

**Health and Social Services Consortium
Area Agency on Aging**

Area Plan

2022-2025



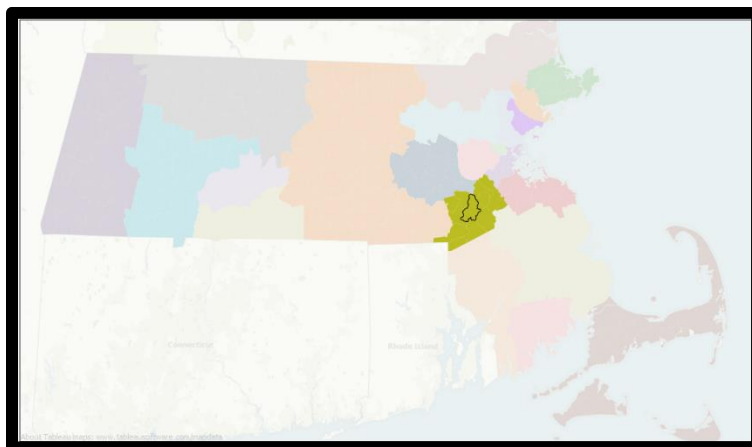
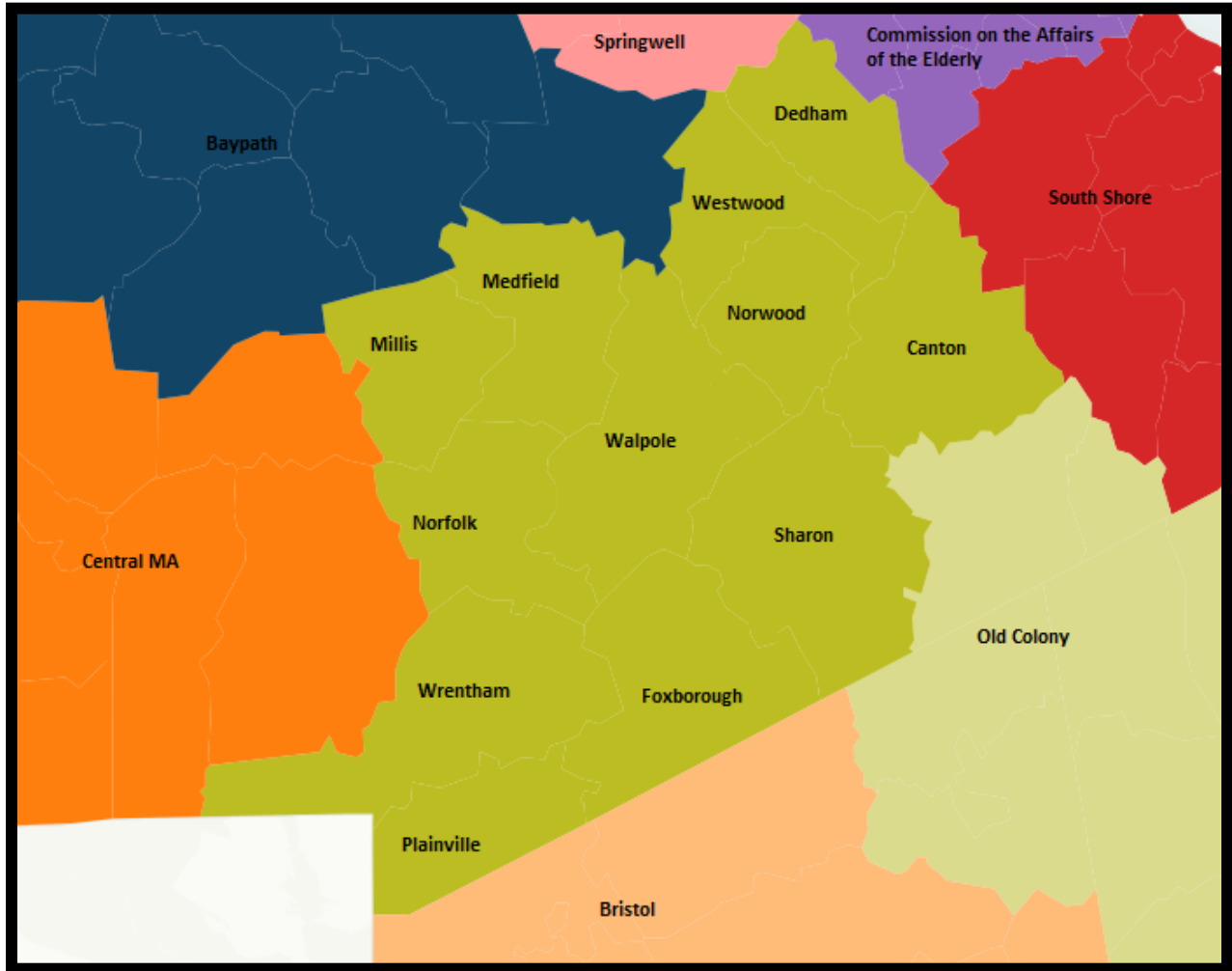
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HESSCO Planning and Service Area Map



- Program Service Area Communities**
- Canton
 - Dedham
 - Foxborough
 - Medfield
 - Millis
 - Norfolk
 - Norwood
 - Plainville
 - Sharon
 - Walpole
 - Westwood
 - Wrentham

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Since 1977, Health and Social Services Consortium, Inc (HESSCO) has served twelve communities in South Norfolk County by delivering a comprehensive system of services and supports that empower older adults and their caregivers. HESSCO designs and delivers innovative programs that respond to the needs of its communities. On a daily basis, older adults access care and support through HESSCO to maintain independence and age with dignity in the place of their choosing.

The HESSCO program service area (PSA) includes the following twelve towns: Canton, Dedham, Foxborough, Medfield, Millis, Norfolk, Norwood, Plainville, Sharon, Walpole, Westwood, Wrentham. According to census data, over 41,000 individuals over age 60 reside within the HESSCO PSA.

In 1965, the Older Americans Act enacted by Congress authorized many of the programs and services that continue to provide critical support to elders, especially those who are socially and economically isolated. This Act, most recently reauthorized in 2020, provides the foundation for the network of over 600 Area Agencies on Aging across the United States and territories. HESSCO is one of 21 Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) in Massachusetts. HESSCO also serves as one of 25 Aging Services Access Points (ASAP) within Massachusetts. The HESSCO model has the AAA and ASAP co-located within the same agency and serving the same PSA. HESSCO also serves as a lead agency within the Aging and Disability Resource Consortium, providing a no-wrong door approach to services and supports across the lifespan.

In its role as the Area Agency on Aging, HESSCO is a leader in planning and development of new approaches to aging well and community development. HESSCO leverages its expertise and resources to identify community needs, advocates for public policies and regulations that support positive aging, develops new programs to address emerging needs, builds coalitions and engages stakeholders around the needs of older adults.

To develop this Area Plan, HESSCO actively sought information on the needs of local older adults, researched trends and available data, and accessed state and federal guidance to ensure that this plan will guide HESSCO in its mission to empower older adults, their families and caregivers to live with dignity and in the manner and place of their choosing. This process included a local needs assessment that engaged over 300 older adults across the PSA through surveys and focus groups, allowing HESSCO to hear directly from older adults about their needs, preferences, and concerns for aging in their community.

