



**BayPath Elder Services  
Area Agency on Aging  
FFY 2022-2025  
Area Plan**

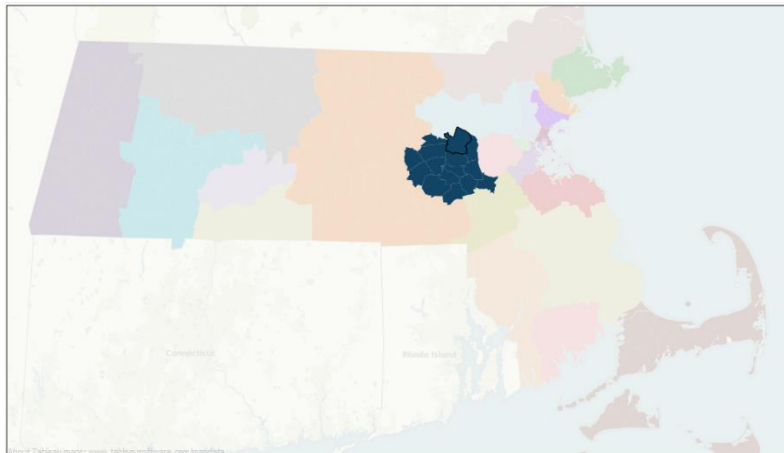
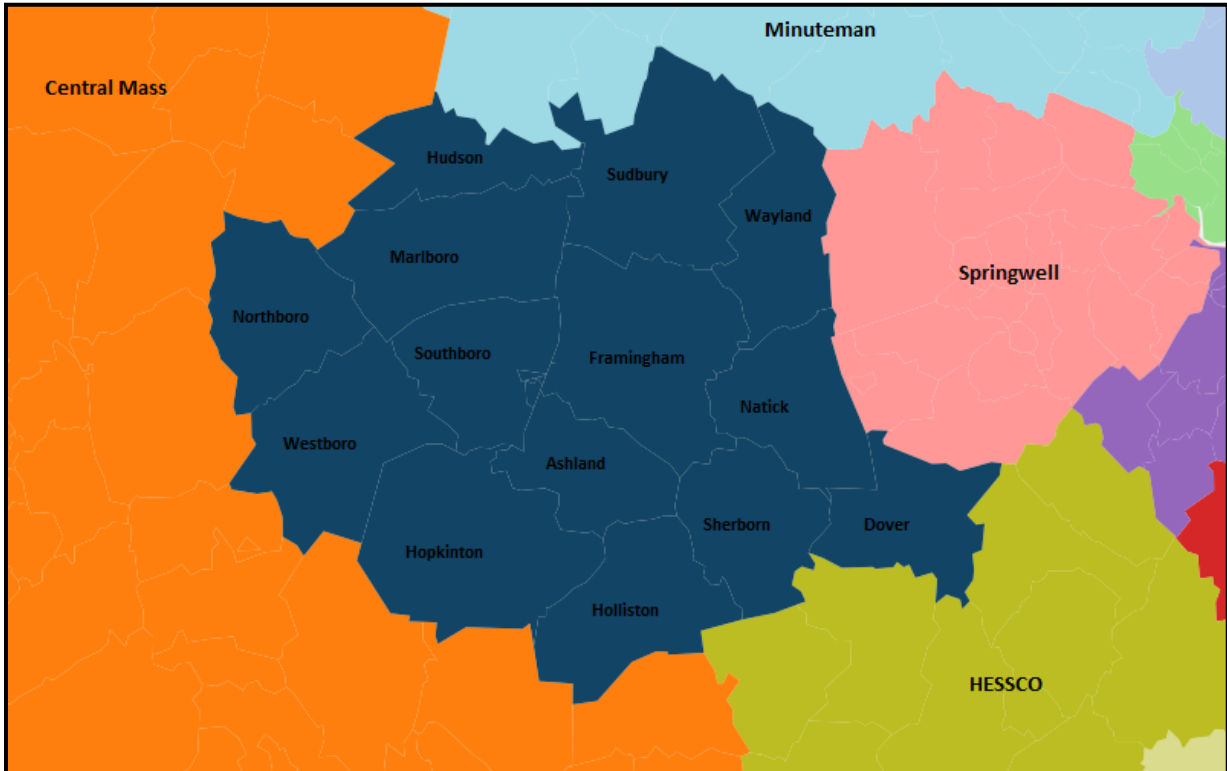
**Table of Contents**

