



# AREA AGENCY ON AGING

Community Services Department

# 2020 COVID-19 IMPACT DATA BRIEF

## Communication & Information

Throughout pandemic response efforts, our concern about connecting with folks who are socially isolated has been heightened. As a result, our outreach efforts pivoted to better reach community members who may not know about our services.

A pre-pandemic survey showed that 50% of Boulder County older Adults weren't sure where to find information about resources (CASOA)\*.

### RESPONSE:

- Shifted to virtual call center
- New partnership with the Boulder County Assessor's Office to mail resources to older adults in the community
- Distributed bilingual resource cards to residents
- Increased frequency of newsletter distribution with subsequent increase in subscribers
- Collaborated with Boulder County Public Health to provide accurate and culturally relevant COVID-19 information and available resources in Spanish
- Hired additional bilingual Resource Navigator on the BCAA Resource Line



### Reached over 34,000 Boulder County residents

Mailing with Assessor's Office 17,259	BCAAA website unique page views 9,319	
	Bilingual outreach cards 4,100	Newsletter subscribers 3,768

## Economic Stability

Cost of living in Boulder County was increasing prior to the pandemic and is an ongoing challenge during this time. Pre-pandemic, nearly 30% of Boulder County older adults had difficulty meeting their daily expenses (CASOA)\*, such as food and housing costs.

BCAAA funds and provides services that assist older adults aging safely in their own home. We responded to the immediate needs of the community when Colorado Stay-At-Home orders were enacted.

### RESPONSE:

- Transportation - 1,894 hours of food and medication transportation provided by Cultivate and Via
- Technology - \$65,000 allocated to purchase laptops, device installation, and training for older adults and family/informal caregivers
- Financial Assistance - \$116,431 provided to clients for housing, utilities, home maintenance, car repairs, grocery gift cards, and other resources
- Meals - over \$400,000 distributed to meal site grantees and partner providers



### 7-times more meals provided!

2019 14,177	2020 102,043
----------------	-----------------

## Social Participation

Social isolation risk is linked to poor mental and physical health, cognitive decline, and premature chronic disease and death (PPF)\*\*.

While acknowledging a shift to virtual platforms can increase isolation, it was necessary to safely serve our community. BCAA got devices into the hands of older adults, as well as access to the internet and online training opportunities.



### RESPONSE:

- Pivoted to virtual programming for Healthy Aging classes, Medicare Counseling, and Medicare Basics Classes and Cafecitos
- Purchased and distributed laptops and internet hotspots for older adults and family/informal caregivers
- Grantee providers Enight Skills Center and A Day Place began making reassurance calls to clients
- Increased program access by partnering with community-based organizations
- Volunteer operations shifted to online or over the phone
- Increased provision of mental health services

4,323 client contacts made by Medicare Counselors and volunteers

58 laptops purchased for older adults and caregivers

18% increase in mental health service delivery for older adults

## Respect & Social Inclusion

One in four older adults in our community reported being treated unfairly or discriminated against because of their age (CASOA)\*.

COVID-19 has further exposed ageism. The need to end ageism has perhaps never been more urgent, with COVID-era memes characterizing COVID as a “boomer remover,” and critical care standards that move older adults to the back of the triage line.



### RESPONSE:

- Virtually celebrated the 20th anniversary of our trailblazing Lavender Gala with three events
- Project Visibility, a LGBTQ+ training for professionals, provided three virtual training sessions attended by 61 people
- Long-Term Care Ombudsman continued to provide resident, caregiver, and professional advocacy and support
- Provided Changing the Narrative anti-ageism trainings
- Conducted advocacy and education around vaccine access and crisis standards of care
- Shared anti-ageist stories of older adult lived experiences during COVID

### Top Consult Topics for Long-Term Care Ombudsman in 2020:

1. Resident rights
2. Care Issues
3. Emergency Preparedness
4. General Inquiries
5. Long-Term Care options

\*The Community Assessment Survey for Older Adults (CASOA) can be found here: [allagewell.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Boulder-Region-3B-Report-2018-FINAL.pdf](https://allagewell.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Boulder-Region-3B-Report-2018-FINAL.pdf)

\*\*The Aging in Boulder County - Past, Present, Future Report (PPF) can be found here: <https://assets.bouldercounty.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/aaa-ppf-report-2109.pdf>