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CONGRESSIONAL  
UPDATE 2020  
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# ILLINOIS AREA AGENCY ON AGING DIRECTORS

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Rockford

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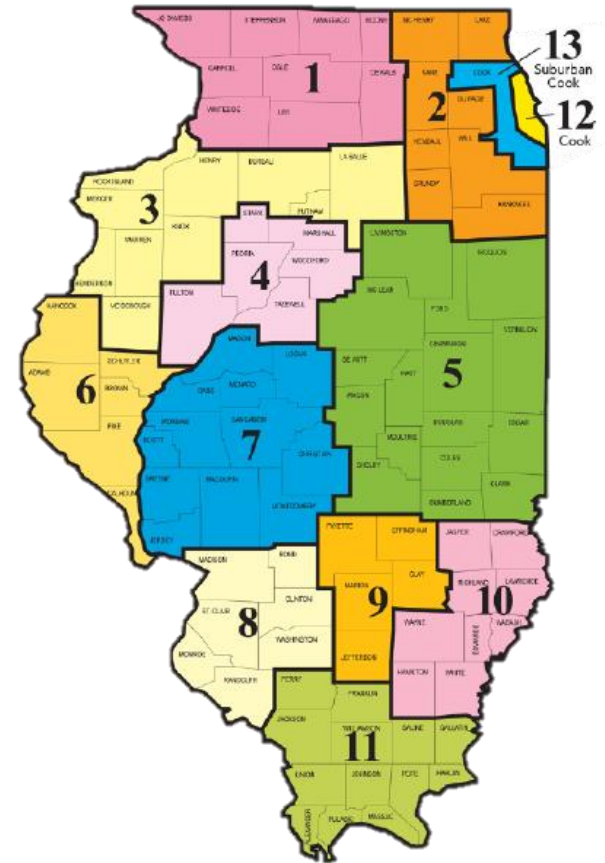
Egyptian AAA – PSA 11  
Carterville

## **Yolanda Curry**

City of Chicago – PSA 12  
Chicago

## **Diane Slezak**

AgeOptions – PSA 13  
Oak Park



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# ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT ON AGING



- Paula A. Basta, M.Div.,  
Director
- Lora McCurdy, Deputy  
Director
- Becky Dragoo, Manager,  
Division of Home and  
Community Services
- Samantha Brill,  
Legislative Liaison

# AGENDA

Welcome

Introduction of Legislators

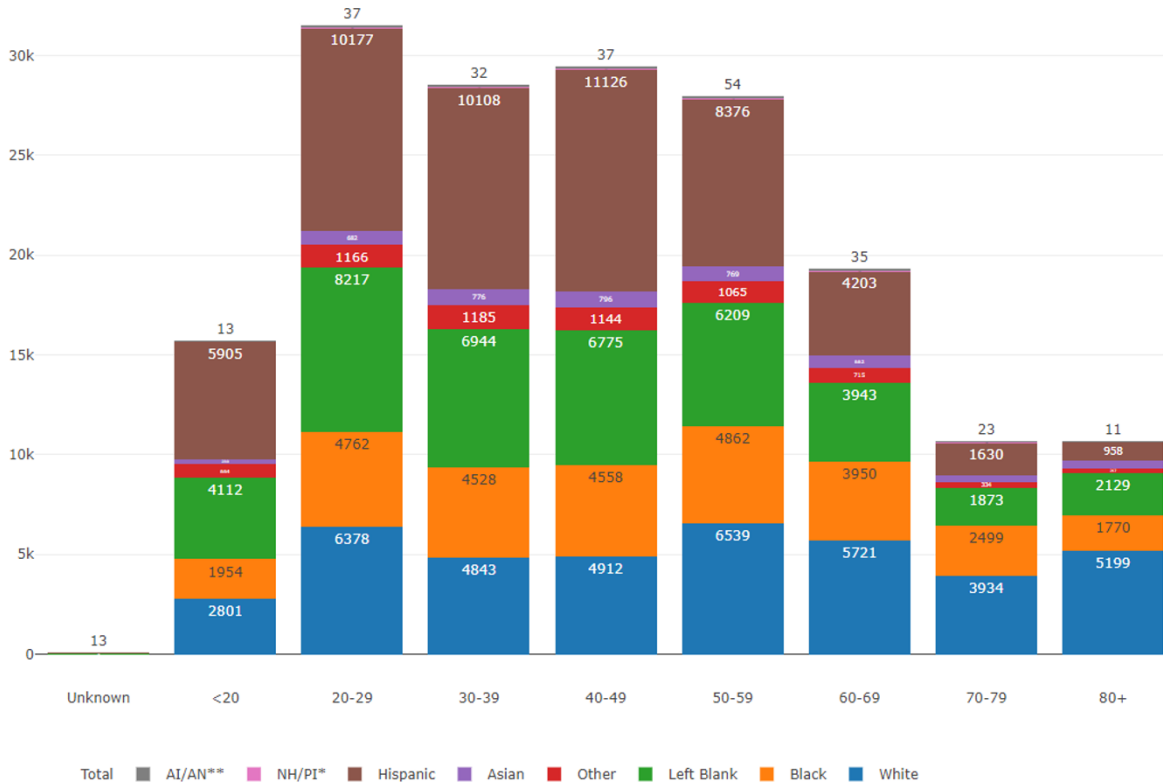
Challenges faced by the aging network in light of COVID-19