**Planning and Service Area Map.....3**  
**Executive Summary.....4**  
**Area Plan on Aging Context.....7**  
**Goals, Objectives and Strategies.....19**

**BayPath Elder Services, Inc.**  
**Area Agency on Aging/Aging Services Access Point**  
[www.baypath.org](http://www.baypath.org)

**33 Boston Post Road West**  
**Marlborough, MA 01752**

**508-573-7200**  
**FAX: 508-573-7222**  
**TTY: 508-573-7282**



## Executive Summary

BayPath was incorporated as a non-profit organization on March 3, 1977, under the original agency name of BayPath Senior Citizens Services, Inc. The purposes for which the corporation was formed are as follows:

*“This non-profit corporation is organized to plan, develop and implement the coordination and delivery of services and supportive programs for persons sixty years of age and over unless otherwise restricted by conditions of grants or contracts, in the City of Marlborough, and the townships of Ashland, Holliston, Hopkinton, Dover, Sherborn, Natick, Framingham, Wayland, Sudbury, Hudson, Northborough, Southborough and Westborough, Massachusetts. The corporation shall endeavor to assist older persons to obtain services including but not limited to information and referral, homemaker and chore assistance, housing services, health maintenance and rehabilitation, nutritional services, legal and advocacy assistance, transportation, emergency assistance, and whatever medical or supportive services may be needed to prolong the life and well-being of older persons in the community and to prevent premature institutionalization.”*

In 1978, BayPath received its designation as the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) for the fourteen communities which it serves. In 1994 the name was changed to BayPath Home and Community Services and in 2001 to BayPath Elder Services. BayPath’s current office is in Marlborough, Massachusetts. BayPath’s mission is as follows: “We empower individuals across the lifespan to live with dignity and independence in the community setting of their choice by providing quality resources and services.”

BayPath received its designation as an Aging Services Access Point (ASAP) in 1997. The network of ASAPs was designed by EOEA and the legislature to provide a single access point for older adults seeking health and social supports. Over the past few years, the context for aging services, specifically health and social supports, has continued to evolve. Managed care entities that combine Medicare and Medicaid funding, so-called Duals Programs, are an increasingly popular choice for older adults. Duals plans in Massachusetts include a full array of community based long term services and supports. The collective infrastructure of health and social services, researchers, policy makers,

government, health care providers and systems are more aware than ever of the impact of Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) on the lives and wellbeing of older adults. Such an awareness sharpens the focus on the impact of AAAs and other community-based organizations that are dedicated to addressing SDOH.

The COVID-19 pandemic demanded all the resources of BayPath Elder Services and its community partners. Core Title III services provided critical support to older adults who faced incredible challenges as a result of the pandemic. Information and Referral Services provided up to date information and assistance to older adults and their caregivers about COVID-19 and the vaccine during a particularly difficult phase of the pandemic, when vaccine availability was limited, few vaccination sites existed, and scheduling appointments was challenging. BayPath worked closely with Councils on Aging to conduct outreach to homebound elders, provide transportation, and make referrals to local public health authorities who were responsible for administering the vaccine. The pandemic also exposed the extent of food insecurity among older adults. The BayPath Nutrition Program was able use enhanced federal funding to meet the increased need in both the number of consumers and need for additional meals. Caregivers were particularly impacted by the pandemic. Many families chose to forego in-home services in order to maintain the health of older adults, which increased the caregiving burden. Adult Day Health and other community resources suspended operations or greatly reduced offerings. In addition, for those who decided to continue in-home services, the pandemic upended the labor force. Many home care aides withdrew from the workforce to care for family members, supervise children who were schooled at home, or to protect their own health. The Family Caregiver Support program offered a lifeline to caregivers to help them cope with the increased strain.

BayPath Elder Services adapted to find new ways to conduct business and provide services. Remote participation in programs enabled many older adults to combat isolation and benefit from virtual socialization. The LGBT, Alzheimer's and caregiver support groups, health promotion evidence-based services and many other were offered at BayPath and the COAs. Tech enabled option for accessing programs is an innovation that helped reduce social isolation and will continue into the future. BayPath's collaborate approach to problem solving with COAs will also continue as the spending plan for American Recovery Plan Act dollars commences.

The sources of funding for BayPath Elder Services are the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and Title III of the Older Americans Act.

Additionally, BayPath receives contributions, private donations and utilizes external grants for innovative programs.

