

“Offering Choices for Independent Lives.”



2025 ANNUAL REPORT



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Dear Friends and Partners,

“ As I reflect on 2025, one thing is clear: we accomplish more when we do it together. Every success this year was possible because of the dedication of our staff and volunteers, the vision of our board, and the unwavering support of our funders and more than 100 partners across Southwest Michigan. Together, we advanced our mission to ensure that every person – even those who need nursing-home level care – can live where they choose, with dignity and independence, through programs like MI Choice Waiver and a full range of services.

From strengthening the Southwest Michigan Community Care Hub to expanding person-centered care through Home-Based Primary Care and in-home behavioral health counseling, and earning national recognition for innovation, this year was filled with meaningful progress – made possible by collaboration and trust. Looking ahead, we'll keep transforming possibility into reality. With you by our side, we'll deepen partnerships, strengthen the caregiving workforce, and build systems that make choice and independence not just ideals, but a reality for those we serve.

Thank you for walking this journey with us. ”



With gratitude,
Christine Vanlandingham, CEO
Region IV Area Agency on Aging

Who We Are

Region IV Area Agency on Aging is a private, not-for-profit serving Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren counties since 1974. We work alongside older adults, people with disabilities, caregivers, volunteers, and more than 100 community partners to make Southwest Michigan a place where every person can live with dignity, purpose, and independence in the setting of their choice.

Mission:

Offering Choices for Independent Lives

Vision:

*Through Choice and Range of Service,
Every Aging Adult Lives a Quality Life*

Advisory Council:

Kim Smith Oldham (Chair)
Debra Johnson (Vice Chair)
Maureen Adams
Jeannette Ahmed
Kim Bicard
Bertha Carson-King
Candi Gabrielse
Laura Gutierrez
Patty Klug
Carole Mobus
Stephanie Ostrander
Danielle Persky
Jim Roberts
MaryJo Schnell

Board of Directors:

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Velma Hendershot (Vice Chair)
Kenley Penner (Secretary)
Don Radde (Treasurer)
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Jim Everett
Michael Grice
Hon. Mabel Mayfield
Gail Patterson-Gladney
David Vollrath
Dr. Larry Wile Jr.Hon.
David DiStefano (Alternate)

Our 2025 Impact

The numbers behind a year of work alongside our community.

All I&A Staff are
**Inform USA
Certified.**

\$1.1 million saved by Medicare beneficiaries who worked with **SHIP counselors**—1,224 people, 1,039 hours of one-on-one counseling.

100% of **Dementia Caregiver** training participants reported they felt more confident in their ability as a caregiver.

77% of preschool children paired with a **Foster Grandparent** showed measurable gains in school readiness—through the work of 66 volunteers and 33,000+ hours.

97% of **Matter of Balance** participants reported feeling more comfortable talking with others about their fear of falling.

Of Information & Access recipients, **95% report** they would call again and recommend the service to others.

100% of care recipients paired with a **Senior Companion** reported feeling less lonely.

862 community members live in the setting of their choice rather than a nursing facility through the **MI Choice Waiver**.

3,711 community members and professionals reached through **74 outreach events and presentations**.

641 nursing facility and adult foster care residents supported by our **Long Term Care Ombudsman** across 180 licensed facilities.

5,823 community members reached our **Information & Access team**—with 16,186 consultations by phone, web chat, and in person.

By the Numbers

The Work Behind Every Day of FY2025

Most of the Area Agency on Aging's work happens out of view. It is a phone call answered, a meal delivered, a benefits form completed, or a caregiver supported through a long week. The numbers on these pages represent that work across every service, every category, and every day of FY25.

Social Care Navigation & Coordination

Information & Access

5,823 served; 16,186 consultations conducted – telephone, live web chat, and in-person at the agency or at community partner host sites; 95% report they would call again and recommend the service to others. All I&A Staff are Inform USA Certified.

All Region IV AAA Information & Access Specialists are certified through Inform USA, the national standard for information and referral services, meaning every person who reaches out receives accurate, unbiased guidance from a trained professional.



Caregiver with Participant

Case Coordination & Support

57 served. Provides ongoing, lower-intensity care coordination for adults 60+, regardless of functional or cognitive need. This service helps individuals maintain stability and access to community-based supports over time.

Care Management

28 served. Provides ongoing, higher-intensity care management for individuals who meet nursing facility level of care, supporting them to safely remain in their homes and communities with appropriate services in place.

Care Transitions Coordination & Support

52 served. Supports individuals returning home from the hospital, often beginning the same day or within one business day of referral. This short-term service ensures safe transitions, implements discharge plans, and helps prevent hospital readmissions within 30 days. 100% of enrolled participants had AAA staff initiate contact within 1 business day, with many being reached on the same day as referral received. 96% of at-risk participants had no readmission within 30 days with same diagnosis.