Focus Areas

The Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA) which serves as the state unit on aging for the U.S. Administration for Community Living has developed focus areas which serve as pillars for aging service providers across the Commonwealth. HESSCO uses these focus areas as a framework to develop and provide the programs and services identified through this Area Plan process. These focus areas are:

1. Supporting the core programs of the Older Americans Act, a set of services authorized and funded through legislation;
2. Supporting participant-directed/person centered planning with programs that connect people to resources;
3. Protecting the rights of older adults and preventing abuse to support elder justice.

HESSCO along with all Area Agencies on Aging across Massachusetts work to ensure that the services provided through the Older Americans Act reach those with the greatest economic and social need. Individuals with greatest economic and social need include older adults living alone, low-income older adults, minority older adults, Native American older adults, and socially isolated populations such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer older adults (LGBTQ+), limited English proficient older adults, and those isolated due to circumstances such as COVID-19.

Local Needs Assessment

HESSCO completed a local needs assessment to develop this Area Plan. This local needs assessment encompassed ten listening sessions with older adults and/or advocates for older adults and distribution of a survey to five targeted groups of older adults. Through these efforts, HESSCO received input from 341 older adults and/or their advocates to determine the priorities and concerns within the HESSCO PSA. The overall results of the focus groups and surveys showed that older adults want services that are both easily accessible and will help them remain in their home. Addressing issues related to transportation, housing and economic security are also priorities for local older adults. When surveys were disaggregated for racial/ethnic and language-based minorities, priorities for helping older adults for whom English is not their native language and caregiver support programs became higher priorities.

As HESSCO completes a needs assessment process every four years, it has the benefit of comparison to prior needs assessments. One change from prior years was the focus on reaching disenfranchised groups shown by the respondents, and the fervor with which the financial needs of older adults was expressed during focus groups. In addition, HESSCO asked survey and focus group respondents questions specific to the COVID-19 pandemic. These results show that the older adults in the HESSCO PSA have experienced increased social isolation, are concerned for their health risk related to COVID-19 and have exercised less due to COVID-19 concerns.

Analysis from U.S. Census Bureau Data and population projections from the University of Massachusetts Donahue Institute show that all twelve towns within the HESSCO program service area have seen population growth of individuals over age 60 and this is expected to continue over the duration of this Area Plan. When compared to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the HESSCO program service area will have a higher percentage of individuals over age 60. The HESSCO PSA also has some communities with a density of Asian minorities who identify as Chinese and Asian Indian. Additionally, the vast majority of those within the HESSCO PSA selecting Hispanic or Latino on the U.S. Census American Community Surveys identify as Other Hispanic or Latino and Puerto Rican.

HESSCO Area Plan Goals

The HESSCO Area Plan outlines seven overarching goals of the Area Agency on Aging and then specifically identifies agency programs and processes that HESSCO will utilize to achieve the goals. The overarching goals identified within this plan are:

- Provide consumer with the information and available services and supports in a manner that allows consumers to make informed decisions about care and services that will best meet his or her needs;
- Improve access and availability of transportation options across the PSA ensuring that consumers can get to the destinations that are important to them;
- Ensure that consumers have access to a full complement of services to meet their care needs and support individual preferences;
- Offer evidence-based healthy aging programs that support disease prevention and health promotion and support age-friendly community initiatives across the PSA;
- Ensure that all programs supported through HESSCO maintain a person-centered approach and adopt principles of participant-direction and decision-support;
- Prevent, detect, assess, intervene and/or investigate elder abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation;
- Protect the rights of older adults, people with disabilities, and caregivers across the PSA and provide equal access to the justice system.

Within these seven overarching goals, the HESSCO Area Plan provides guidance for the comprehensive system of service and supports for older adults and their caregivers across the PSA. Some of the programs and processes involve furthering commitments already established while others involve innovations or strategies to address emerging needs. Throughout the 2022-2025 timeframe for this HESSCO Area Plan, HESSCO will continue to strengthen and support the programs that have become a cornerstone of care for older adults in our PSA. HESSCO is committed to remaining abreast of the needs of older adults and empower them to live their life with dignity, in the place and manner of their choosing.

CONTEXT

HESSCO is one of 21 Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) in Massachusetts and one of 25 Aging Services Access Points (ASAP) within Massachusetts. HESSCO has served in its capacity as the Area Agency on Aging since 1977 and plays a significant role in planning and community development. HESSCO leverages its expertise and resources to advocate for public policies that support positive aging, develop new programs to address emerging needs and identify the needs of its community members. HESSCO continuously listens to its stakeholders and engages in coalition building to address the needs within its program service area (PSA).

HESSCO developed this Area Plan on Aging with direction and guidance from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs on federal and state focus areas and with direction and guidance from older adults and/or their advocates from within the HESSCO PSA. In addition, HESSCO has researched trends and data from within our PSA to understand our communities and the older adults and caregivers who reside within it.

Federal and State Focus Areas:

The Executive Office of Elder Affairs with the U.S. Administration for Community Living identified three primary focus areas that local Area Plans on Aging must address within their PSA.

- The Older Americans Act Core Programs are a set of services authorized and funded through this legislation. They are grouped under broad categories that include the following.
 - Title III-B: Supportive services that provide access to services, in-home services, and legal services.
 - Title III-C1: Congregate meals that are located within community dining sites that offer nutritious meals, socialization, and various programs of interest to participants.
 - Title III-C2: Home delivered meals that provide a nutritious noon meal and a daily check-in for homebound elders.
 - Title III-D: Evidence-based health education that focuses on disease prevention and health promotion.
 - Title III-E: Family Caregiver Support Program that provides one-on-one counseling and information to caregivers as well as education programs.
 - Long Term Care Ombudsman Program that provides advocacy for residents of long term care facilities.
- Person-Centered Planning initiatives are efforts to connect individuals to resources that offer older adults and their family caregivers a degree of choice and control over the long-term services and supports they need to live at home.
- Elder justice efforts that protect the rights of all older adults and prevent elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation

HESSCO will use these focus areas to provide the framework for designing and providing aging services programs across the PSA for the duration of this Area Plan.

Local Needs Assessment

The Executive Office of Elder Affairs provides a format for each AAA to conduct a needs assessment within its PSA. HESSCO incorporates those findings into this Area Plan to ensure that the HESSCO Area Plan on Aging targets the needs of those older adults and their caregivers living within the PSA. HESSCO completed the needs assessment from September 1, 2020, to December 15, 2020. HESSCO conducted 10 different listening sessions/focus groups and distributed surveys to five target populations. These efforts provided a combination of in-person discussions, discussions over digital platforms such as Zoom, and survey results in English, Chinese (Traditional Mandarin), and Russian. HESSCO was able to engage 60 older adults and/or their advocates in discussion and 281 older adults through surveys. Throughout this process, HESSCO ensured that within the consumers engaged, there was representation across racial and ethnic populations, from low-income elders and from social isolated elder populations. A full review of the methodology and results from the 2020 Needs Assessment Project are outlined in Attachment A. Through these efforts, HESSCO has established the following primary assessment statements.