Sampling of Area Agencies on Aging COVID-19 Response Summaries

Our Ask to Legislators

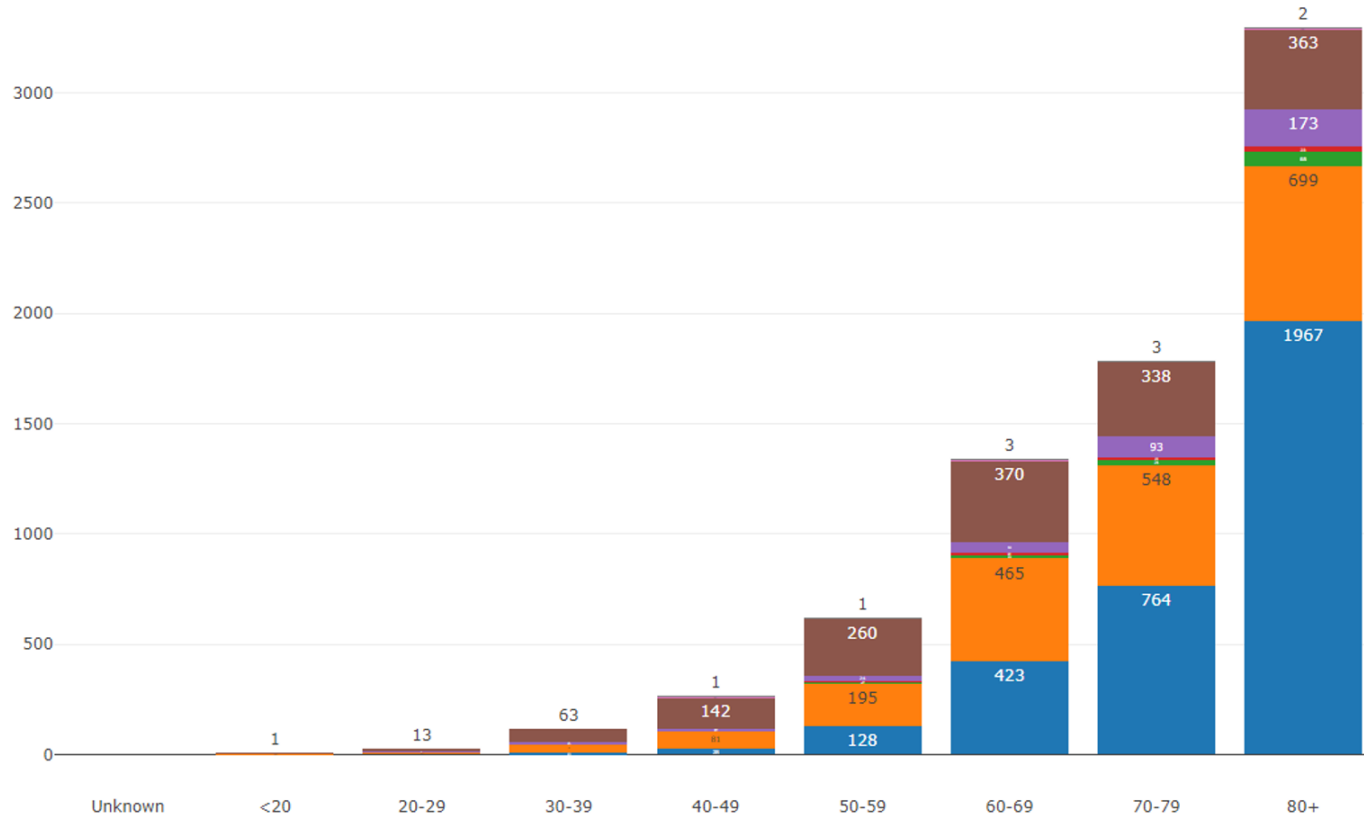
Discussion

# Illinois Confirmed Cases



Confirmed cases population is a broad sampling of the Illinois population

# Illinois Deaths from Covid-19



# CHALLENGES FACED BY THE AGING NETWORK DURING COVID-19

## **Older adults are disproportionately impacted by the “side effects” of COVID-19**

- Age as a risk factor – age in and of itself correlates with higher risk of hospitalizations and deaths due to COVID-19
  - 85+ year-old 13x higher chance of being hospitalized than 18-29-year-old
  - 85+ year-old 630x higher chance of dying than 18-29-year-old
- Nursing Homes – very hard to contain respiratory illness in community living facilities. LTC facilities in communities of color disproportionately impacted.
- Social Isolation – can exacerbate already existing vulnerabilities (i.e. access to food, medication, medical care)
  - Social isolation is a real marker for risk
- Suspension of in-person programming that older adults relied on –
  - Effective mid-March, Area Agencies on Aging suspended congregate services such as congregate dining sites and senior center operations.

# FOOD ACCESS RESPONSE IN ILLINOIS

- Illinois Aging Network delivered **533,548** shelf stable meals to seniors since the shelter in place order began in March.
- Illinois Aging Network delivered over **4,806,425** meals to seniors since March 30 through the Home Delivered Meal Program, which remained open throughout shelter in place.
- **16,631** NEW participants served since March 2020.



Overall, we have provided over **228,277** meals to seniors *each week*.

This amounts to more than **5.3M** meals to seniors since the COVID-19 pandemic began in March.



# SAMPLING OF AREA AGENCIES ON AGING COVID-19 RESPONSE SUMMARIES

Providing	Providing meals to congregate participants in alternative ways (carry-out, grab and go) while keeping the home delivered meal services intact.
Continuing	Continuing to provide information and assistance through our telephone hotlines
Providing	Providing virtual programs via Zoom or Telephone calls (Telephone Topics).
Delivering	Delivering care packages out to participants with games, puzzles, and more.
Performing	Performing telephone wellness checks on participants via volunteer networks

# AGEGUIDE

- **Nutrition response:**
  - Provided approximately **31,286** meals to seniors each week from our congregate and home delivered meal providers.
  - Expanded partnerships to increase access to meals through new meal pick up sites