Care Transitions from Nursing Facility to Home for Medicaid Recipients 18+

94 served. Helps Medicaid recipients age 18 and older move out of nursing facilities and back into homes of their own, with the supports and services in place to live safely in the community.

Options Counseling

132 served. Provides immediate, in-home support for individuals experiencing urgent social or economic needs. This short-term service prioritizes individuals in crisis, stabilizes immediate concerns, connects them to resources, and supports a transition to independence.

Custom Care (private pay care management)

25 served. A private pay option that provides professional care management for individuals and families who want expert guidance coordinating care, services, and supports, regardless of program eligibility.

Chronic Care Management

114 served.
(see *Community Collaborations*, pages 14-19)



Senior Expo 2025

Caregiver Resources & Support

Dementia Caregiver Evidence-Informed Training

38 attended. 100% felt more confident in their ability as a caregiver and learned new skills to communicate more effectively.

Dementia Caregiver Evidence-Informed Training

38 attended. 100% felt more confident in their ability as a caregiver and learned new skills to communicate more effectively.

Savvy Caregiver Training

11 caregivers attended.

Caregiver Support Groups

50+
(see *Community Care Hub*, pages 12-13)

Caregiver Care Management - Launched in late FY25

6 served.

Managed Care Programs

MI Choice Waiver

862 served. Living in a setting of their choice rather than a nursing home; \$49M saved to Medicaid. Provides nursing home level of care in the setting of a person's choice, allowing older adults and adults with disabilities to remain in their own homes rather than enter a facility. \$49M saved to Medicaid. 862 are able to live independently in the community instead of an institution.

(see *Community Care Hub*, pages 12-13)

Veterans Directed Care:

22 served. Empowers eligible veterans to remain independent in their own homes and communities by directing their own long-term services and supports. Through a person-centered approach, veterans develop individualized spending plans and have flexibility to hire, train, and manage workers and services that best meet their needs and goals.



Bertie

One Call Changed Everything: Bertie's Story

When Bertie moved to St. Joseph in 2016, she started with a simple phone call to find her local senior center. Nearly a decade later, that call has grown into a full circle of care. Now 79 and living with congestive heart failure, Bertie receives in-home primary care, remote blood pressure monitoring, and behavioral health support through the Integrated Care at Home program. Her preferred care worker, Tasha, helps with groceries, appointments, and the occasional trip to the movies. Her Friendly Caller, Val, phones every week without fail.

"I just can't even describe the feeling that it gave me not to have to worry for the first time in my life. It's made such a difference."

Integrated Care at Home

Primary Care & Behavioral Health

92 primary care patients.
99% enrolled in Chronic Care Management, providing them with a Community Health Worker and the development of a customized care plan to address their health-related social needs. 91% reported increased adoption of healthy behaviors. 81% reported improved confidence managing their health. 28 received remote patient monitoring of their chronic health conditions with blood pressure monitors, pulse oximeters, weight scales, and glucometers.
(see *Community Care Hub*, pages 12-13)

Behavioral health counseling

54 patients served. 95% learned problem-solving skills that will help them handle future challenges.

Nutrition Counseling 10 patients served. 81% reported increased adoption of healthy behaviors. 78% reported improved confidence managing their health.

GUIDE Dementia Care Model

27 patients served. 27 caregivers served. All recieved Advanced Care Planning. 284 hours of caregiver respite.

Outreach, Education, and Ombudsman

Outreach
161 hours · 74 events and presentations · 3,711 community members and professionals reached.

Medicare Counseling (SHIP)
1,224 served · 1,039 hours · \$1.1M saved.

Opioid Education
232 community members and professionals served.

Elder Abuse Prevention
82 individuals served. 172.5 hours provided.



Staff at Senior Expo 2025

PATH and Matter of Balance Classes
67 community members recieved education. 97% of Matter of Balance participants reported feeling more comfortable talking about their fear of falling. 100% felt more comfortable increasing their activity.

Long-Term Care Ombudsman
641 residents served at 180 licensed facilities. (nursing facilities, adult foster care homes, and homes for the aged)

Volunteer Impact

See pages 20-21 for the full Volunteer Engagement section.

Campus for Creative Aging

See page 11 for the Campus for Creative Aging spread, where these programs are featured in detail.

Community Care Hub services

See pages 12-13 for the Community Care Hub spread, where the network's service numbers are featured in detail.



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2.



3.