- Older adults in the HESSCO PSA want services that are both easily accessible and will help them remain in their home. They want to understand the complex system of services and supports available and know who to call when they need help.
- Older adults in the HESSCO PSA want access to a coordinated transportation system that will help them get to their destinations, whether medical or non-medical related.
- Older adults in the HESSCO PSA are interested in having more housing options within their communities and having improvements made to the options they currently have.
- Older adults in the HESSCO PSA are concerned with their economic security and increased costs related to food, housing, and health insurance are priorities to address.
- Outreach to older adults who are socially isolated and building cultural competency for providers and peers regarding LGBTQ+ needs is a priority for older adults in the HESSCO PSA.
- Older adults from racial, ethnic, and linguistic minorities within the HESSCO PSA identify priorities of helping older adults for whom English is not their native language, caregiver support programs and connecting with public safety programs.

HESSCO also must consider the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the PSA. This Area Plan on Aging will incorporate plans for services and supports that will bridge between a time when the entire nation is implementing various emergency public health measures and an anticipated reduction in these measures as the public health threat subsides. This pandemic has undoubtedly caused emotional, physical, and financial distress for the older adults in the HESSCO PSA. HESSCO will continually focus on responding to these emergent needs as these unprecedented times unfold. Table 1 shows the HESSCO Needs Assessment Project survey responses indicating some of the impact of the pandemic.

Table 1: COVID-Related Survey Responses from Needs Assessment Project	
Area of Concern	Percent Selected
I am concerned about my health risk and that COVID may be more severe for me.	49%
I am more lonely or isolated because of COVID-19.	46%
I exercise less because of COVID restrictions or changes	33%
I would like to use technology such as a computer or iPad to keep in-touch with family or health providers but would need education on using it	23%
I would like to use technology such as a computer or iPad to keep in-touch with family or health providers but would need help with the cost of it	11%
COVID-19 has resulted in negative changes to my financial situation	13%
Data Source: Needs Assessment Project survey conducted by HESSCO completed between September 1- December 31, 2020; survey provided in three languages; 269 total respondents for this survey section.	

HESSCO has completed an in-depth review of available U.S. Census bureau data and population projections from the University of Massachusetts (UMASS) Donohue Institute Population Estimates Program. This provides HESSCO with a better understanding of the projected change in population since our last needs assessment project and for the life of this Area Plan on Aging.

According to U.S. Census Data and projections from the UMASS Donohue Institute, all 12 towns within the HESSCO PSA have seen population growth of individuals over age 60 since the 2010 Census and projections show that this growth will continue. When compared with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the HESSCO PSA will have a higher percentage of individuals over the age of 60 throughout the duration of this Area Plan. All twelve towns within the HESSCO PSA will experience a growth rate of their population over age 60 between ten and twenty-one percent over this Area Plan timeframe (See Table 2 on next page).

It is important for HESSCO to understand the aging population within its PSA. While overall, the HESSCO PSA has lower percentages of ethnic and racial minorities than the Commonwealth, it is important to note that some communities have a density of Asian minorities higher than the state percentage. Further analysis of the American Community Surveys Census Data shows that majority of these communities have Asian residents who identify as Chinese and Asian Indian. In addition, within the entire HESSCO PSA the vast majority (61%) of those selecting Hispanic or Latino on the survey, identify as Other Hispanic or Latino with the next highest category (24%) selecting Puerto Rican. HESSCO remains committed to ensuring that programs and services are designed to provide access to all residents and that efforts are made to improve access for older adults within ethnic, racial, and linguistic minorities (See Table 3 for U.S. Census Race and Ethnicity information).

Table 2: Age-Based Population Projections				
Area	Residents Age 60+ 2010 Census	Residents Age 60+ 2020 Projection	Residents Age 60+ 2025 Projection	Percent Change from 2020 to 2025 Projection
Canton	4,937	6,441	7,378	+14.5 %
Dedham	5,973	8,062	9,238	+14.6 %
Foxborough	3,228	4,435	5,133	+15.7 %
Medfield	2,010	2,948	3,398	+15.3 %
Millis	1,459	2,280	2,700	+18.4 %
Norfolk	1,629	2,974	3,606	+21.3 %
Norwood	6,542	8,202	9,014	+9.9 %
Plainville	1,556	2,263	2,693	+19.0 %
Sharon	3,401	5,025	5,558	+10.6 %
Walpole	4,960	6,889	7,877	+14.3 %
Westwood	3,438	4,363	4,885	+12.0 %
Wrentham	2,053	3,345	3,982	+19.0 %
HESSCO Area Total	41,186	57,227	65,462	+14.4 %
Massachusetts Total	1,273,271	1,712,133	1,930,643	+12.8 %
Data Source: UMass Donahue Institute MassDOT Vintage 2018 Population Projections. September 2018. (UMDI-DOT V2018); accessed and percent change analysis completed by HESSCO 04/01/2021.				

Table 3: Percent of Population Identifying Race and/or Ethnicity from Census Data (Not Age Specific)							
Area	White	Black or African American	American Indian and Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	Some Other Race	Hispanic or Latino
Canton	84.3	6.2	0.6	8.2	0.1	2.6	4.1
Dedham	86.6	8.5	0.4	3.7	0.1	3.3	8.7
Foxborough	89.6	0.0	0.0	12.4	0.0	0.0	3.1
Medfield	94.3	1.3	0.3	5.4	0.0	0.0	2.0
Millis	93.7	2.3	0.0	1.8	0.0	2.5	2.3
Norfolk	88.7	7.3	0.3	2.0	0.0	3.4	7.1
Norwood	85.7	8.0	0.6	5.8	0.1	1.5	6.8
Plainville	89.6	4.8	0.3	4.6	0.0	1.4	4.5
Sharon	78.6	3.0	0.3	17.9	0.0	2.1	5.4
Walpole	91.2	2.0	0.6	5.2	0.2	3.0	9.1
Westwood	88.8	0.9	0.0	10.7	0.0	2.1	3.0
Wrentham	95.8	3.2	0.1	1.0	0.0	0.2	2.9
HESSCO Area Total	87.8	4.7	.4	6.8	.1	2.1	5.5
Massachusetts Total	80.9	9.4	0.7	7.5	0.2	4.8	11.8
Data Source: 2019 American Community Surveys, ACS 5 Year Estimates Data Profiles Using Zip Code Tabulation Area for Town Data; Data Label of "Race Alone or In Combination with One or More Other Races"; Accessed April 2, 2021; HESSCO area analysis completed April 2, 2021 https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=ACS%20Quick%20Facts&g=0400000US25_8600000US02021,02026,02030,02052,02054,02056,02062,02067,02081,02090,02093,02762&tid=ACSDP5Y2019.DP05&hidePreview=true							

In developing this Area Plan on Aging, HESSCO has also conducted an in-depth review of community health data, call trends for those calling into the HESSCO Information and Referral Department and demonstrated service needs over the last four years. Upon review of available data regarding chronic disease within our PSA, the health and wellness of the older adults within our PSA must remain a priority, see Table 4 on the next page. Across the HESSCO PSA, at least half of all older adults age 65 and over report at least four chronic health conditions. HESSCO is compelled to continue its efforts that will address issues of fall prevention, Alzheimer's Disease prevention and management, diabetes prevention and management, and other chronic disease issues.