  - Increased access to food through increased meal delivery and shelf stable meals
- **Virtual social supports:**
  - Increased technology enhancements to service delivery including chat/website features, remote work equipment, virtual programming, tablets for seniors etc.
  - Established COVID-19 Resources section on AgeGuide's website and regular circulation of aging network resources and advocacy topics via Constant Contact e-blasts
  - Expanded virtual programming such as recreation opportunities, Bingocize, Stressbusters, Tai Chi etc.
  - Expanded Music and Memory and virtual Memory Cafés
- **Community based supports:**
  - Expanded programs to combat social isolation including Telephone Reassurance and Friendly Visiting
  - Increased Flexible Community Services, Respite, GRG and Gap funding to address emergency needs
  - Continued partnerships with community organizations serving Limited English-Speaking older adults to provide meals and targeted outreach
  - Increased funding for alternate transportation as traditional transportation has limited or suspended services
  - Expanded TCARE caregiver assessment as a service offered regionwide

# CENTRAL ILLINOIS AGENCY ON AGING

## **For Our Providers**

- Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) - masks, gloves, hand sanitizers, disinfectant wipes & sprays, thermometers, etc. to keep their clients and themselves safe
- Technology – laptops to communicate with clients
- Additional staffing time - to cover changing and expanded services
- Advertising - flyers, brochures, and supporting materials to perform outreach to older adults

## **For Our Clients in Need**

- Financial assistance with bill payments, due to loss of income
- Financial assistance with residential repairs, due to reduced income, in order to help older adults remain in their homes

## **For Our Caregivers**

- GrandPads or other similar communication devices – that provides communication with family, caregivers, and health professionals through voice and video
- T Care Assessment Tool – to provide a comprehensive method of providing assessment, resource information, referrals, documentation, and follow-up to caregivers
- The Savvy Caregiver Program – to equip family members and others for the caregiving role

## **For Those Receiving Home-Delivered Meals**

- Purchasing additional shelf-stable meals for distribution to individual seniors on an as-needed basis when regular meals were not available

## **For Those Participating in Congregate Meal Sites**

- Providing all meals on a take-out basis only, due to the gathering and eating restrictions.