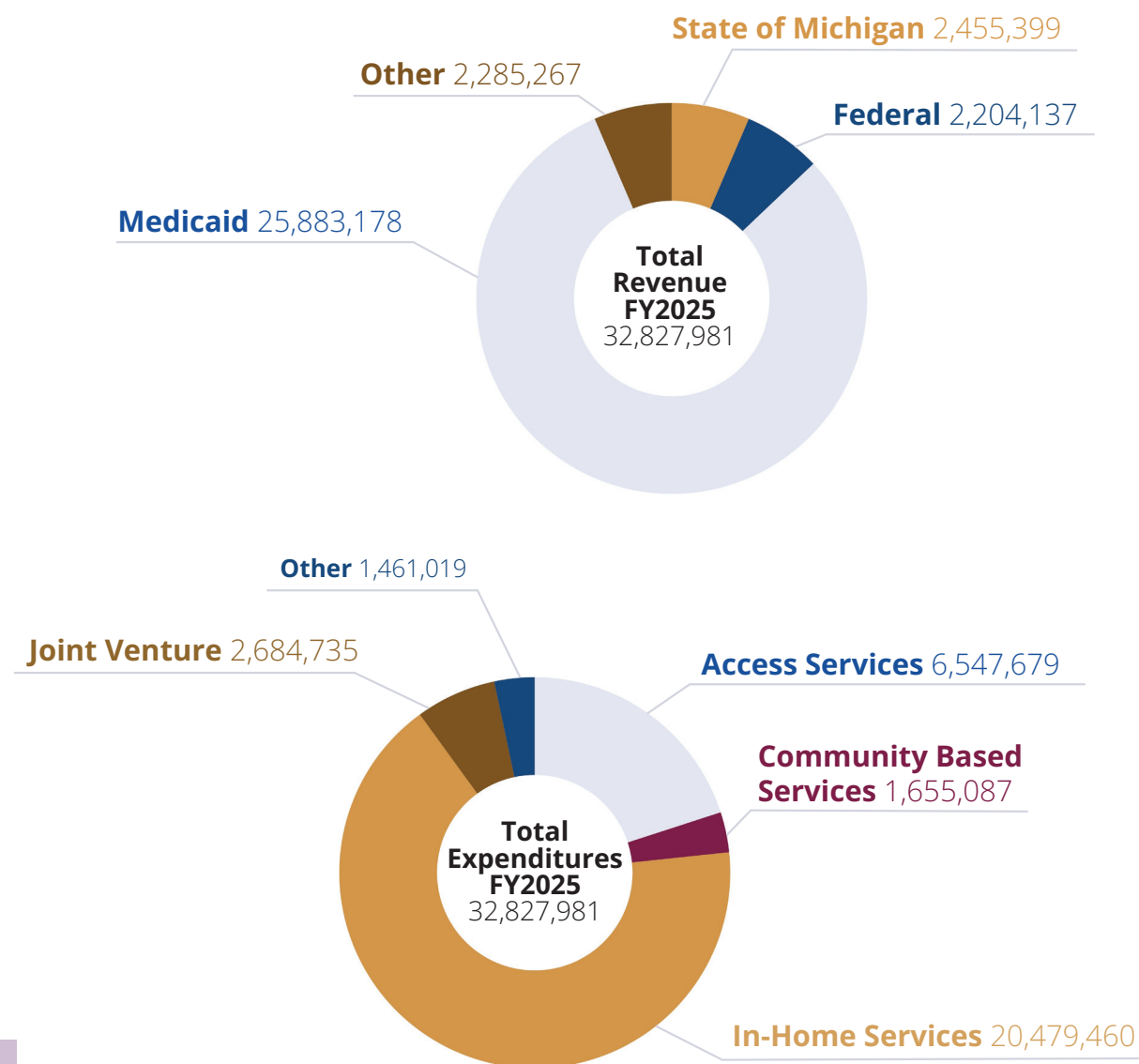
4.

- 1. Foster Grandparent volunteer and participant
- 2 & 4. Volunteers from Corewell Health, organizing donations for homebound clients and long-term care facility residents.
- 3. Caregiver and Participant

FY 2025 Financial Snapshot

Funding Choices for Independent Lives

The Area Agency on Aging manages funding from federal, state, local, and private sources to deliver services across Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren counties. The chart below reflects FY 2025 revenue and how it was directed back into the community.



Lynn & Freeborn Kellogg Campus for Creative Aging

Built With Older Adults, Not Just for Them

The Campus for Creative Aging exists because aging is worth celebrating. It is a movement where older adults teach and learn, where dementia is met with understanding instead of fear, where job skills are sharpened in later careers, and where neighbors gather over a virtual cooking class. The later decades of life bring experience, skill, perspective, creativity, and time, and this movement is where those gifts are welcomed, and shared. It is not a service we deliver. It is a community we build together.