Table 4: Percent of HESSCO Area Residents Age 65+ with Chronic Disease with State Estimate for Comparison (Age 60+ for Injured in Fall Estimate)				
Area	Alzheimer Disease or Related Dementia 13.6 % State Estimate	Diabetes 31.7 % State Estimate	Injured in a Fall Last 12 months 10.6 % State Estimate	4+ Chronic Conditions 60.7 % State Estimate
Canton	17.0 %	32.2 %	9.8 %	63.3 %
Dedham	18.0 %	30.0 %	9.8 %	64.9 %
Foxborough	13.2 %	27.8 %	9.9 %	55.6 %
Medfield	14.9 %	24.2 %	8.8 %	53.6 %
Millis	12.3 %	26.8 %	9.9 %	53.3 %
Norfolk	12.3 %	27.4 %	9.8 %	54.1 %
Norwood	16.3 %	31.2 %	9.8 %	61.9 %
Plainville	11.0 %	27.0 %	9.9 %	59.4 %
Sharon	14.8 %	30.6 %	9.8 %	57.2 %
Walpole	14.4 %	28.9 %	9.8 %	61.5 %
Westwood	16.2 %	26.8 %	8.8 %	64.9 %
Wrentham	18.6 %	29.0 %	9.9%	58.7 %
Data Source: MA Healthy Aging Collaborative 2018 Data Reports by City/Town, accessed April 2, 2021				

All this information and data provides the roadmap that is this HESSCO Area Plan on Aging 2022-2025. HESSCO will use this research to design programs, innovate, and respond to the needs of older adults within our PSA as they strive to age with dignity in the place and manner of their choosing.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

Focus Area 1: Older Americans Act Core Programs

HESSCO has formulated goals and objectives based on the core programs of the Older Americans Act which form a foundation of the aging services network in our PSA.

Goal 1: Provide consumers with the information about available services and supports in a manner that allows consumers to make informed decisions about care and services that will best meet their needs.

Information and Referral (Title III B)

To accomplish this goal HESSCO will continue to dedicate resources and support for a strong Information and Referral Department. Results from the HESSCO Needs Assessment Project show that most of all survey respondents (67%) believe that "Ensuring older adults know who to call when services are needed" is a top priority for their Area Agency on Aging. Qualitative results from the Needs Assessment also support that knowing who to call when services are needed as a priority. The Information and Referral Department managed over 5,000 calls in Fiscal Year 2020 and will continue to be staffed to accommodate the increased demand for this service. Ongoing training for this Department will continue to include principles of customer service and will also focus on the topic areas derived from the Fiscal Year 2020 Call Trends Reports and the Needs Assessment Project. This training will include but will not be limited to: Aging Services Access Point (ASAP) services, nutrition services, financial supports, and transportation services. As the pandemic unfolded within the last year, the HESSCO Information and Referral Department was able to pivot its training focus and expand its knowledge on the most current needs. For example, in April and May of 2020, HESSCO received many calls regarding food insecurity and the need for home delivered meals from the community. In January, February and March of 2021 the Information and Referral Department gained the expertise to discuss and schedule vaccine appointments for older adults. Maintaining this ability to quickly gain expertise and deliver pertinent information to the needs of our callers will remain a priority throughout the pandemic and beyond. HESSCO will continue its membership in the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems (AIRS) with the goal of having all our Information and Referral staff AIRS certified. HESSCO will also maintain access to translation services to facilitate calls from non-native English speakers. HESSCO maintains a list of all staff who speak other languages and may assist with translation and has contracted translation services available. HESSCO will also maintain its TeleTYpe (TTY) phone access to facilitate communication with the hard of hearing and Deaf community.

Outreach

The Needs Assessment Project completed by HESSCO indicated that consumers and caregivers have a strong need to understand who to call when services are needed and how to access the available services. To meet this need, HESSCO will implement a comprehensive outreach initiative. This initiative will encompass vulnerable elders from ethnic and racial minorities, elders who are socially isolated, and elders who are low-income. HESSCO currently has

outreach materials translated into Russian and Chinese (Traditional Mandarin). HESSCO will continually assess the need to translate documents into other languages based on data gathered through the U.S. Census and our collaborative work with community organizations. HESSCO has developed several congregate meal programs within our PSA that serve ethnic, linguistic minorities and socially isolated populations. HESSCO will make use of the opportunities these successful programs offer to expand outreach further within these communities. These include two Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ) focused programs, a program for older adults of Chinese descent and a program for older adults of South Asian descent.

HESSCO is also launching a COVID-19 vaccine access initiative in partnership with the Latino Health Insurance Program (LHIP). While this program will focus on vaccine access for racial, ethnic, and linguistic minorities, outreach materials for all HESSCO services will be provided in multiple languages over the course of vaccine access outreach.

HESSCO will review all its outreach documents for literacy standards, ensure that it is culturally appropriate and accessible in multiple formats. HESSCO will also conduct outreach with area faith communities to reach their constituents in a format that best meets their needs. Our plan will be to reach older adults through church bulletins, faith community gatherings and more.

Technology to Access to Care and Reduce Isolation (Title III B)

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, HESSCO embarked on a pilot project to improve access to care using technology. HESSCO has been piloting the use of a tablet with cellular capability to conduct Home Care Program assessments. Within the pilot program, the HESSCO Care Manager will conduct a hybrid style of assessment with a telephone assessment completed prior to the visit, 15 minutes spent in-person with the older adult and then a tablet is set-up and provided to complete the assessment via an online platform on the tablet. This pilot has been successful and HESSCO intends to expand the program further for the Home Care department and add a tablet loan program for older adults who may need this technology capability for telehealth visits and to reduce social isolation through connection with family and friends.

Goal 2: Improve access and availability of transportation options across the program service area ensuring that consumers can get to the destinations that are important to them.

Transportation Services (Title III B)

HESSCO will build on its previous work to improve access and availability of transportation. HESSCO retains a portion of its Title III B funds for the purpose of transportation use and has developed a process for the Councils on Aging to determine local transportation needs for individual consumers. HESSCO then arranges fulfillment of those rides with contracted providers. As transportation continued to be a priority by consumers identified during the Needs Assessment project, HESSCO plans to continue this process. In working with its Council on Aging partners, HESSCO continues to ensure that older adults are connected to their local resources for long term support. To improve access, HESSCO has recently negotiated the use of GoGo Grandparent, a concierge service for Uber and Lyft on-demand transportation services. While this service was prioritized for access to COVID-19 vaccination clinics, it has also been

helpful for other non-emergent medical transportation needs. In addition, HESSCO has recently received additional funds from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council that has allowed HESSCO to increase its transportation budget five-fold over the next year and expand its scope beyond medical transportation needs. All these combined efforts will allow HESSCO to offer a robust transportation access initiative within its PSA.

Goal 3: Ensure that consumers have access to a full complement of services to meet their care needs and support individual preferences.