This area plan will summarize major needs of older adults in the Metrowest area and outline how BayPath Elder Services intends to address them over the next four years. In addition to employing Older Americans Act funding to support the efforts of local agencies to address these issues, BayPath will also continue to develop new initiatives focusing on the unmet needs reported during the needs assessment process.

BayPath Elder Services is committed to monitoring the needs of older adults in our Planning and Service area and develop programs and services to meet those needs.

## Area Plan Context

The American Community Survey (ACS) on [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov) is an ongoing survey that provides vital information on a yearly basis about our nation and its people. Information from the survey generates data that help determine how federal and state funds are distributed each year.

The 2019 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates revealed that there are an estimated 64,580 individuals over the age of 60 living in BayPath's planning and service area. In line with the aging population across the country, this represents a 25% increase over the 2010 U.S. Census which reported 51,695 individuals.

All 14 towns in BayPath's planning and service area saw increases in the older adult population. While much is reported on the number of baby boomers entering the older adult population, we are reminded that individuals are living longer as well. Nearly 10% of the 64,580 older adults in BayPath's service area are over the age of 85 years.

The priorities and intentions of the Older Americans Act is to serve older adults with the greatest economic needs, the greatest social needs and low-income minorities. In conjunction with these OAA priorities the most recent needs assessment data was used to determine the funding priorities for the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2022 grant cycle.

Overall results from the needs assessment were based on focus groups, COA members and staff input, as well as surveys received from the public during the period from 9/1/2020-12/31/2020.

Six hundred, forty-seven individuals participated in the needs assessment process. The participants included our community partners at Councils on Aging and Housing Authorities. Advocates for the older adults in the Money Management and Nursing Home Ombudsman program also contributed. The primary participant was the older adult themselves, with 341 Meals on Wheels consumers returning a completed survey.

The COVID19 pandemic and the consequential increase in social isolation was a common factor in most of the responses to the surveys and focus groups. The data supported the frequency of depression and loneliness by the general population as well as the minority populations because of isolation. Personal safety, highlighting fall risk was reported in 70% of those surveyed.

The Funding Priorities for the FFY2022-2025 were developed as a result of these findings

## Funding Priorities FFY2022-2025

### **Title IIIB**

- **Programs that Reduce Loneliness/Isolation/Depression**  
(Social isolation was identified as an area of concern in all 15 focus groups and surveys)
  - Companionship
  - Educational opportunities
  - Dementia-friendly community projects
  - Culturally diverse social/recreational programs
  - Intergenerational programming
  - Transportation for any/all the above
  
- **Programs that promote independence in the community setting of the consumer's choice.**  
(Home improvement was included in 20% of the responses regarding Personal Safety)
  - Home maintenance, modification, and minor repair
  - Address clutter, squalor and hoarding tendencies, including support
  - In-home services and supports
  - Transportation

### **Title IIID**

- **Programs that meet the Administration on Community Living's evidence-based program requirements.**  
(70% of survey responses listed fear of falling as a primary concern related to Personal Safety)
  - Matter of Balance
  - Chronic Disease Self-Management
  - Enhanced Wellness
  - Other evidence-based healthy aging programs

### **Title IIIE**

- **Programs focusing on respite and self-care for caregiver**  
(60% of focus groups and survey responses identified the need for caregiver support and resources)
  - Powerful Tools for Caregivers
  - Savvy Caregiver
- **Other forms of caregiver support and respite**
- **Providing information and resources for Grandparents Raising Grandchildren**



## **Focus Area Discussion**

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs has identified major “focus areas” to be addressed through the FFY2022-2025 Area Planning process: Older Americans Act Core Programs, Participant-Directed/Person-Centered Planning and Elder Justice.

### **Information and Referral:**

BayPath's Information and Referral (I&R) Department is a member of the Alliance of Information and Referral Systems, Inc. (AIRS), a professional organization committed to improving access to services for all people through the mechanism of information and referral. BayPath's I&R department is the gateway to all the programs and services available in the Metrowest area, as well as those of the agency. The I&R staff will continue to conduct person-centered assessments of callers (older adults) and their caregivers for the purpose of identifying their needs and preferences. Such assessments enable I&R Specialists to provide callers with an appropriate array of service and program options. Over the next four years, BayPath I&R department will continue to update resources with the latest programs and services that develop within its service area. The 2021 Needs Assessment (NA) project identified the desire to age in place and reduce isolation as priority concerns for older adults. BayPath will focus on increasing and diversifying its resource database to address these concerns. In addition, BayPath will include annual updates of the changing guidelines for local, state, and federal benefits, as well as the diverse range of local initiatives at community-based organizations. BayPath will expand its knowledge of area resources by cross training with community partners that serve both elders and persons living with disability of all ages.