73 adult learners
gained new digital skills in 10 Computer Learning Center classes on topics like web basics and safety.

109 community members
trained and committed to being Dementia Friends. 94% said the class deepened their understanding of dementia

500+ community members
joined 12 virtual healthy cooking classes.
(See community collaborations on pages 14-19)

9 older adults
built new careers through the Senior Community Services Employment Program with 7,200+ hours of training and support. (100% reported growing in job readiness skills.)



Melissa Thar

A New Path Forward: Melissa's Story

When Melissa Thar left her 28-year healthcare career to care for her mother full-time, she wasn't sure what came next. The Senior Community Service Employment Program connected her with on-the-job training at Area Agency on Aging and with the Computer Learning Center at the Campus for Creative Aging, where she built new digital skills alongside her work.

"My goal is to have a full-time remote position in the healthcare field at the same employer until I retire. I am very thankful to be working with wonderful staff at Area Agency on Aging."

Southwest Michigan Community Care Hub

Together for Health, Home, and Community

The Southwest Michigan Community Care Hub is a trusted regional connector that brings together health care, social services, and community supports into one coordinated system. It is the result of more than a decade of collaborative development, shaped by deep partnerships across sectors and communities throughout Southwest Michigan. Through the Hub, the Area Agency on Aging brings contracts to nearly 80+ community-based providers, who, in turn, deliver care to older adults, people with disabilities, and caregivers. The model is bidirectional by design: We coordinate, fund, and connect. Our partners deliver. Our community benefits.



Doris and Mary

Behind Every Number, a Person

The numbers describe the system. What they cannot show is what it feels like to come home from the hospital and find that someone has already arranged the ride, the meals, the home modifications, and the person who will come by twice a week to help. That coordination is what the Hub does. The people doing it are our partners.

350

Personal Emergency
Response Systems
Placed in Homes

7,469

Hours of Chore
and Homemaker
Services

27,000+

Rides Coordinated to
Appointments and
Community Life

34,281

Days of Residential Services at
Adult Foster Care Home and
Assisted Living Facilities

11,597

Hours of Personal
Care Delivered
by Direct Care

115,813

Meals Delivered to
882 Homes

37,711

Congregate Meals
Served at Dining Sites

1,200

Hours of In-home Nursing for
Medication Set-up and Vitals

568,166.75

Hours of Community
Living Supports

18,259+

Hours of Adult
Day Services for
51 Participants

Community Care Hub | Our full network of nearly 80+ provider partners is listed on pages 27-28.

Doing More Together Than We Could Alone

Featured Collaborations

Direct Care Workforce Coalition

Direct care workers are the home health aides, personal care attendants, and homemakers who help older adults and people with disabilities stay safe in the places they call home. The Southwest Michigan Direct Care Workforce Coalition exists to support and stabilize this essential workforce. In 2025, the Coalition focused on building its strategic plan and charter, growing regional partnerships, expanding training, and advocating for fair pay and fewer barriers to entry. The goal is simple: a workforce that is valued and well-supported, so the people who depend on them receive care rooted in dignity.

AAA Health Solutions

A partnership between Region IV Area Agency on Aging, Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan, and Senior Resources of West Michigan expands access to person-centered options counseling and Medicare assistance through the State Health Insurance Assistance Program across a multi-region service area. By aligning service delivery, data, and quality standards across agencies, this collaboration ensures consistent, high-quality support regardless of where individuals enter the system. Through this shared infrastructure, older adults and caregivers are better able to navigate complex benefits and coverage decisions, resulting in more informed choices, increased access to services, and a stronger, more coordinated regional aging network.

Safe Haven with WellWise Services

In partnership with WellWise Services Area Agency on Aging, Region IV AAA is expanding its capacity to support older adults and vulnerable individuals experiencing abuse, neglect, and exploitation through a dedicated, coordinated response model. This collaboration strengthens access to safe housing, protective services, and community-based supports by aligning agencies around shared practices and rapid response strategies. By leveraging cross-agency expertise, the partnership enhances safety, reduces isolation, and ensures that individuals experiencing abuse are connected to the resources needed to stabilize and recover.

Network of Collaborations

Southwest Michigan Arts and Aging Partnership



The Arts & Aging Partnership of Southwest Michigan brings together partners across the arts, public health, education, and philanthropy sectors to use creative expression to advance understanding of aging, dementia, and caregiving. In FY 2025, the partnership expanded its impact through community-based performances, exhibitions, and collaborative art initiatives—including the Window to Our World caregiver project—and broader engagement with regional arts partners. Building on earlier work such as Memory of a Dance, these efforts foster dialogue, reduce stigma, and support a more dementia-inclusive, age-friendly region.