Supporting Families and Caregivers

During the 2020 HESSCO Needs Assessment Project, survey respondents and listening session attendees identified the availability of services to help seniors remain in their home as a priority. HESSCO will continue to provide a strong focus on assessing eligibility for home and community-based services. HESSCO will also continue to provide service planning and/or care management for consumers who choose to develop a care plan that meets their individual needs. As a provider of state-funded Home Care Program services, HESSCO will offer eligible older adults the opportunity to develop a service package that may include but not limited to the following types of services: homemaker services, adult day health, laundry services, personal care or home health services, personal emergency response systems, adaptive equipment, companion services, medication dispensing, home delivered meals, transportation, grocery shopping, chore services, vision rehabilitation, respite care, and habilitation therapy.

Within the assessment for home and community-based services, HESSCO will ensure a seamless referral to additional services needed for advocacy and more specialized support such as the Family Caregiver Program, Ombudsman Program or Adult Protective Services. Ensuring that vulnerable elders or elders who may be victims of abuse or neglect receive the services and supports they need will continue to be a high priority for HESSCO. The annual trainings for all agency staff will include an Adult Protective Services training in how to recognize and report abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation.

Supportive Housing

HESSCO has an active and engaged Supportive Housing community in Sharon and Norwood. This model of housing has successfully ensured access to services and supports that consumers need to remain independent in their community. Residents within this program have access to a Supportive Housing Services Coordinator. The addition of social and wellness programming enhances their community experience while combining education and social supports. HESSCO will continue to support this housing model and advocate for more funded programs within the HESSCO PSA and Commonwealth.

HESSCO has launched the expansion of a supportive housing model with a private property management company. This model will leverage the core Older Americans Act programs and Home Care Program that HESSCO provides through a managed system coordinating these services within the building on a scheduled basis. The goal is to improve resident access to these services through a concentrated effort collaborating with the property management. HESSCO

will continue these efforts to expand the options for these private models of supportive housing within our PSA.

Increasing the Business Acumen of Aging Network Partners

To expand its complement of services offered to families and caregivers, HESSCO is working within its network of aging services partners across the Commonwealth to develop services for the private market. This will allow the network to gain strength as it works collaboratively and systematically to expand its imprint. It will also allow agencies to diversify their funding sources, a critical requirement for growth and development.

Transitions in Care

HESSCO will strive to improve transitions in care for consumers within the PSA through ongoing outreach and coordination with other service providers across the care continuum. HESSCO will continue to offer transition support services to individuals returning to the community from a hospital or nursing facility. This care transition program is a collaborative effort that includes the Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, and the Clinical Assessment and Eligibility Program and the Home Care Program.

Nutrition and Meal Support

HESSCO has always placed significant value in the Title III C meal support programs funded through the Older American's Act. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, HESSCO had targeted the congregate meal program as a growth area. It is expected that the PSA programs will return to operations of its congregate meal program, although this will take time and will likely be staggered across the PSA. HESSCO will support the "Grab-and-Go" model for those congregate programs that are not back to in-person operations. HESSCO will also explore hybrid models of in-person and Grab-and-Go meals dependent on local needs and the individual comfort level of participants. HESSCO will continue to provide support to some of the most vulnerable elders within our PSA. HESSCO will maintain a focus on providing meal support for the LGBTQ+ community and our Chinese and South Asian meal programs. These programs provide an opportunity for vulnerable or isolated elders to both offer and receive social support, receive nutrition support from HESSCO and provide an avenue for HESSCO to reach consumers in need of additional supports. As the population evolves over the next four years, HESSCO will review the need for additional congregate meals programs for vulnerable or isolated populations.

Along with its congregate meals program, HESSCO continues to place high value on its home delivered meals program. This program promotes good nutrition and assists vulnerable, homebound elders maintain nutritional health. HESSCO will continue to consider this a priority program. HESSCO currently offers a hot noon-time meal delivered to homebound elders in each town within the PSA, Monday through Friday. For those consumers who need additional meal support, HESSCO has available a frozen weekend meal, a cold evening meal, and breakfasts. In addition, HESSCO places high value on ensuring that the meal program meets both the health and cultural needs of individual consumers. Thus, HESSCO offers therapeutic meals such as renal-diet appropriate meals, ground or pureed meals as well as Kosher and vegetarian meals.

This allows HESSCO to provide nutrition support in a manner that meets an individual's needs and preferences. In addition, HESSCO will continue to offer emergency shelf-stable meals to mitigate the risk to our consumers who cannot receive a home delivered meal during a weather-related emergency and will seek outside private financial support when needed for this program.

The HESSCO nutrition program will continue its longstanding commitment to the use and provision of fresh and local fruits and vegetables. HESSCO will distribute farmer's market coupons in each town and deliver fresh food items to home delivered meal consumers.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, HESSCO has seen a 75% increase in its daily meal delivery that has been sustained throughout the pandemic. HESSCO anticipates that some of these consumers may shift to a congregate program post-pandemic, however, HESSCO anticipates that there will likely be an increased need for home delivered meals that will be sustained across the PSA. HESSCO will strive to meet this increased need.

New Service Development

The HESSCO Needs Assessment Project results show a need for handyman, repair, and light chore services across the PSA. Within the majority of all listening sessions held across the PSA, the older adults discussed the necessity of these services that allow them to remain in their home with ease and independence. The need for assistance with such things as changing light bulbs, shoveling, putting up/taking down storm windows and more were discussed at great length. The majority of participants discussed the difficulty they have accessing the private market for these services. These concerns focused on service cost, finding providers, and feeling secure that the providers had been properly vetted. HESSCO will continuously evaluate options to fund a pilot program to provide these services across the PSA with vetted providers.

Goal 4: Offer evidence-based healthy aging programs that support disease prevention and health promotion and support age-friendly community initiatives across the PSA.

Evidence-Based Programming (Title III D)

HESSCO will continue to support evidence-based healthy aging programs through its Title III D programs and Title III C Nutrition programs. HESSCO has a history of providing Chronic Disease Self-Management, Diabetes Self-Management, and Savvy Caregiver. Upon review of available data regarding chronic disease within our PSA, the health and wellness of the older adults within our PSA must remain a priority, see Table 4 in Context section of this Area Plan on Aging. Across the HESSCO PSA, at least half of all older adults age 65 and over report at least four chronic health conditions. HESSCO is compelled to continue its efforts that will address issues of fall prevention, Alzheimer's Disease prevention and management, diabetes prevention and management, and other chronic disease issues. During the timeframe of this Area Plan on Aging, HESSCO will initially focus on nutrition related evidence-based programming such as Healthy Eating for Successful Living in Older Adults and Diabetes Self-Management programs. HESSCO also remains committed to serving racial, ethnic, and linguistic minorities with these evidence-based programs to provide avenues of education and outreach to these populations.

Age-Friendly Communities

HESSCO has been a proponent of sparking Age-Friendly community organizing across its PSA. With assistance from HESSCO, the Neponset River Regional Chamber of Commerce became the first Chamber of Commerce in the United States to apply for and receive Age Friendly status for its entire region. HESSCO chairs the Elder Care Alliance within the Chamber that initiated these efforts. Through this and other collaboration, HESSCO has been involved with Age Friendly efforts in Norwood and Dedham and Dementia Friendly efforts in Sharon. Other communities have expressed interest and committed to devoting more resources in this area. HESSCO views its role to spark interest, organize community listening sessions, and foster community development of a stakeholder committee with clear goals and identified resources. HESSCO anticipates expanding these efforts across the PSA.