The BayPath Information and Referral Department is also responsible for conducting outreach in the community to reach older adults who may not be connected to the aging network of AAAs and Councils on Aging. BayPath is committed to finding new ways of reaching low-income and isolated elders, as well as minority populations, including those who speak languages other than English. BayPath has prioritized the recruitment of bilingual staff to serve linguistic communities in our area who speak Spanish, Portuguese, and Russian. As customary pre-pandemic activity resumes, BayPath staff will continue to outreach to potential consumers and caregivers at health fairs, community events, senior housing, community centers, and other locations.

### **Title III Community Grants**

Over the next four years, BayPath plans to address the needs of the older adult cohort by partnering with Councils on Aging and other community organizations to start or expand services in each of the core programs (through the Title III planning and grants process). Priority will be given to proposals and projects that serve the needs of older adults with the greatest economic need, the greatest social need, isolated, and low-income minorities. In response to BayPath's 2021 NA Project, community partners highlighted the need for programs and aid in aging in place and housing options. The desire to maintain independence ranked in the top 3 responses in several focus groups.

### **LGBTQ+ Initiative**

LGBTQ+ older adults face significant social isolation and barriers to care and services. Living through the second pandemic of their lives during COVID-19 pandemic, many LGBTQ+ older adults responded as they did during the AIDS Crisis: reach out, build community, share verified information about how to stay safe, and help one another navigate turbulent/unfamiliar emotions about our shared crisis. In 2020 many elders learned how to use electronics, particularly smartphones and zoom, to join BayPath Elder Services' virtual Coffee Hour, Pathways Café, and Dune Shack Artspace social gatherings. Because our *Pride Across Generations* gala each October and our Pathways Café welcome people from many generations, BayPath's team leaned into our familiarity with creating/facilitating intergenerational conversations and kept rainbow events open to all ages.

Younger guests have enjoyed learning often-hidden history from those who witnessed or made great societal changes and have been relieved and eager to discuss their own challenges, concerns, and triumphs with elders who can understand them. In reciprocation, they have cheerfully helped seniors understand new language and technology.

We continue working to increase and improve outreach to underserved and marginalized populations, particularly Queer and Transgender People of Color (QTPOC) who often face additional cultural and community challenges to "coming out" and living authentically. Our 2020 PAG Virtual Gala, hosted by the founders of the LGBT Elders of Color, started BayPath's community conversations about the intersection of Black Lives Matter and LGBTQ+ equality activism.

By increasing awareness about resources such as the Alzheimer's Association's LGBTQ+ phone-in support group, we have helped LGBTQ+ families feel safe discussing their concerns and challenges. Amongst peers, they can speak freely without editing information or neutralizing pronouns.

Our *GRAY PRIDE: Welcoming & Working with LGBT Elders* cultural competency training is offered FREE every month on Zoom in 90- and 60-minute versions open to all interested parties. Sessions can be scheduled free for any agency, group, or congregation. A 30-minute overview is available to spark conversations, followed by a showing and discussion of the documentary *Gen Silent* or a more casual Q&A.

Access to reliable Wi-Fi and working knowledge of smartphones, tablets, etc. provides “transportation” during the pandemic. We help seniors to use their devices, often working one-on-one for their comfort. Our guests do not have to use their mic/camera, though we make sure they have connected successfully. This increases access for those who find that hearing or seeing themselves onscreen intensifies gender dysphoria; one younger guest communicates by typing in the chat box, while others acknowledge and include the typed comments aloud.

An unanticipated joy of the pandemic has been Zoom visits with faraway groups and friends, creating closer ties with the Rainbow Elders, LGBT Elders of Color, and Rainbow Outreach Professionals groups, among others. We also have connected with new friends who are isolated, housebound, or distant, and by popular demand BayPath will continue to host virtual programming in years ahead.

An unanticipated joy of the pandemic has been Zoom visits with faraway groups/friends, creating closer ties with the Rainbow Elders, LGBT Elders of Color, and Rainbow Outreach Professionals groups, among others. We also have connected with new friends who are isolated/housebound/distant, and by popular demand BayPath will continue to host virtual programming in years ahead.