Chronic Care Management with Corewell Health

Region IV AAA partners with Corewell Health House Calls and Southwestern Medical Clinic in Niles to integrate care managers directly into primary care teams, bridging medical care with the social care and supports that drive better health outcomes. This collaboration strengthens whole-person care by ensuring that patients' health-related social needs, such as housing stability, nutrition access, and caregiver support, are addressed alongside their medical care. Through shared case consultation and coordinated care planning, the partnership improves continuity of care, reduces fragmentation, and supports individuals in remaining safely in their homes and communities.

Partnership with Corewell Health Care Management

Region IV AAA and Corewell Health discharge planning teams are building a more integrated approach to care transitions through ongoing collaboration and relationship-building. By improving communication, clarifying roles, and streamlining referral processes, this partnership reduces delays and gaps in care, particularly during critical transition points from hospital to home. The result is a more responsive, coordinated system that supports better outcomes, reduces readmissions, and strengthens a shared "one-team" approach to patient care.

Interoperable Referral Pilot

Region IV AAA partnered with MiHIN and Mon Ami to pilot an interoperable, closed-loop referral approach designed to better connect health care and community-based services. Through this pilot, partners tested the secure exchange of synthetic referral data between systems, exploring how social needs identified in one setting can be electronically shared, tracked, and resolved across organizations. While conducted in a controlled test environment, this work represents a critical step toward building a scalable Community Information Exchange infrastructure, one that enables real-time coordination, improves accountability for outcomes, and strengthens the ability of providers to address the full spectrum of patient needs in partnership with social care clinicians and a coordinated network of home- and community-based providers and community-based organizations.

Information & Access Specialists Embedded at Host Sites

Through partnerships with organizations such as United Christian Services and Neighbor by Neighbor, Region IV AAA is embedding Information & Access Specialists directly within community settings to meet people where they are. This approach reduces barriers to access by bringing trusted, person-centered navigation services into the communities served. By working alongside local partners, specialists are able to identify needs earlier, connect individuals to resources more efficiently, and strengthen community-based support networks resulting in more timely and effective assistance.

Caregiver Support Groups

Region IV AAA collaborates with partners including Alzheimer's Association, Area Agencies on Aging across Michigan, Corewell Health, and Parkinson's Foundation to provide a comprehensive network of caregiver support groups across formats and geographies. By offering in-person, virtual, and statewide options, this partnership expands access to emotional support, education, and peer connection for caregivers with diverse needs, including dementia and kinship caregivers. These groups reduce caregiver isolation, strengthen coping strategies, and help sustain individuals in their caregiving roles, an essential component of community-based care.

Healthy Berrien Consortium Work Groups *Assesment*

Chaired by Region IV AAA, the Assessment Work Group serves as the data and measurement backbone of the Healthy Berrien Consortium, aligning Community Health Needs Assessment strategies and activities across partners. Through monthly collaboration, the group strengthens data collection, sharing, and analysis to support informed decision-making and coordinated action. By maximizing data sharing and aligning community needs assessment efforts, the workgroup ensures that HBC initiatives are grounded in shared data rather than isolated efforts or anecdotal insight.

Community Health Worker Workforce Development

Co-chaired by Region IV AAA and the Berrien County Health Department, this workgroup is advancing the development of a sustainable Community Health Worker (CHW) workforce across Southwest Michigan. Through cross-sector collaboration, partners are aligning CHW roles, referral pathways, and long-term sustainability strategies, including financing and integration into care teams. This work strengthens the capacity of the region to address social drivers of health by expanding a workforce that serves as a trusted bridge between healthcare and community-based services. As a result, individuals experience improved access, more coordinated care, and stronger support navigating complex systems.

Social Cohesion

Region IV AAA participates in the Social Cohesion Work Group to advance a shared, county-wide approach to strengthening social connection, identified as a key driver of health and well-being in local community needs assessments. This workgroup brings together partners to align strategies that increase connection between individuals, communities, and institutions. By coordinating efforts across sectors, the group is helping shift social connection from a series of isolated programs to a broader, community-level strategy. These efforts support reduced isolation, improved mental and emotional well-being, and stronger informal support networks while also fostering intergenerational connections and helping to challenge and change perceptions of aging. Together, this work contributes to communities where older adults are more visible, valued, and supported to remain engaged and live independently.



1-2. Rake a Difference | Photo credit
United Way of Southwest Michigan
3-4. Senior HolidayCare Packages
5-6. Senior Expo

*Read more about these programs on
page 17*



Rake a Difference for Seniors

AAA staff joined efforts with United Way of Southwest Michigan in November to rake leaves for older adults who are not able to do fall cleanup work and who do not have the financial resources to pay for the service.