Oral Health

HESSCO will continue to place high value on assisting seniors in accessing oral care for their overall health and wellness. HESSCO will continue to participate in the Elder Dental Programs facilitated by the Community Visiting Nurses Association and held within the HESSCO PSA. While these in-person programs oral care programs have been suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic, HESSCO anticipates their return and that the need may be heightened post-pandemic. HESSCO will continue to be an active participant in these programs by providing nutritional counseling, health insurance counseling and outreach to older adults in attendance.

Focus Area 2: Participant-Directed/Person-Centered Planning

Goal 1: Ensure that all programs supported through HESSCO maintain a person-centered approach and adopt principles of participant-direction and decision-support

Staff Development

HESSCO will ensure that the appropriate program staff understand and recognize the principles of person-centered planning. This will be accomplished by HESSCO's commitment to provide training in Motivational Interviewing, Strengths-Based Social Work Principles, and Shared Decision-Making. These principles are incorporated into all programmatic work at HESSCO.

Home and Community Based Services

HESSCO adopts the principles of person-centered care planning throughout all its service planning activities. When a consumer is eligible for the state-funded Home Care Program, a Care Manager actively listens to the consumer's area of need and identifies for the consumer the services that may meet those needs that are available through the program as well as services that may not be included in the Home Care Program. The consumer is then able to develop a plan of care with the Care Manager.

HESSCO will also continue to provide the state-funded Consumer-Directed Care Program. With this program, the Care Manager acts more as a facilitator for the plan of care developed by the consumer. In addition, HESSCO will work with Personal Care Attendant Programs within the HESSCO PSA to ensure that consumers have access to this program that provides consumer choice and control over their service providers. Both programs support the principles of

participant-directed care and person-centered planning, allowing consumers to determine the mix of personal assistance supports and service providers that work best for them.

Caregiver Support

HESSCO's model for caregiver support allows the caregiver participant to direct the assessment and service planning to the areas of highest need as identified by the caregiver. This allows the Caregiver Specialist to ensure that the entire process is participant-directed and the service plan developed is both person-centered and strengths-based. The HESSCO program will focus heavily on the opportunity for the caregiver, with support from the Caregiver Specialist, to develop a self-care plan to assist the caregiver in building resiliency and alleviating stress. HESSCO has also started a virtual Caregiver Support Group based on the increased need for caregiver supports during the COVID-19 pandemic. The HESSCO Caregiver Specialist acts as a facilitator for discussions that are participant-directed. Each participant is invited to share their concerns for discussion and support from all group members.

During the 2020 HESSCO Needs Assessment Project, disaggregated survey results based on linguistic, racial, and ethnic minorities indicated that these respondents placed a higher priority on providing support and programs for family caregivers. The participant-directed nature of this program will ensure that the Caregiver Specialist is addressing the needs presented by the caregiver. This Needs Assessment result does indicate the need to ensure that outreach for this program is conducted within these communities that indicated their priority need.

Options Counseling

The Options Counseling program at HESSCO will continue to embrace a participant-directed, decision-support model. In this model, a consumer identifies their greatest areas of need and the HESSCO Options Counselor responds with information on the various possible programs and services available to meet those needs. Once informed of all options, the consumer can then develop an informed decision as to where and how to access care and support, determining the mix of personal assistance supports and service providers that work best for them. This model allows the Options Counselor to connect people to the resources they need for their area of concern.

Serving Health Insurance Needs of Everyone (SHINE)

The SHINE program at HESSCO will continue to fully support a participant-directed model of support. When in need of advocacy or health insurance benefits review, a consumer works with a SHINE counselor to identify their needs. The SHINE counselor will research all options and inform the consumer of the full slate of possibilities. This empowers the consumer to make an informed decision, and the SHINE counselor can then offer advocacy services and access information to ensure that the consumer has the resources to implement their plan.

Empowering the Community

HESSCO will continue efforts to empower seniors and caregivers residing in the community to consider their needs and wishes around care and to make their wishes known to family, friends,

advocates, and healthcare providers. HESSCO will hold at least one event annually open to the community to empower consumers to develop a healthcare focused advance care plan. To do this, HESSCO has aligned with Honoring Choices Massachusetts and will inform consumers of the five planning documents that are accepted in Massachusetts and use the Honoring Choices model of Explore, Plan, Connect. HESSCO has also incorporated training on the Honoring Choices model and five planning documents into the new staff orientation for all HESSCO employees.

Focus Area 3: Elder Justice

Goal 1: Prevent, detect, assess, intervene and/or investigate elder abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation.

Adult Protective Services

HESSCO will maintain its full support of the Adult Protective Services unit with staff to receive and investigate reports of abuse, neglect, and financial exploitation. This unit will connect at-risk community members to services and supports using person-centered service planning principles. HESSCO will provide training for the Adult Protective Services staff on trauma-sensitive practices, domestic violence, and financial exploitation.

HESSCO will maintain key relationships with financial institutions, medical professionals, and law enforcement that support a broad-based community response to elder abuse and financial exploitation. HESSCO will support local taskforces that involve municipalities and service providers that work together to resolve difficult situations emerging within the community.

Elder Abuse and Financial Exploitation Prevention

HESSCO will conduct an education campaign to educate the public and key informants regarding the issues of elder abuse and financial exploitation. The topics of this campaign will include but not be limited to recognizing signs of elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation, how to make a report of elder abuse, how to work with HESSCO as a key informant, and recognizing scams. HESSCO will complete no fewer than two education programs annually with the target audience of the public, service provider groups, and first responders across HESSCO's PSA. HESSCO has been involved with training new police recruits in the state and will continue that commitment.

Goal 2: Protect the rights of seniors, people with disabilities, and caregivers across the PSA and provide equal access to the justice system.

Legal Services (Title III B)

HESSCO will continue its commitment to provide Legal Services across the PSA. HESSCO works collaboratively with its sub-grantee to ensure that seniors have access to legal support and

representation regardless of ability to pay. In previous years, primary focus areas for this work provided representation for seniors experiencing housing concerns, the need for planning documents, and consumer finance issues. In Fiscal Year 2020, 77% of seniors who accessed this service were living below the poverty level. This exemplifies the crucial nature of this program and the protection it offers for seniors at risk of losing their housing and financial security. Thus, HESSCO will remain committed to funding the program above the requirements outlined in the Older American's Act.

Ombudsman Program

HESSCO will continually strive to ensure that long term care residents within its PSA access the Ombudsman Program for needed support. HESSCO will advocate for the rights of nursing and rest home residents and work to resolve problems and improve care and quality of life. South Shore Elder Services provides the Ombudsman Program Services within the HESSCO PSA. HESSCO will ensure that residents are connected to this program and will house information on its website and collateral materials directing individuals to the program. The HESSCO Transition Specialist will work closely with the residents identified by the South Shore Elder Services Ombudsman Program who wish to access supports and services to return to their homes and communities when identified as a goal.