# EAST CENTRAL ILLINOIS AREA AGENCY ON AGING

## **Coordinated Points of Entry/Senior Information Services**

- Serving older adults during the pandemic requires immediate technology changes
- -Improving internet connectivity in rural areas
- -Providing technology training for older adults
- -Technology purchases for both clients and service providers

## **Nutrition Services**

- -Purchase of shelf-stable meals
- -Provide second meal and weekend meal options to individuals with high nutritional risk

## **Caregiver Services**

- -Expanding technology to conduct support groups
- -Implementing TCARE – an evidence-based, ACL-accredited solution to prevent caregiver burnout



# AGELINC, THE AREA AGENCY ON AGING FOR LINCOLNLAND, INC.

- Transitioned all direct services (Medicare Assistance, Benefit Access, Information and Assistance, Caregiver Education) programming to internet, phone and mail accessible services in order to provide continuous services.
- Helped to provide over 42,000 dollars in emergency relief funds for housing, utility, nutrition, health, medication and other COVID related needs to the aging and disabled populations.
- Coordinated the delivery and distribution of supplemental FEMA shelf stable meals for delivery and pick-up across the twelve-county service area.
- Provided additional Cares Act money to nutrition providers for immediate increase in delivered nutrition following the closure of congregate meals services.
- Provided FEMA and community donated PPE to clients and providers.
- Developed new programming to address the health and emotional needs of our service area's most isolated seniors, including The Friendly Caller Program and The Telehealth Nurse Caller Program.

# AGESMART COMMUNITY RESOURCES

## Services Still Available

- Curbside pickup at your local Senior Center
  - Call 618-222-2561
- Assistance with Medicare and other benefits general aging and caregiving questions
  - Call 618-222-2561
- [Farmer's Market Benefits](#)
  - Call 618-222-2561

## New Programs

- Uber Rides for Mascoutah Seniors
  - Call 618-566-8758
- Agesmart's Learning Channel
- AgeSmart COVID Counseling
  - Call 618-877-4420 and ask for AgeSmart Cares
- Metro East Community Wellness
  - Call 618-444-2936
- Video Series on Adaptive Equipment
  - Visit AECorner.com and use the code AgeSmartCares

# MIDLAND AREA AGENCY ON AGING

- **3000** Social Isolation bags that were distributed throughout our PSA Included were **masks, exercise, adult coloring pages, word search, colors first aid kit and resource information of AAA services**
- Friendly Visiting converted to Telephone reassurance
- Friendship Cards have been sent out to clients
- Information and Assistance are doing well-checks
- Nutrition staff are calling all congregate people
- Nutrition has activities in parking lot when meals are picked up
- Second meal delivered to Seniors
- Shelf Stable meals delivered to Seniors
- Virtual Caregiver training is available in the PSA
- T-Care Assessment for Caregiver Advisor program
- Virtual training to learn how to use the internet and basic technology
- Collaborating with Mayors of small town to reach the seniors that we may not have in our system.
- Using emergency funds to help get what is needed to assist seniors during Covid-19

# CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY & SUPPORT SERVICES – SENIOR SERVICES AAA

## Covid-19 Nutrition Response

- Provided over 2.2 million Home Delivered Meals including “To-Go” to older adults since the start of Covid-19.
- Over 15,000 unique participants have received HDMs as part of the local Covid-19 response.
- 500,000 shelf-stable meals have been delivered to older adults since the start of Covid-19.

## Virtual and Telephonic Programming

- DFSS launched their remote Health Promotion and Fitness programs during the Covid-19 response. Services are available to older adults through one-on-one telephone consultations, group conference calls, virtual one-on-one sessions and virtual group presentations. The launch of a full-scale, city-wide virtual senior center is currently under development.

## Well-Being Checks and Telephone Reassurance Calls

- DFSS has conducted over 700 face-to-face well-being checks for seniors identified as social isolated or at-risk in the community.
- DFSS partnered with Service Illinois Commission’s 250 volunteers to provide calls seniors in Chicago; the Junior League and the American Medical Association volunteers engaged 10,000 seniors; the Apartment Buildings and Managers Association (ABOMA) had local building managers engage seniors in 600 Chicago area high-rise buildings.

## Access to Aging Network Services

- The Information and Assistance Call center was expanded to add a second call center location to assure adequate staffing to answer the incoming calls for assistance and linkage to services.
- DFSS provided expedited client assessments for the Home Delivered Meals program to effectively enroll seniors in the program during the “Stay at Home” order.





