

Older Americans Act Mental Health Provisions: Collaborative Strategies of AoA and SAMHSA

**American Public Health Association
2007 Annual Meeting**

November 7, 2007

U.S. Administration on Aging

**Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services
Administration**



Older Americans Act Long Term Plan



2006 Older Americans Act (OAA) Reauthorization

- Recognizes the need to address mental health and substance abuse prevention (MH/SAP) issues.
 - Calls for AoA to develop objectives, priorities, and a long term plan to support State and Local efforts to address these issues.
 - AoA and SAMHSA are developing the Long Term Plan to:
 - ❑ Maximize agency expertise
 - ❑ Capitalize on available resources
 - ❑ Include initially identified priorities, and
 - ❑ Continue to function as a dynamic planning resource to incorporate new older adult MH/SAP issues.
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Objective 1. Evidence-Based Programs

Identify and promote evidence-based programs to address priority MH/SAP issues concerning older adults through screening/detection programs and prevention/early interventions.

Priorities:

1. Expand the identification and promotion of general MH/SAP evidence-based related publications and materials.
2. Expand the identification and promotion of evidence-based programs and materials for:
 - ❑ Depression and anxiety
 - ❑ Suicide prevention
 - ❑ Prescription drug and alcohol misuse.

Objective 2. State Level Coordination

Encourage coordination between the State Unit on Aging and the State Mental Health and Substance Abuse agencies to assess state needs, and jointly plan the implementation of services to meet those needs.

Priorities:

1. Provide TA and guidance to support joint planning and coordination.
2. Provide information and resources concerning joint state level program development and coordination issues.
3. Define aging related MH/SAP outcome measures and data collection and analysis.

Objective 3. Increase Awareness



Increase awareness of mental health and substance use disorders in older adults and promote use of interventions to treat these disorders.

Priorities

1. Maximize use of available information and public awareness experience to promote recognition of MH/SAP problems, available screening, detection, prevention and early interventions at the national, state and local levels.
 2. Provide Information Memorandums on key topics.
 3. Post/link public awareness resources on AoA and SAMHSA websites.
 4. Reduce the stigma of seeking care and other barriers to receiving services.
 5. Remove barriers to diagnosis and treatment.
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AoA Choices for Independence Initiative

- Empowers individuals to make informed decisions about their long-term support options
 - Aging and Disability Resource Centers
- Provides more choices and flexible funding for individuals at high-risk of nursing home placement
 - Nursing Home Diversion Modernization
- **Enables older people to make lifestyle modifications that can reduce their risk of disease, disability, and injury**
 - **Evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention programs through local aging services provider organizations**

Healthy IDEAS

Healthy IDEAS (Identifying Depression, Empowering Activities for Seniors)



An evidence-based community depression program designed to detect and reduce the severity of depressive symptoms in older adults with chronic health conditions and functional limitations through existing community based case management services.

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