Public Safety

During the 2020 Needs Assessment Project, when HESSCO disaggregated the results of the survey based on racial, ethnic, and linguistic minorities, a higher priority was placed on working with public safety departments to ensure the safety and security of older adults in the community. HESSCO will advocate for older adults within these populations to improve their level of safety and security. HESSCO will foster communication and identify the unique concerns that older adults may have within the community with public safety departments. This will be incorporated into our protective services trainings but also our participation on community crisis intervention teams and our collaboration with housing authorities. HESSCO is also acutely aware that the nation has experienced an increase in hate crimes focused on the Asian community. As HESSCO has a large number of Asian older adults within its PSA, HESSCO will work collaboratively with our local public safety partners to identify these concerns and develop a preventative approach.

Housing Advocacy

During the 2020 HESSCO Needs Assessment Project 32% of survey participants identified a priority of assisting seniors with housing options. In the qualitative analysis of listening sessions, the need to improve and expand housing options was also identified as a priority. It was clear from these results that the older adults within the HESSCO PSA want additional housing options and want improvement upon current options. Many listening session attendees discussed the deteriorating physical condition of public housing and outdated infrastructure that included senior housing with no elevators for second floor residents. A lack of affordable, independent living options, the need for additional subsidized programs, and need to streamline and ease the

initial application/annual reapproval process were identified as priorities. In addition, resident bullying and institutional discrimination related to LGBTQ+ status was identified as a concern.

HESSCO will use its role as the Area Agency on Aging to advocate for more Supportive Housing Programs within the PSA and the Commonwealth. In addition, HESSCO will ensure open communication with all housing authorities within our PSA to ensure that the unique needs of older adults, particularly those from vulnerable or socially isolated populations, are recognized. HESSCO will function as a conduit to relay the infrastructure and physical condition concerns to the authorities that have influence over financing and advancing improvement. HESSCO has also received outreach from private developers in the past and moving forward will continue to ensure that any potential developers are aware of the needs of the older adults within the PSA.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement

Quality Assurance and Quality Improvement are core HESSCO values and are an integral component of HESSCO agency function. HESSCO is committed to operating a program of continuous quality improvement. HESSCO has a dedicated Quality Improvement Manager who provides oversight, direction and coordination of all quality assurance and quality improvement efforts. HESSCO develops a Quality Improvement Plan each year that defines success for HESSCO programs and implements a measurement plan to assess achievement towards program goals. The Quality Improvement Committee at HESSCO is comprised of representatives from each of the Home Care, Nutrition, Planning and Community Development Departments and the Executive Director. The Quality Improvement Committee prioritizes performance objectives, develops measurement strategies and sets goals for improvement.

HESSCO employs the following tenets of performance measurement and quality improvement:

- Goals and objectives must be clearly identified and be measurable;
- Measure sets should include both process measures and outcome measures;
- Root cause analysis tools are used to identify issues;
- Rapid cycle improvement methodology such as the Plan-Do-Study-Act (PDSA) should be used to advance quality improvement objectives.

Consumer Satisfaction Surveys

HESSCO is committed to ensuring the satisfaction of the consumers it serves. For all facets of the services and programs it provides, HESSCO has a component of measuring consumer satisfaction. Some programs have surveys that are standardized across the Commonwealth for all Area Agencies on Aging and other programs have HESSCO generated surveys. HESSCO is committed to assessing consumer satisfaction for the following programs:

- Title III B Services including Legal Services and Transportation Services
- Title III C Nutrition Services
- Title III D Evidence-Based Education Programs

- Title III E Family Caregiver Services
- SHINE Program Services
- ASAP Purchased Services (in-home care)
- ASAP Case Management Services

These survey results are coordinated through the Quality Improvement Manager annually. They are used to assess HESSCO performance and identify areas for improvement and/or program development. These surveys are an important way for HESSCO to hear from its most important stakeholders, the older adults it serves.

ATTACHMENT A: 2020 NEEDS ASSESSMENT PROJECT RESULTS

State Guidance

The Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA) requires each Area Agency on Aging (AAA) to undertake a needs assessment process every four years as part of the development of the Area Plan on Aging. The EOEA guidance requires each AAA to conduct a minimum of eight activities with an emphasis on direct communication with older adults in at least 50% of all activities. The activities must meet the requirements outlined here.

- Five methods that target Older Americans Act identified populations: Greatest Economic and Social Need, Minority, Low Income; Low Income Minority, Rural, and At Risk
- Three methods that target older adults in social isolation: Living Alone, Limited English Proficiency, LGBTQ+, Rural, Indigenous Population, and Other Populations in Social Isolation

HESSCO Activities

HESSCO completed a series of ten public activities across the Program Service Area (PSA) to meet directly with older adults and/or their advocates. These activities took place between September 1 and December 15, 2020 and took place either in-person or via the digital platform Zoom. These provided opportunities for HESSCO to ask questions directly of older adults and their advocates to explore their concerns, ideas, and priorities. They followed a standard format that included:

- Introductions for facilitators and members and reason for meeting;
- Explanation of the role of the Area Agency on Aging and the Area Plan on Aging;
- Discussion of areas of priority for older adults with review of priorities identified in previous needs assessment in 2016 as a starting point for discussion;
- Discussion of how COVID-19 has impacted those in attendance;
- Discussion of anything not yet mentioned that is a concern or priority for anyone in attendance;
- Explanation for how information will be used and shared.

The table below identifies the date of each listening session, the population invited, and the mode of communication. These efforts reached a total of 60 older adults and/or their advocates through direct conversation and sharing of information and ideas.

Date of Event	Population Invited/Host	Mode of Communication
September 11, 2020	Residents of Dedham/Dedham Council on Aging	In-Person
September 30, 2020	Residents of Foxborough/Foxborough Council on Aging	In-Person
October 14, 2020	Residents of Norfolk/Norfolk Council on Aging	In-Person
October 14, 2020	Members of St. Vincent de Paul Society/St. Catherine Siena Conference	Digital via Zoom
November 9, 2020	Residents of Wrentham/Wrentham Council on Aging	In-Person
November 9, 2020	Residents of Westwood/Westwood Council on Aging	Digital via Zoom
November 10, 2020	HESSCO Advisory Council Members/HESSCO	Digital via Zoom
November 16, 2020	Sharon Knitting Club/Sharon Council on Aging	In-Person
December 10, 2020	Residents of Norwood/Norwood Council on Aging	Digital via Zoom
December 14, 2020	Participants in LGBTQ+ lunch programs/HESSCO	Digital via Zoom

HESSCO also conducted five targeted surveys to reach additional older adults across the PSA. These surveys were translated into Russian and Chinese (Traditional Mandarin), two languages identified by HESSCO staff as spoken by older adults receiving the survey. The efforts as outlined in the table below garnered responses from 281 older adults between September 1 and December 15, 2020.

