

CCoA Policy Priorities for 2024-2025

Policy Priority/Strategy/Action

Updated November 16, 2024

A. Improve behavioral health services for older adults

1. Ensure older adult representation on state and local advisory bodies.
 - a. Sponsor Legislation: [AB 2207](#) (Reyes) would, among other things, add the Executive Director of CCoA or director's designee, to the California Behavioral Health Planning Council and Alzheimer's Disease and Related Conditions Advisory Committee.
2. Support the development of services for older adults with local behavioral health agencies.
 - a. Promote behavioral health issues of older adults as an important public policy area and educate about important behavioral health issues, including availability, access and quality of services for older adults; integration of behavioral health and medical services.
 - b. Collaborate with other organizations, i.e., the California Behavioral Health Planning Council, the California Behavioral Health Directors Association, the California Association of Area Agencies on Aging and the California Department of Aging (CDA).
 - c. Monitor development of older adult behavioral health evidence-based and emerging programs; disseminate information about programs through outreach and education.
3. Support research on behavioral health for older adults, with special emphasis on data gathering, analyses, program review and policy development for the most vulnerable older adult populations (e.g., racial/ethnic minorities, underserved, LGBTQIA+).
 - a. Participate in stakeholder meetings, provide feedback and recommendations, and contribute to reports and toolkits developed by the CDA focused on older adult behavioral health.
 - b. Secure intern (May-August 2024) to conduct research through the University of San Francisco Leo T. McCarthy Fellow Program. *(completed August 2024)*
4. Advocate for standardized data collection to include older adult behavioral health, inclusive of racial, ethnic and sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI) data.
 - a. Provide technical support for California's first statewide survey documenting the needs, hopes and priorities of mid-life and older LGBTQIA+ residents across the state under the auspices of the California Aging and Disability Research Partnership.

B. Increase workforce opportunities for & expand the workforce serving older adults

1. Support inclusive employment practices for older adults.
 - a. Help identify potential interested companies, nonprofits and government agencies and connect them with the Age-Inclusive Management Strategies (AIMS) initiative, a platform that includes assessments, consultation and

resources for employers about how to meet the specific needs of experienced workers while balancing competing organization priorities.

- b. Monitor outcomes of the California Department of Rehabilitation (DOR) EmployABILITY Business Grant program and promote through social media outlets, the AgeWatch newsletter and presentations, as appropriate.
2. Support streamlining access to employment programs that support older adults.
 - a. Draft and release a policy brief with recommendations based on research and the May 2024 CCoA Forum: *Shining Stars in the Workforce - Experienced Workers*.
 - b. Partner with DOR to target older adults for vocational rehabilitation services.
 - c. Support continuation of CDA California GROWS workforce initiative by advocating for increased funding, expansion and sustainability.
3. Leverage current workforce initiatives to encourage specialization in geriatrics and gerontology (medical, behavioral health, social services, etc.).
 - a. Identify action items, as appropriate, with the Labor and Workforce Development Agency.
 - b. Sponsor Legislation: [AB 2207](#) (Reyes) would add organizations that represent or serve older adults to the California Workforce Development Board.
4. Promote diversity-focused pipeline programs that lead into aging services, Gerontology, Geriatrics, and health and social professions.
 - a. Seek ongoing funding for the Cheryl Brown Gerontology Scholarship program.

C. Address homelessness & increase housing options for older adults

1. Advocate for state funding to support the expansion of local home-sharing programs and remove barriers that impede opportunities for low-income older adults AND statewide shallow subsidies for older adults at risk of homelessness.
 - a. CCoA report: *HOUSING THOSE HARDEST HIT: Addressing Older Adult Homelessness, October 2024*.
2. Advocate for requirement of cities and counties to account and plan for the need for assisted living in their local housing elements.
 - a. Explore opportunities to sponsor new legislation and educate new legislators regarding the value of and need for assisted living.

D. Identify Innovative Solutions to Support Health and Well-Being of All Californians

1. Improve and strengthen aging services in California to better serve the needs of an older, more diverse population.
 - a. Sponsored Legislation: [SB 1249](#) (Roth) seeks to modernize and strengthen the state's aging services system, established fifty years ago, by reforming provisions of the aging services network.
 - b. Participate in the rulemaking process to establish regulations to implement provisions of SB 1249.

- c. Participate in stakeholder meetings and provide feedback and recommendations related to the September CDA Report on the needs of LGBTQ+ older adults.
2. Initiate development of Lifespan Education curriculum for K-14 grades to raise awareness about planning for a longer life, support intergenerational programs, promote a positive image of aging and combat ageism.
 - a. Work with the California Foundation on Aging Board to draft a project plan and develop a scope of work for a consultant to support development of a strategic plan and grant proposals.
3. Monitor implementation of California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM), an initiative to create a more coordinated, person-centered, and equitable health system for the Medi-Cal Population.
 - a. Participate in stakeholder meetings and provide input and recommendations on the proposed transition of select Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) programs into managed care.
4. Monitor the CDA Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) Financing Initiative¹.
 - a. Participate in stakeholder meetings and provide feedback and recommendations for LTSS Financing initiative.
 - b. Participate in stakeholder meetings and provide feedback and recommendations for CalPACE.
5. Explore possibilities and opportunities for Artificial Intelligence (AI) to benefit older adults, persons with disabilities, caregivers and providers.
 - a. Participate in stakeholder meetings, provide feedback and recommendations, and contribute to reports related to AI impact on older adults, families and providers.
6. Support development of communities for healthy living.
 - a. Collaborate with AARP and other stakeholders to elevate the understanding of communities of health living concept(s).
 - b. Participate in stakeholder meetings, provide feedback and recommendations.
 - c. Convene a forum of subject matter experts in September 2025 (TBD).
7. Monitor development and implementation of major policies, legislation and regulations, including but not limited to CA Master Plan for Aging, National Master Plan for Aging and Older Americans Act.
 - a. Participate in stakeholder meetings, provide feedback and recommendations.

¹ The Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) Financing Initiative, a critical component of the Master Plan for Aging, includes research and policy options for addressing the LTSS affordability challenges faced by California's older adults and people with disabilities, particularly those who fall in the "missing/forgotten middle." This two-year project includes a Medicare Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) pilot. A final report is expected by June 30, 2026.