### **Home Delivered Meals**

BayPath’s 2021 NA Project confirmed that food insecurity is a major concern. The COVID19 pandemic brought the issue to the forefront. 46% of respondents listed nutrition as a social concern. Economic and financial security was a concern highlighted in the survey and focus groups where it ranked in the top 3 concerns in 28% of the responses. The nutrition program is a critical support for low-income elders.

BayPath provided 180,770 home delivered meals in calendar year 2020. This was a higher number than the normal 10-12% annual increase. The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted the program in both the number of consumers and the delivery of the meals. From March through June the need steadily increased. At the same time the number of volunteer drivers decreased, losing 80% of the volunteers. By June, the need levelled off, and new volunteers,

including college students, at home parents and school employees working from home, filled the gap.

The program also changed the delivery of meals. What had been a five-day meal delivery was reduced for most of the year to twice a week, with cold and frozen meals complementing the one hot meal. The no-contact delivery was adopted, which meant bagging the meals and hanging them on the doors at each home. As a result of the necessary changes during the pandemic, the program has added new paid staff to the delivery team. In addition, float staff for the meal sites were added. This will ensure continuity of service should another pandemic or natural disaster occur. This strengthens the program by using a core of paid delivery staff while continuing to engage volunteers.

The use of technology is also being explored as we work toward a paperless process for the Home Delivered Meals Program. Using phone applications that will improve communication with the drivers, having “not at home” alerts automatically forwarded to in office support staff, and GIS mapping of the routes. This technology could also monitor consumers' changes in condition.

The Nutrition Program is also working on the expansion of meal options to include more culturally diverse meals.

BayPath’s goal is to continue to closely monitor revenue and expenses so we can continue to provide home delivered meals to eligible seniors in need of nutritional support.

### **Congregate Meals**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic congregate meals were suspended at all sites, with few, as of this date, having set plans for reopening. When able to resume, BayPath will continue with 9 congregate lunch programs, 7 of which serve American fare and 2 that serve authentic Chinese foods. BayPath will explore adding more Grab and Go sites for the next several years in addition to congregate community meals. This hybrid model will ensure more options to the population as well as ensuring continuity of services should another pandemic or natural disaster occur. The congregate model of meal delivery combines nutrition with socialization and is an important vehicle to reduce isolation.

### **Nutritionist Services**

BayPath’s registered dietitian (RD) develops at least two senior specific nutrition curriculums and educates seniors in the 14 towns of our catchment area twice per year on subjects such as Diabetes, sodium, pro-biotics, brain health, cooking for one, etc. The goal for this area is to continue to expand host sites for these education sessions to reach diverse senior populations. During the COVID19 pandemic these programs were adapted to be accessible virtually and will

continue to provide them to the communities, via local cable, zoom and other virtual platforms. This will allow individuals the ability to view their time.

BayPath's RD also provides one-on-one nutrition assessment and therapy to seniors found to be at high nutrition risk. The RD delivers therapy to an eligible senior by phone, in their home or at the local senior center. The RD completes a nutrition assessment and provides a customized nutrition plan for each senior in need of nutrition support.

The goal is to continue to outreach to the 14 communities, so the BayPath RD is known as the "community dietitian" for seniors in our area. The RD will continue education of staff to ensure the resource is offered to all consumers.

### **Disease Prevention/Health Promotion**

The Healthy Living Center of Excellence (HLCE), based at Merrimack Valley Elder Services, staff regional coordinators who help HLCE in meeting the needs of communities throughout the state. The organizations serving as regional coordinators provide oversight for planning, implementation, and evaluation of the evidence-based programs under grant funding for the regional collaborative. They help to ensure the systematic and coordinated delivery of programs. Each region hosts regular coalition meetings where community organizations can gather to share best practices and coordinate services. The MetroWest Regional Coordinator is the contact for the BayPath Elder Services area.

BayPath's partnerships with area Council(s) on Aging and other community organizations provide opportunities for older adults and their caregivers to participate in local programs. To continue providing these programs during the COVID-19 pandemic, the HLCE developed virtual classes that meet the Evidence Based Program criteria set by the Administration for Community Living (ACL). The use of remote technology to deliver such programs may help improve access to older adults who have difficulty accessing or using transportation. The partnerships that offer these programs have expanded over the years to include Housing Authorities, Adult Day Health programs, and the local YMCA. BayPath will continue to offer funding to community partners who wish to provide these programs both virtually and in-person. In addition to concerns regarding falls and balance, the 2021 NA project found that 90% of respondents had health concerns regarding chronic pain.