Survey Target Recipients	Survey Distribution
Residents of Senior Housing in Sharon	Survey distributed by Supportive Housing Coordinator with stamped, return envelope included
Recipients of Meals on Wheels	Survey distributed to all Meals on Wheels recipients with stamped, return envelope included
Residents of Highland Glen housing development in Westwood	Survey distributed by Resident Services Coordinator with stamped, return envelope included

Residents of Wilkins Glen housing development in Medfield	Survey distributed by Resident Services Coordinator with stamped, return envelope included
All older adults within the Program Service Area	Survey distributed digitally through social media and online mechanisms accessed via Survey Monkey link.

The qualitative and quantitative results of these listening sessions and surveys were evaluated at HESSCO to determine the priorities of older adults within the PSA. In addition, HESSCO completed analysis of available community health data, census data, satisfaction surveys of HESSCO services, and call topics and trends within the Information and Referral Department of HESSCO.

Quantitative Results:

The top five priorities identified by the 281 surveys received by HESSCO are:

- Ensure Older Adults Know Who to Call When Services are Needed (67%);
- Improve Availability of Services to Help Seniors Remain in Their Home (64%);
- Improve Transportation Services (47%);
- Address the Financial Needs of Seniors (36%);
- Assist with Housing Options for Seniors (32%).

When the surveys are disaggregated by racial, ethnic, and linguistic minorities, the priorities change to the following:

- Ensure Older Adults Know Who to Call When Services are Needed (78%);
- Helping Older Adults for whom English is not their Native Language (73%);
- Improve Availability of Services to Help Seniors Remain in Their Home (58%);
- Improve Transportation Services (53%);
- Provide Support and Programs for Family Caregivers (35%).

Additionally, surveys translated into Russian and Chinese (Traditional Mandarin) ranked “Helping older adults for whom English is not their native language to access services” as their number 2 and number 1 priorities, respectively. Comments on these surveys reflected need for translation services for appointments with doctors, and to access transportation. Thirty-three percent of survey respondents identifying as ethnic or racial minorities identified “Work with Public Safety Departments to Ensure the Safety of Older Adults in the Community” as a priority while only 19% of the aggregated total identified this as a priority.

Qualitative Results

The qualitative analysis of the 10 listening sessions/focus groups conducted by HESSCO elicited the following five priorities for attendees:

- Ensuring Seniors Know Who to Call When Help is Needed;
- Services to Support Seniors Remaining at Home;
- Addressing Financial Needs of Seniors;
- Improving Housing Options;
- LGBTQ+ Cultural Competency.

The more in-depth discussion on these topics elicited the information outlined here.

Ensuring Seniors Know Who to Call

- Understand and know what HESSCO does in the community. Attendees were not always aware of the depth and breadth of services available or how HESSCO can help connect them.
- Understand how people want to get information, many identified the need to mail information to older adults and not rely on digital newsletters.
- Need to recognize that HESSCO does more than Meals on Wheels. Many attendees recognize this program and were surprised to hear of other services.
- Connect with other trusted providers to help spread the word about how to get services, particularly doctors and other medical professionals.
- Reach disenfranchised groups, go where they feel safe and accepted to share information about services.

Services to Support Seniors to Remain at Home

- Meals on Wheels is a priority service and consumers want to make sure it is protected and continues.
- Handyman and basic chore services are also a priority. This was identified in multiple groups as something very difficult for older adults to access safely and affordably.
- LGBTQ+ Cultural Competency for providers and older adults' peers is necessary for older adults to feel safe and secure in receiving services at home.

Addressing Financial Needs of Seniors

- Cost of property taxes identified as a source of concern for many at several different listening sessions. There are very limited options for property tax abatement or work-off opportunities accessible to participants.
- Cost of medications and insurance were identified in most of the listening session as a serious concern for many older adults.

- Cost of food and utilities were identified, especially the cost of fresh fruits and vegetables. Many in attendance discussed cutting back on certain foods due to cost.
- Cost of various housing options was identified at several listening sessions. The majority of all participants identified very limited affordable housing options within their communities.
- Needing to be better prepared for the cost of aging. Many identified that it is expensive to age in place and being more prepared for that through classes or education may be helpful.
- Feeling more marginalized due to lack of funds. Many identified feelings of powerlessness and social isolation due to their inability to afford things and/or their need to accept assistance.

Improving Housing Options

- Improvements are needed for current subsidized housing. Attendees discussed the lack of subsidized housing within their communities and the long waiting lists for residents to access the housing. Many also discussed the state of disrepair for the housing that does exist, identifying peeling paint, old carpeting, and needed repairs. Many also discussed that the current housing in their community is not optimal for older adults either due to location within the town or the physical structure of the building (such as a second story with no elevator).
- Lack of options for those wanting to stay within their own communities. Participants in all listening sessions identified that there is very little inventory within their own communities if they want to downsize and continue to live independently.
- LGBTQ+ Cultural Competency is a necessity. Participants identified bullying between residents within housing complexes and a lack of understanding by staff and town professionals who must intervene.

Statements of Needs and Priorities

HESSCO uses the information elicited from these qualitative and quantitative analysis to identify these six statements of needs and priorities for the older adults within the HESSCO PSA.

- Older adults in the HESSCO PSA want services that are both easily accessible and will help them remain in their home. They want to understand the complex system of services and supports available and know who to call when they need help.
- Older adults in the HESSCO PSA want access to a coordinated transportation system that will help them get to their destinations, whether medical or non-medical related.
- Older adults in the HESSCO PSA are interested in having more housing options within their communities and having improvements made to the options they currently have.
- Older adults in the HESSCO PSA are concerned with their economic security and increased costs related to food, housing, and health insurance are priorities to address.

- Outreach to older adults who are socially isolated and building cultural competency for providers and peers regarding LGBTQ+ needs is a priority for older adults in the HESSCO PSA.
- Older adults from racial, ethnic, and linguistic minorities within the HESSCO PSA identify priorities of helping older adults for whom English is not their native language, caregiver support programs and connecting with public safety programs.

COVID-19 Related Concerns:

HESSCO also explored the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic for older adults within the HESSCO PSA. This Area Plan on Aging will incorporate plans for services and supports that will bridge between a time when the entire nation is implementing various emergency public health measures and an anticipated reduction in these measures as the public health threat subsides. This pandemic has undoubtedly caused emotional, physical, and financial distress for the older adults in the HESSCO PSA. The qualitative discussions supported the same level of concerns as found in the quantitative survey analysis. When the surveys were disaggregated by racial, ethnic, and linguistic minorities, there were no significant changes in concerns noted. This table shows the HESSCO Needs Assessment Project survey responses indicating some of the impact of the pandemic.

COVID-Related Survey Responses from Needs Assessment Project	
Area of Concern	Percent Selected
I am concerned about my health risk and that COVID may be more severe for me.	49%
I am more lonely or isolated because of COVID-19.	46%
I exercise less because of COVID restrictions or changes	33%
I would like to use technology such as a computer or iPad to keep in-touch with family or health providers but would need education on using it	23%
I would like to use technology such as a computer or iPad to keep in-touch with family or health providers but would need help with the cost of it	11%
COVID-19 has resulted in negative changes to my financial situation	13%
Data Source: Needs Assessment Project survey conducted by HESSCO completed between September 1-December 31, 2020; survey provided in three languages; 269 total respondents for this section of survey.	