

California Commission on Aging

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GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor

Executive Director
Karol Swartzlander

November 2, 2021

Susan DeMarois
Director, California Department of Aging
2880 Gateway Oaks Drive, Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95833

Dear Ms. DeMarois:

The California Commission on Aging commends the Newsom Administration and the California Department of Aging (CDA) for focusing on stronger state and local leadership structures.

The Commission appreciated the opportunity to partner with CDA in convening four regional and two target audience specific townhalls. Focused on the Hubs and Spokes Network for Disability and Aging Initiative, the townhalls offered an opportunity to hear from stakeholders across the state about the CDA's proposed statewide "foundation and framework" for every local community to achieve person-centered, equity-focused, and data-driven services and outcomes for all Californians as we age.

The Commission offers the following Hubs and Spokes Initiative recommendations in four areas:

1. Best Practices

- Leverage the experience, lessons learned and structure of the existing Aging and Disability Resource Connection (ADRC) program partnerships, which serve as a vehicle for streamlining consumer access to community supports, as the foundational framework of the Hubs and Spokes model.
- Showcase successful ADRC models and local leadership, e.g., Ventura, San Francisco and Marin counties.
- Leverage the Hubs and Spokes Initiative to reframe and rebrand the experience of aging in California, informed by best practices of local communities and other states' initiatives.
- Identify funding for continuous outreach using multiple approaches to ensure all individuals understand how to access information and assistance.

2. Capacity

- Enhance CDA's infrastructure to fully support the ADRC/Hubs and Spokes Initiative (e.g., Options Counseling training academy, technical assistance; policy and program guidance; monitoring and evaluation) to ensure consistency and quality of services statewide.
- Provide technical support to emerging ADRCs partnerships.
- Enhance the business acumen of current and emerging ADRCs through technical assistance and business acumen training to facilitate the integration of health and social services through partnerships with governmental programs for older adults and contracts with health plans and behavioral health providers.

3. Funding

- Increase administrative allocations for Area Agency on Aging (AAA) program expansion and oversight.

- Provide adequate funding to support emerging ADRCs partnerships.
- Ensure equity for underserved and under resourced communities through enhanced funding.
- Provide a dedicated funding stream for Options Counseling to empower consumers to make informed decisions about LTSS options, regardless of income.
- Work with the Office of Medicare and Medicaid Innovation and Integration to develop a mechanism to return a portion of Medicare and Medicaid cost savings, achieved through ADRC services, back to the ADRCs to support sustainability and expansion of community-based long-term services and supports.
- Leverage resources from California Advancing and Innovating Medi-Cal (CalAIM) and other state initiatives to support ADRC/Hubs and Spokes development.

4. Data

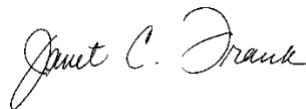
- Map out the availability of Area Agency on Aging services beyond core Older Americans Act programs to assess service gaps and needs.
- Leverage the Department of Health Care Services statewide Gap Analysis and Multiyear Roadmap of Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) and Managed Medi-Cal Long Term Services and Supports to both identify gaps in LTSS services and establish a baseline of expanded, standardized core ADRC/Hubs and Spokes Model services statewide.
- Establish a standardized minimum data set for local reporting to the State compatible with the proposed California Health and Human Services Agency Common Data Exchange.
- Ensure consistent language and terminology across Health, Behavioral Health and Social Services systems.
- Define how success will be measured.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Hubs and Spokes Initiative. As always, the Commission stands ready to support the Administration in development of a more inclusive, accessible and equitable LTSS system in California.

Sincerely,



Ellen Schmeding
Chair, CCoA



Janet Frank, PhD
Chair, CCoA Master Plan for Aging Committee

cc:

Richard Figueroa, Deputy Cabinet Secretary, Office of the Governor

Kim McCoy Wade, Senior Advisor on Aging, Disability and Alzheimer's, Office of the Governor

Joe Xavier, Director, California Department of Rehabilitation