### **Family Caregiver Support Program**

The Caregiver Support Program at BayPath provides educational programs and support services to family caregivers and professionals. The Family Caregiver Support Specialist (Specialist) educates and supports the caregiver, providing self-care guidance and ensuring an action plan is created that includes backup

support, resources for respite and technical assistance. Referrals to legal experts to advise and assist with Health Care Proxy and Power of Attorney documents are routine.

The need for respite for the caregiver was identified as a need in 60% of survey responses in BayPath's 2021 NA Project. The COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences relating to the closing of day programs caused the biggest unmet need among caregivers. How to get relief and respite from the daily responsibilities of caring for their loved one while balancing their own needs was difficult. During this time, the Specialist relied on local resources, such as the Executive Office of Elder Affairs' Home Care Program, short-term respite in a facility, and scholarships provided to the caregiver to hire in-home companion care. The program purchased Companion Pets for persons with Alzheimer's disease and related disorders. Companion Pets are designed to bring comfort and companionship to the care recipient. Alzheimer's Pet Therapy helps patients escape from a world where someone is always caring for them and provides some respite for the Caregiver.

The most important service provided by the Specialist is validating the concerns and needs of the Caregiver. Assuring them that they are doing their best, emphasizing to the Caregiver that their needs matter too. The Specialist regularly attends MetroWest Alzheimer's Partnership meetings and the bi-weekly meetings of the Massachusetts Family Caregiver Support Program. These meetings are beneficial for gathering information on local resources, support programs and shared lessons from peers.

BayPath Elder Services developed the CaregivingMetroWest.org website several years ago to address the unmet need for a single point of access to caregiver information, supports, resources, and social connections for potentially thousands of Caregivers whose care recipients live in the MetroWest 25-town service area. The website includes a customized assessment tool, an interactive map, message boards, a secure personal section, a caregiver blog, an interactive glossary, and comprehensive tips and information on all aspects of caregiving. It remains a valuable tool for information and resource access to caregivers.

### **Aging and Disability Resource Center:**

The MetroWest ADRC partners are BayPath Elder Services, Health and Social Services Consortium, Inc. (HESSCO), and the MetroWest Center for Independent Living. The three agencies work together as the "No Wrong Door" for people of all ages, incomes, and disabilities to get information and resources on the full range of long-term services and supports (LTSS) options. The MWARDC partners from 26 different cities and towns outreach and cross-train

with Veteran's Service Officers, various town department staff, rehabilitation facilities, nursing homes, rest homes, councils on aging, hospitals, and physician groups. Meeting regularly throughout the year, the goal of this group of professionals is to provide information and resources to individuals of any age living with a disability enabling them to make informed decisions on their care needs.

### **Options Counseling Program**

The Options Counselors offer intensive one-on-one decision support services to individuals of any age in need of long term supports and services. The program is founded on the principles of consumer control and direction. Options Counselors conduct trainings and presentations in the community about options for long term care that benefit professionals and their consumer groups. The MWADRC Options Counselors faced challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021 due to mandatory social distancing. Many consumers did not have access to technology that would enable virtual meetings and consequently services were provided over the telephone.

Long-term care includes an ever-changing array of services aimed at helping people live as independently as possible, meeting medical, social, financial, and housing needs. It can range from assistance with household chores to assistance with activities of daily living, to highly skilled medical care. Long-term care services can be provided in a variety of settings such as the home, assisted living community, or nursing home. An Options Counselor will assist people with understanding the available options that meet an individual's long-term care needs, allowing them to make informed choices about where to live and how to manage their care.

### **Consumer Directed Care**

Consumer Directed Care (CDC) allows the consumer to recruit, hire, and supervise their in-home care provider rather than utilizing BayPath's contracted network. The consumer is assigned a care manager who is involved in guiding the consumer in understanding the responsibilities of a consumer-employer: scheduling aides, training them on the provision of services, completing worker time sheets and submitting these to the fiscal agent contracted for payroll. The CDC Program at BayPath currently has 135 Homecare and 65 Senior Care Option (SCO) participants. These consumers benefit from hiring someone familiar, a family member or friend. This was beneficial and less stressful during the COVID-19 pandemic, when fear of spreading the virus caused many in need of assistance to decline help from agencies or someone unknown to them.