Senior Holiday Care Packages

In partnership with Berrien Community Foundation, and thanks to generous donors, 50 community volunteers delivered over 500 care packages to homebound seniors in Berrien County. Kits included vital items like shampoo, toothpaste, a first aid kit, an activity book, tissues, candy, a handwritten card, and more.

Senior Expo

In partnership with The Herald-Palladium, the Area Agency on Aging presented the 27th Annual Senior Expo at Lake Michigan College Mendel Center in Benton Harbor. The event included over 50 community vendors, entertainment, a Health and Wellness Pavilion sponsored by Corewell Health, drug take-back, a photo booth, and more. It was attended by over 800 seniors, caregivers, aging services professionals, entertainers, and community leaders.

Additional Affiliations and Memberships

Additional collaborations happen through AAA's affiliations and memberships, which include the Bronson Care Coordination Committee, PACE of Southwest Michigan Board, the St. Joseph Housing Commission, TRIAD, the three-county Human Services

Coordinating Councils, and the Van Buren County Health Committee.

Key memberships include USAging, the National Council on Aging, the American Society on Aging, and the Area Agency on Aging Association of Michigan.

Our full network of provider partners, the organizations who deliver care alongside us every day, is listed on pages 27-28.

Volunteers

Neighbors Caring for Neighbors

The Area Agency on Aging’s volunteers come from across the community. Some are older adults serving their peers. Others are working-age neighbors, students, and community members who turn out when their hands are needed. Together, they tutor children, sit with neighbors, make phone calls to check in, pack care kits, and deliver meals during the holidays. The work changes lives on both sides of every visit, every call, and every doorbell.

In 2025,

52 volunteers packed and delivered more than 500 holiday care packages to homebound older adults in Berrien County.

In its first weeks, **4 Friendly Helpers** served 7 older adults across 28 hours of help. The program is small by design and growing.

21 Senior Companions served 78 care recipients and caregivers, offering not just hours of help but the steady fact of someone showing up

23 Friendly Callers connected with 46 older adults through 531 reassurance calls, checking in, listening, and offering the simple reassurance of being thought of.

66 Foster Grandparents served 486 children and students across more than 33,000 hours of volunteer service.

Foster Grandparents
The Foster Grandparent program pairs older adults with children in classrooms, after-school programs, and community settings, giving children the steady attention of a trusted adult and giving Foster Grandparents the chance to keep showing up for the next generation.

Senior Companion
Senior Companions are older adults who spend time with other older adults, providing company, conversation, transportation to appointments, and the kind of presence that interrupts isolation.

Friendly Callers
Friendly Callers reach out by phone to older adults who may not see another person for days at a time. The calls are brief, but the contact matters.

Friendly Helpers
Friendly Helpers is the Area Agency on Aging’s newest volunteer program, launched in late 2025 to provide practical help to older adults — small tasks that make daily life easier and home safer

Special Projects
Throughout the year, community volunteers turn out for projects that the Area Agency on Aging could not deliver alone—packing care kits, raking leaves, delivering meals during the holidays, and supporting events.
(See Community Collaborations, pages 14-19)

“I Love the Foster Grandparent Program”: Lisa’s Story
As soon as Lisa Joseph turned 55, she applied to be a Foster Grandparent through Region IV Area Agency on Aging. “I was at home, on disability, and I needed something to do,” she said. Now nearly 61, she’s spent six years in a kindergarten classroom at Benton Harbor Charter School, and she can’t imagine doing anything else: *“They are my pride and joy. I never want to leave them.”*

Each day looks a little different: leading Center Time, working one-on-one with kids who need extra help, guiding them through letters and activities. The moments that stay with her are the small ones. “I will show it to them once, and when they catch on, it’s so nice to see them get it.”

Her advice to anyone considering volunteering? Show the kids love. And have patience.

Interested in becoming a Foster Grandparent or Senior Companion? Contact us at 800-654-2810 or visit AreaAgencyonAging.org.

Shaping Local, State, & National Public Policy

Most of the Area Agency on Aging's work happens out of view. It is a phone call answered, a meal delivered, a benefits form completed, or a caregiver supported through a long week. The numbers on these pages represent that work across every service, every category, and every day of FY25.



1.



2.



3.



4.

- 1. Older Michiganians Day
- 2-3. Legislative Forum
- 4. Older Michiganians Day

Older Michiganians Day

AAA staff, volunteers, and community members traveled to Lansing for Older Michiganians Day where they joined hundreds of other advocates from around the state in person and via livestream to rally in support of aging, disability, and caregiver services.



