited, Income-Constrained, Employed) represents the growing number of families who are unable to afford the basics of housing, childcare, food, transportation, health care, and technology. There are 141,484 households in the Adirondack Rural Health Network (ARHN) region, with 16,926 of those households belonging to individuals over 65 years of age. In total 56,635 households were designated as either poverty or ALICE. In Essex County 27% of individuals receive Medicaid; 10.1% fall under the federal poverty level. In Franklin County, part of Mercy Care's direct service area, 25.9% of individuals receive Medicaid; 17.8% of individuals fall under federal poverty level.

There is little public transportation, if any, in many areas in New York's Adirondack and North Country Region. The geographic expanse in the Adirondacks is isolating. There are often long distances to services, including to health care facilities and providers. Mercy Care Friendship Volunteers will provide one-on-one transportation to elders to access health care and social care, at no cost to the elder.

5. Are there partners/collaborators for implementation or funding-who? Has the solution been tried by other organizations?

Mercy Care serves as a catalyst and facilitator of systemic change to empower older adults to age in place more successfully and empower our communities to become more age friendly. Mercy Care hosts and facilitates quarterly meetings of the Caregiving Working Group of the North Country, with excellent attendance from health, human, and aging service professionals and volunteers from several different New York North Country counties to share knowledge, break down silos, and hear from expert presenters on topics as concern older adults. Mercy Care serves the whole community--any older adult in need within our capacity. Our services are provided free of charge and are given freely by our kind and generous Volunteers. There are no income or health guideline requirements like many government-funded programs require.

Mercy Care is funded solely through charitable contributions and private foundation grants. Mother Cabrini Health Foundation has awarded Mercy Care with significant grants to provide training, technical assistance, and tools to help other communities establish and operate their own Community Friendship Programs for older adults, based on Mercy Care's successful model. The community itself supports our mission through their generous volunteer service and financial support. We receive no reimbursement for our services.

Over the past year, Mercy Care has been blessed to receive private foundation grants including: The McCutchen Foundation, Mother Cabrini Health Foundation, Thomas and Agnes Carvel Foundation, Chur Family Foundation, Jacob L. Reiss Foundation, Adirondack Foundation-Joan Grabe Family Fund, Sisters of Mercy Fund for Ministry Grant Program, Adirondack Foundation-Robert and Kathleen Trainor Family Fund, Cloudsplitter Foundation, Adirondack Foundation-Generous Acts, The Max & Victoria Dreyfus Foundation, J.M. McDonald Foundation, Adirondack Foundation-Aseel

Legacy Fund, Adirondack Foundation-Frances Douglass Silleck UMCF, and Charles R. Wood Foundation.

6. How will you know your actions are having an impact? How will you measure outputs and outcomes?

Evaluating Impact: Perform annual Mercy Care Elder Care Receiver, Friendship Volunteer, Parish Nurse, and Spiritual Care Companion Volunteer Surveys; survey and evaluate Volunteer Training and Education event participants; survey participants in social care and engagement activities, survey Mercy Care's Elder and Volunteer iPad permanent loan participants and the volunteers who train them one-on-one.

For the period March 1, 2024 – January 31, 2025, Mercy Care Volunteers donated 2,968 hours of service, drove 39,057 miles, and fulfilled 1,284 requests for assistance to elders to meet various needs. Over the period, 108 Mercy Care Volunteers assisted 204 elders in the Tri-Lakes region of the Adirondack Mountains with “errands of mercy.”

In response to a mailing to Elder Friends and Volunteers requesting submissions for Mercy Care's Friendship Newsletter sent to Elder Friends and Mercy Care Volunteers, an Elder Care Receiver sent us the following story with a \$5.00 bill enclosed in the envelope:

“My best experience was the introduction to the love of my life by his sister with whom I'd been friends forever. We went together for two years breaking up and then getting back together and eventually getting married and moving to Tupper Lake to make our home and raise four children—a girl and three boys and I've lost the girl and oldest boy in death. I lost my husband in 2004, and we would have been married 70 years this coming November. I will be 92 come November. I still maintain my own home—cooking, laundry, and keeping a wood stove burning. I really appreciate you teaming up Diane to me. We hit it off right from the start and have so much in common. Excuse my writing as my sight isn't good.”

Now recognized as a Social Determinant of Health, isolation and loneliness severely impact health and fullness of life. Mercy Care gives priority to the strengthening of meaningful social relationships to encourage participation by elders in the life of their communities. Mercy Care respects the human dignity of each elder and his or her integrated multidimensional human nature. Mercy Care is, therefore, holistic, addressing the needs of elders, whether in the social, intellectual, health, emotional or spiritual dimension of their lives.

We would be most grateful for the Friends Foundation for the Aging to touch the aging in the Adirondacks with mercy expressed through a \$10,000 grant award. The grant will help sustain, further develop, and advance Mercy Care's mission and programs to pursue the spread of hope and kindness to help our elder neighbors age in place more successfully and inspire our rural mountain communities to become more age friendly.

Mercy Care for the Adirondacks
Age-Friendly Communities in the Adirondacks
Grant Budget - July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026

Income Sources	Friends Foundation for the Aging	Grant Budget Other Funds	Total Grant Budget Proposed
Friends Foundation for the Aging	\$10,000		
Max & Victoria Dreyfus Foundation		\$ 7,500.00	
J. M. McDonald Foundation		\$6,000	
Chapel Hill Foundation		\$5,000	
Adirondack Foundation Generous Acts		\$10,000	
Sisters of Mercy Ministry Fund		\$ 25,000.00	
Thomas & Agnes Carvel Foundation		\$ 10,000.00	
Frances L. Carpenter Foundation		\$ 3,000.00	
Adirondack Foundation Aseel Legacy Fund		\$ 5,000.00	
Cloudsplitter Foundation		\$10,000	
Charles R. Wood Foundation		\$7,500	
Chur Family Foundation		\$40,000	
Joseph C. Nugent Family Charitable Trust		\$ 2,500.00	
Jacob L. Reiss Foundation		\$ 37,000.00	
McCutchen Foundation		\$ 45,000.00	
Adirondack Foundation Joan Grabe Family Fund		\$ 25,000.00	
Infant Jesus of Prague		\$ 3,000.00	
Corporate/Organization Support		\$ 4,500.00	
Program Fees		\$ 4,000.00	
Individuals		\$72,500	
	\$10,000	\$ 322,500.00	\$ 332,500.00
Personnel Expenses	Friends Foundation for the Aging	Other Funds	Proposed Project
Salaries	\$6,500	\$ 218,130.00	\$ 224,630.00
Payroll Administration		\$9,700	\$ 9,700.00
Combined Fringe Benefits		\$40,400	\$ 40,400.00
Subtotal Personnel Expenses	\$6,500	\$ 268,230.00	\$ 274,730.00
Non-Personnel Expenses	Friends Foundation for the Aging	Other Funds	Proposed Project
Printing	\$1,000	\$ 4,200.00	\$ 5,200.00
Supplies/Equipment	\$1,000	\$7,000	\$ 8,000.00
Travel	\$500	\$3,500	\$ 4,000.00
Communications		\$6,970	\$ 6,970.00
Insurance		\$1,800	\$ 1,800.00
Occupancy		\$5,000	\$ 5,000.00
Purchased Services	\$1,000	\$25,800	\$ 26,800.00
Sub Total Non-Personnel Expenses	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 54,270.00	\$ 57,770.00
Total Project Expense	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 322,500.00	\$ 332,500.00