### **Legal Services**

BayPath has partnered with MetroWest Legal Services to help protect the rights of vulnerable elders for over 40 years. Through the Title IIIB grant, MetroWest Legal Services provides free legal services to low-income elders within the BayPath 14 town catchment area. In FFY 2020, MetroWest Legal Services provided legal representation and/or advice to 296 older adults. The majority of those elders live below the poverty level and 12% reported ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino. Housing issues continue to be a high priority, though the COVID-19 pandemic and the suspension of non-emergency cases in Housing Court for most of the year resulted in lower numbers of cases and consumers compared to previous years. The expectation is that once the courts fully open and lift the suspension the number of cases will rise. The other high-volume category of cases was Estate/Life Planning. MetroWest Legal Services adapted to the pandemic by adding remote visits, limited in person meetings with clients, and constant phone/email contact. They continued to hold virtual clinics for housing issues and individualized virtual meetings with elder clients. BayPath will continue to partner with MetroWest Legal Services to serve the legal needs of older adults.

### **Long-term Care Ombudsman Program**

The primary goal of the Long-term Care Ombudsman Program is to offer a way for residents to voice their concerns and have their complaints addressed so they may live their lives with dignity and respect. Ombudsmen also educate residents, staff and families about resident rights and refer to other agencies as necessary to ensure the quality of care.

The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 challenged the Program Director (PD) and the volunteers with restrictions on access to the nursing home staff and residents. Through guidance and direction from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs State Ombudsman program, BayPath's PD assisted the volunteers with learning new methods of advocating for residents. The use of telephone communication and virtual visits allowed the Ombudsman to stay in contact with the residents. As they look ahead, they are developing plans to continue with virtual visits and slowly make their way back into facilities safely. Moving forward, it will be a hybrid model as the PD and volunteers continue with virtual visits and calls combined with in-person visits for observation.

BayPath will continue to support the program and the PD in recruiting efforts to attract additional volunteers. The PD will seek out candidates that demonstrate the ability to adapt to change and use technology. This will better prepare the program for any unforeseen circumstances that may limit access to the facilities as the COVID-19 pandemic did.



### **Elder Rights/Protective Services**

BayPath relies on two sister Aging Service Access Point (ASAPs) for the Protective Service (PS) program for our consumers. Springwell to our east and Elder Services of Worcester to our west work closely with BayPath staff to ensure that our consumers receive the necessary protection of the PS Program. Springwell and Elder Services of Worcester both hold office hours at BayPath twice each month. These office hours will continue to provide one-on-one, in-person consultation to BayPath staff members. These Protective Services departments are always available by phone and a valued resource to both staff and our consumers. All BayPath staff and program volunteers receive ongoing supervision and training on recognizing and reporting signs of elder abuse, neglect and exploitation. BayPath staff members will continue to consult with a supervisor and protective services when concerns about potential abuse, neglect, and exploitation or self-neglect of a consumer arise. BayPath's Interdisciplinary Decision Team (IDT) meets regularly to discuss complex cases and outline a plan for additional assessment and intervention.

### **Money Management Program**

Financial and economic security was identified as an area of concern in 14 focus groups. To address this concern, BayPath's Money Management Program will continue to provide bill-pay support to help older adults remain independent and in control of their finances. BayPath's Money Management Program has provided much-needed support for older adults who have difficulty managing their day-to-day finances. Providing individualized assistance through the dedicated efforts of trained volunteers, volunteers assist consumers with organizing and reviewing bills, preparing checks, reviewing bank statements, and establishing a workable budget. The volunteers also advocate on behalf of the elder with creditors and service providers.

This is achieved through the dedicated support of screened and trained Money Management volunteers. BayPath has 88 active Money Management volunteers serving approximately 63 older adults in the BayPath and HESSCO catchment areas (Ashland, Canton, Dedham, Dover, Framingham, Foxboro, Holliston, Hopkinton, Hudson, Marlborough, Medfield, Millis, Natick, Norfolk, Northborough, Norwood, Plainville, Sharon, Sherborn, Southborough, Sudbury, Walpole, Wayland, Westborough, Westwood, and Wrentham). Volunteers receive continuous training and support during regularly scheduled meetings and daily access to the Program Supervisor and Coordinator. Volunteers are also trained in recognizing the potential mental health issues which could put their consumers at higher risk of being abused, neglected, or exploited. BayPath's money

management program will continue to work closely with legal services and the three Protective Services departments in the BayPath/HESSCO catchment area. The COVID-19 pandemic of 2020-2021 brought new challenges to money management. During that period Money Management consumers had been assisted remotely utilizing telephone calls and doorway bag drop visits. Volunteers were quick to adapt and dedicated in their efforts to continue to provide bill paying services. The lessons learned from this experience will serve the program well as we move forward. The use of technology to facilitate volunteer onboarding and meetings has proven to be efficient and beneficial. The pandemic has highlighted the importance of in person visits for money management. Clients need to see the volunteer to build trust and help make a connection with their volunteer and the program. The clients enjoy the social aspect of the bill paying experience and this cannot be replicated with technology. During the pandemic volunteers have been able to obtain consent to remove documents from clients' homes. This accommodation should be continued when warranted to help facilitate bill paying.