Older Michiganians Day



Legislative Forum

18th Annual Legislative Forum

Over 69 older adults, community members, and aging service professionals met with state elected officials and their staff at the 18th Annual Legislative Forum held at The Campus For Creative Aging. Attendees urged lawmakers to support and expand access to the MI Choice Waiver Program, Home- and Community-Based Services, and family and informal caregivers.

USAging Policy Briefing

AAA staff and aging advocates around the country attend the Annual USAging Policy Briefing in Washington, D.C. During the two-day event, staff are able to hear updates on critical policy issues facing older adults and meet with members of Congress on Capitol Hill to advance the platform of legislative action.



USA Aging Policy Briefing

2025 Awards

Recognizing the People Who Make Southwest Michigan a Better Place to Grow Older

Innovation Award

In 2025, Region IV Area Agency on Aging received national recognition from USAging for its Breaking Barriers program, which delivers Medicare-funded, in-home behavioral health counseling to older adults who face mobility, transportation, and provider shortage barriers to mental health care. By enrolling as a Medicare provider and billing directly under the Physician Fee Schedule, the agency is building a sustainable model that doesn't depend on grants, bringing licensed clinical social workers into patients' homes to treat depression, anxiety, grief, and substance use disorder. The award recognizes not just the program's outcomes, but its potential as a replicable model for aging services nationwide.



Region IV Area Agency on Aging receiving USAging Innovation Award

NCQA Accreditation

In FY25, Region IV Area Agency on Aging earned full three-year reaccreditation through the National Committee for Quality Assurance, the highest possible level. NCQA accreditation is a nationally recognized benchmark of excellence, evaluating organizations on care coordination, population health management, and outcomes. This distinction affirms the agency's operational strength and its role as a trusted partner to healthcare systems and community organizations working to keep individuals safely in their homes.



Cindi McLaughlin receiving her award

Bob Dolson Founders Award

Cindi McLaughlin, Executive Director – St. Joseph-Lincoln Senior Center

The Bob Dolson Founders Award was first given in 2024 to recognize an individual who has made outstanding contributions to the field of aging or the well-being of older adults, and who has demonstrated the qualities of leadership, innovation, collaboration, service, and compassion that Bob, the founder of Region IV Area Agency on Aging, embodied throughout his career.



Janice Crumley

Caregiver of the Year Award

Janice Crumley, Benton Harbor

In recognition of the relentless dedication and care shown to her granddaughter with disabilities over the last 20 years, for adapting to also caring for her aging parents in her home with strength and resilience, and for demonstrating the meaningful impact of being an informal and kinship caregiver.



Doris Burr receiving her award

Direct Care Worker of the Year Award

Doris Burr, Paw Paw

In recognition of her over 23 years of unparalleled dedication and outstanding service to the quality of life, comfort, and independence of older adults and people with disabilities; for the example she sets for new care workers, patiently sharing her caregiving experiences; and for her consistent presence and loyalty in the lives of her clients, creating lifelong friendship and mutual respect.



SHCA receiving their award

Community Partner Award

South Haven Center for the Arts

In appreciation of their partnership for the Window to Our World Caregiver Public Art Project, for their creativity, expertise, and dedication in bringing the project to life, and for helping to make Southwest Michigan a community that honors caregivers and celebrates the creativity of all people, including caregivers and those living with dementia.



Meryle Merritt receiving her award

Volunteer of the Year Award

Meryle Merritt, St. Joseph

In recognition of her dedication and enthusiasm for the Friendly Caller Volunteer Program since its inception, for always bringing a joyful attitude to her calls, creating a safe and welcoming environment for her clients, and for demonstrating the deep, meaningful impact volunteerism can have on both the volunteer and the recipient.



Rosemarie Egelhaaf

Dorothy M Richmond Customer Service

Rosemarie Egelhaaf

She has been a part of the Friendly Caller Volunteer Program since its very first day, and her presence is felt in every interaction. Whether greeting visitors at the front desk, supporting Medicare enrollment, or keeping the office running behind the scenes, she brings the same calm, joyful energy to everything she does.

The Organizations Who Deliver Care Alongside Us, Every Day

The Area Agency on Aging’s work is delivered in partnership with a network of contracted organizations and providers across Southwest Michigan. Some are annual contractors who deliver core community services. Some are credentialed providers who deliver in-home and transportation services to our Care Management clients. And some are local businesses who furnish supplies, equipment, and one-time services that keep our clients safe at home.