# AGEOPTIONS, SUBURBAN COOK COUNTY

**COVID-19 response focused predominantly on low-income, minority residents of suburban Cook.**

- **Nutrition response:** Overall, we have provided over 1 million meals to seniors since the start of COVID-19 from our congregate meal sites and home delivered meal providers.
- **Virtual social supports:**
  - Telephone Topics
  - Friendly Phone Visiting
  - Continuation of funding to local library & memory café partners
  - Investment in Uniper and other technology support solutions
  - Providing stipends to faith-based partners through our Caring Together, Living Better program
  - Expansion of virtual music therapy and mindfulness programming through leveraging partnerships
- **Holistic supports:**
  - Continued implementation of TCARE, an evidence-based assessment tool to provide support to family caregivers
  - Expansion of partnership with Rush University to provide mental health supports to older adults and caregivers
  - Providing funding to our Relatives Raising Children program to support eLearning and technology access
  - Funding the **Center** for Disability and Elder law to help older adults preserve homeownership rights
  - Continuation of funding to Targeting Culturally and Linguistically Isolated Persons (TCLIP) agencies to support Limited English-Speaking older adults and caregivers

# LEGISLATIVE ASKS

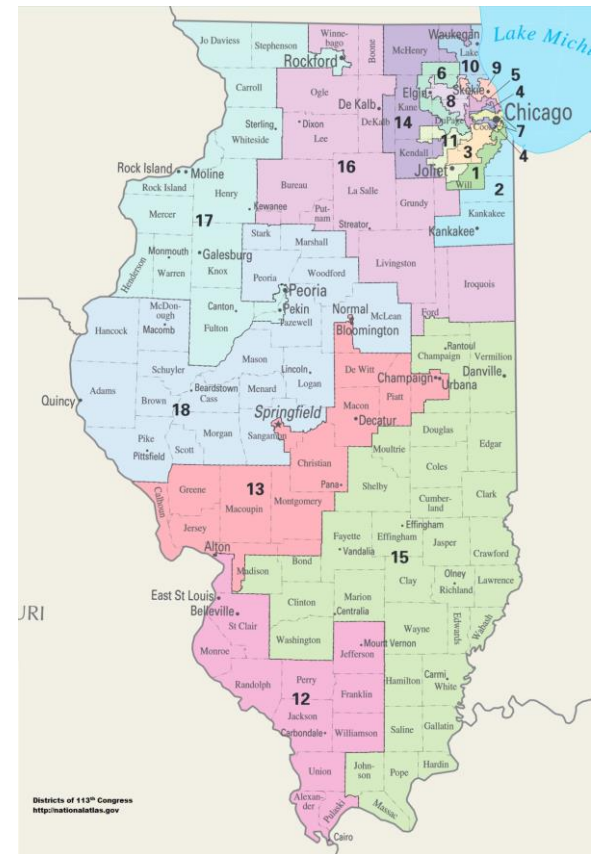
- Thank you for supporting the Families First and CARES Act = \$1.1 billion in emergency funding for vital OAA programs and services!
- **Please pass funding to support the following:**
  - Additional Older Americans Act (OAA) funding for ...
    - Title III-B – Supportive Services
    - Title III-C – Nutrition
    - Title III-E – Caregiver Programs
  - Provide dedicated funding through the OAA's new authority to mitigate social isolation and loneliness among older adults (H.R. 8026/S.4477)
  - Expand access to Medicaid home and community-based services (HCBS) waiver programs and community-living options (Sec. 30103 of the House-passed HEROES Act)
  - Preparing State Health Insurance Assistance Programs to be able to continue to support the Medicare choices of beneficiaries through new virtual solutions—both now and during open enrollment.

# WITHOUT INCREASED EMERGENCY FUNDING FOR OAA PROGRAMS ...

- The aging network would be faced with detrimental situations:
  - Deciding who will receive the limited supply of to-go/home delivered meals
  - Cutting back on vital programs that provide social engagement opportunities for older adults and family caregivers
  - Cutting back on vital programs that provide in-home and community supports that allow older adults to age safely in their communities

# US CONGRESS CONFIRMED ATTENDEES

- Representative Daniel Lipinski, IL 3<sup>rd</sup> District
- Representative Mike Quigley, IL 5<sup>th</sup> District
- Representative Sean Casten, IL 6<sup>th</sup> District
- Representative Raja Krishnamoorthi, IL 8<sup>th</sup> District
- Representative Bill Foster, IL 11<sup>th</sup> District
- Representative Rodney Davis, IL 13<sup>th</sup> District
- Representative Adam Kinzinger, IL 16<sup>th</sup> District



# THANK YOU!

**I4A** has supported each Area Agency on Aging to build a network of aging services at the local level, incorporating the preferences of local participants. I4A's mission is to help Illinois' older adults and people with disabilities live with dignity and choices in their homes as long as possible.



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