## **FFY2022-2025 Goals, Objectives and Strategies**

**Goal #1: Meet the needs of the older adult through programming and partnerships that address those with the greatest economic or social need, those isolated and low-income minorities.**

### **Strategies # 1**

- Offer Title III funding to Councils on Aging and other community partners annually to start or expand services in each of the core programs and based on the needs assessment.
- Create a housing specialist and/or train staff on aging in place and housing options
- Advertise and promote community partners and programs on BayPath social media platforms
- Information & Referral staff update community resources, continuously, and share them with staff and community partners, by email and agency newsletter and website.

**Goal #2: Continue targeted outreach and support of the LGBTQ+ older adult.**

### **Strategies #2**

- Identify the barriers that exist for the LGBTQ+ older adults in obtaining ancillary health services and offer the necessary resources to help access these services.
- Explore ways to increase the opportunities in the community to battle those who are experiencing isolation/depression.
- Maintain regular communication with councils on aging and senior centers to strengthen ongoing relationships, coordinate care and improve services for the LGBTQ+ older adults.
- Conduct outreach and education activities to LGBT older adults to assist them in identifying LGBT friendly resources and support services
- Continue to provide diversity and inclusion training to staff and community partners.

### **Goal #3: Strengthen and expand the Nutrition Program**

#### **Strategies #3**

- Add paid staff to the delivery system and meal sites, while continuing to engage volunteers
- Explore the use of technology to develop a paperless process for the program. The use of phone applications will improve communication with drivers and field staff.
- Expand the meal options to include more culturally diverse meals.
- Develop a hybrid approach to meeting socialization and nutritional needs when congregate meals are suspended due to another pandemic or natural disaster.
- Continue the expansion of host sites for education sessions by the agency's registered dietitian (RD) on specific nutritional topics such as Diabetes, low-sodium, brain health, etc.

### **Goal #4: Help older adults live healthy and active lives.**

#### **Strategies #4**

- Continue partnerships with Senior Centers and other community agencies to provide Healthy Living programs.
- Provide opportunities for meaningful community engagement through volunteer opportunities in BayPath. These volunteer opportunities include, the Board of Directors, several Advisory Councils, Meals-On-Wheels, Money Management and Nursing Home Ombudsman programs.

### **Goal #5: Support, educate, offer training and respite to family caregivers**

#### **Strategies #5**

- Family Caregiver Support Specialist will continue to provide self-care guidance to caregivers.
- Specialist will work with community partners to outreach to the caregiver community educating them on resources and programs that support their needs.
- Through community partners, Savvy Caregiver and Powerful Tools for Caregiver trainings will be offered.

- Develop and maintain resources for respite and adaptive equipment and aids to help provide respite opportunities for the caregiver

**Goal #6: Connecting consumers to resources through person-centered, directed planning**

**Strategies #6**

- Build on the “no wrong door” philosophy of the Aging, Disability Resource Consortium by working with Independent Living Centers (ILCs) and other AAAs providing information and resources to all consumers of any age living with disability and older adults.
- Options Counselors will work closely with community partners providing information and resources relating to aging in the community setting of their choice.
- Continue and expand the Consumer Directed Care option for services in the HomeCare and Senior Care Option programs.

**Goal #7: Protecting rights and preventing abuse of older adults**

**Strategies #7**

- Continue the strong partnership with MetroWest Legal Services, expanding the number of consumers served and exploring new ways to deliver legal advocacy.
- Increase awareness of the Ombudsman program by increasing participation in community events.
- Develop a recruitment plan to expand the volunteer base that was severely compromised by the effect of the pandemic. Work with the skilled nursing facility’s visitor protocols and restrictions to ensure access to the residents by the program staff and volunteers.
- Continue to partner with the protective services programs at Elder Services of Worcester Area and Springwell, Inc. to provide staff with ongoing training and consultation to prevent, identify and intervene with older adult abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Increase awareness of the Money Management Program as a free service in the community that assists elders with budgeting and routine financial matters.