ANNUAL CONTRACTORS: Home and Community-based services funded by the Michigan Bureau of Aging, Community Living, and Supports (ACLS) with Older Americans Act, Older Michiganians Act, and other state funds are contracted on an “annual contract” basis. Request for Proposals is issued every three years based on an ACLS and AAA-approved multi-year

Cass County Council on Aging:

Adult Day Care, Home Delivered Meals, Congregate Meals, Respite Chore, Transportation, Caregiver Education

Caring Connection:

Adult Day Care, Respite Chore

Legal Aid of Western Michigan:

Legal Assistance

North Berrien Senior Center:

Transportation

Senior Nutrition Services:

Home-Delivered Meals, Congregate Meals, Transportation

Senior Services of Van Buren County:

Transportation, Respite Chore

Supplemental Needs Purchases:

Purchases on behalf of AAA Care Management clients are one-time in nature and can include services, supplies, or equipment. These purchases are typically necessary in order to keep the client safe and able to continue living independently in their home. Supplemental need purchases were ordered from the following businesses in FY 2025:

- Airway Oxygen
- Bed Bug Specialist
- Best Way Disposal
- BinTris Moving Services
- Current Wave Electric
- Five Star Heating & Air Conditioning
- Grand Bay Electric
- Guse-Hahn Garage Doors
- Heaven Scent
- Michiana Heating and Air Conditioning
- One Man Does It All
- Service Master

Direct Service Purchase Providers

AAA staff purchase in-home or community-based services according to individual plans and a Direct Service Purchase Bid Agreement with the following credentialed community service providers:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| • A Day to Remember AFC Home | • ConnectAmerica | • Mom's Meals |
| • A Place Called Home in Stevensville, LLC | • Cozy Hill AFC | • Oak Lawn Manor |
| • Accessible Design Solutions | • Divine Grace Country Home, LLC | • Orkin, LLC |
| • ADT | • Forest Glen Assisted Living | • Powell House AFC |
| • Advantage Private Nursing | • Fresh Perspective Home Care | • Private Duty Home Health Care |
| • AJ Jaeger-Heiden | • Functional Homes | • Private Duty Transportation, LLC |
| • Alick's Home Medical Equipment, Inc. | • Golden Shore Assisted Living | • PurposeCare |
| • All HomeCare Services, LLC | • GT Independence | • Ready Ride Transportation |
| • Always Best Care – Michiana | • Guardian Medical Monitoring | • Resource Transportation Group |
| • Angel Hands Home Health Care, LLC | • Harbor Habitat for Humanity, Inc. | • Rick's AMT, LLC |
| • Another Day to Remember | • Help at Home of Michigan, LLC | • Right at Home |
| • Arcadia Home Care & Staffing | • HomeCare Transitions, Inc. | • River Ridge Retirement Village |
| • Area Wide Transportation, Inc. | • HomeJoy of Allegan and Van Buren Counties | • Senior Nutrition Services |
| • Betsab Services | • Homestyle Direct | • Serenity Shore Assisted Living Facility |
| • Blueberry Hill Assisted Living, Inc. | • LaJoy F.I., LLC | • Shangrila Home |
| • Bridgman Retirement Home #2 | • Lakeshore Home Health Care | • Southwest Michigan Community Ambulance Services |
| • Buchanan Meadows | • Laurel Oaks of South Haven | • Stately Living |
| • Carewatch of Michigan Home Care, LLC | • Long Acres Adult Foster Care, LLC | • Stuart Wilson |
| • Caring Connection (The Avenue Family Network) | • Maple Lake Assisted Living | • Swans Lawn Care |
| • Carol's Home | • Maple Lake Builders | • The Willows |
| • Cass County Council on Aging | • Meadowview Gardens AFC | • Valued Relationships, Inc. (VRI) |
| • ComForCare | • Medic 1 | • Van Buren Emergency Medical Services |
| | • Michiana Mobility, LLC | • White Oaks Assisted Living |
| | • Miller's Assisted Living | |

Thank You

To the People and Organizations Who Made 2025 Possible

The Area Agency on Aging is one thread in a much larger fabric. The work in 2025 happened because of foundations, provider partners, volunteers, direct care workers, caregivers in their own homes, and the people who open the door when we knock. We are grateful for every thread in it.



Theresa Uhrich, COO, and Christine Vanlandingham, CEO

The Area Agency on Aging offers programs and services without regard to race, color, age, gender, sexual orientation, national origin or religion. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request.

Region IV Area Agency on Aging is part of a nationwide network of organizations designated through the Older Americans Act to be an aging and disability resource center with information about programs, services and housing options. For information on services in other parts of the state or nation, call Eldercare Locator at 800-677-1116

We are especially grateful for the support of the foundation funders whose investment makes our work possible:



Tax-deductable donations are deeply appreciated and may be made by mail or online by scanning the QR code.



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