



Achieved Program Outcomes FY 2023

The goal of the Ionia County Commission on Aging is to strengthen the well-being of all Ionia County Senior Citizens and to be the cornerstone of support services for their continued independence.

One way we remain focused on our goal is by polling seniors, to get feedback on our services and programming. This year, as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of our founding, we remain as committed as ever to gathering this feedback and to using it to help plot our course moving forward.

Looking back over the history of our agency, its services and direction, it's clear that while certain services continue to form our core – Meals on Wheels, Transportation, Homemaker and Respite Services, Senior Center Services and Healthy Aging/Disease Prevention - nothing remains static and it's fundamentally important to adapt to the needs of those we serve *today*.

In 2022, we completed renovations on the public spaces of our Ionia Senior Center, making important safety and accessibility upgrades. In 2024, we are working to upgrade the other half of our facility, including our kitchen and offices, and hope to increase our footprint by 800-900 square feet. This modest increase would provide much needed private space for meeting with clients. Also planned is a critically needed refresh of our kitchen, with direct access for load-in and load-out for Meals on Wheels, and upgraded ductwork above our kitchen and office space with separate zones for each.

The goal of these changes is to set our agency up for the *next* 50 years. As we develop our plans, we will work to engage the public directly on the project, as we did previously. In fact, several of the ideas for our prior renovation came directly from clients during annual polling.

Our vision for the future is encapsulated in our Senior Center in downtown Ionia. To respect our past and plan for the future, our facility is a welcoming destination for social interaction, enriching programming and a hub for information, where seniors have a voice and a hand in both content and community.

Specific polling results and our analysis follow. Thank you for your support of our efforts, and of our seniors, in Ionia County!

The Ionia County Commission on Aging
November 2023

Supportive Services Programming

Homemaker Services

Results:

- 97% of responses indicated that Ionia County Commission on Aging (ICCOA) Homemakers performed all the tasks assigned (151 of 155 replies).
- 100% of replies indicated that they would recommend ICCOA Homemaker Services to others (155 of 155 replies).
- 100% of responses received indicated that ICCOA direct care workers providing homemaker services are respectful and communicate effectively (155 of 155 replies).

Analysis: Our agency met or exceeded the targets set in all three standardized outcomes for Homemaker Services.

Our agency was thrilled with the number of responses we received this year. Not only did the results show that clients are very satisfied with their Homemaker Services, they show that we are successfully serving many more clients. In fact, we delivered more Homemaker Services in FY 2023 than in any year going back to 2012 (includes OAA and local Senior Millage funding).

We continue to call clients in advance of providing services, to remind clients we're coming and to limit any spread of COVID or the flu from aides to clients and vice versa. We feel it has increased trust and has helped reduce isolation as well.

We also continue to survey clients with Homemaker Services twice per year, at each of their bi-annual assessments. We feel this helps to maintain open lines of communication between client and agency. We are also able to respond to client feedback quickly, helping us to identify changing needs, such as when more services, or other services such as Respite, may be a better fit. The most recent survey is included in tabulating the results.

Respite Services

Our goal with Respite Services is to support caregivers. The stress of caregiving can lead to mental exhaustion and illness. The two key goals of Respite Services include:

- Assist in reducing "caregiver burnout."
- Improved personal well-being reported by caregivers after receiving services.

Results from responses received:

- 83% of caregivers who receive Respite Services indicated a positive personal health score comparing their health to the same period last year (indicating 5 or lower on a 10 point scale where 1 is *very healthy, with 35 replies*).
- 86% of caregivers reported relief as a result of receiving services (indicating 7 or higher on a 10 point scale with 10 being *extremely relieved*). 79% of these respondents indicated they were extremely relieved (out of 14 replies, as indicated at time of reassessment).
- 100% of respondents indicated services helped them accomplish the things they wanted to do (answering *yes* or *somewhat*).

Analysis: Results show that our services make a real difference in the lives of those we serve, with beneficial results.

Our goal for FY 2024 is to continue to grow the number of Respite service hours delivered. While overall In Home Service hours in FY 2023 (for OAA and agency funded services) were higher than in any year since FY 2015, Respite hours are increasing more slowly, and have not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels.

Thanks to the Direct Care Worker premium, and changes at our agency such as creating full-time positions, we do continue to see incremental growth in total services delivered. But we also continue to see increased demand. Our waiting list for In Home Services remained fairly constant from the beginning to the end of FY 2023.

Another success story from FY 2023 would be our successfully building a team of six aides who are able to provide personal care services, such as bathing, supported with both OAA funding under Respite (Personal Care) and through our local senior millage. This has made an incredible difference in our county.

This year we also polled Respite Homemaker clients twice annually, as per our standard Homemaker clients. Results from this polling indicated 100% satisfaction for each of the 3 standardized outcomes survey questions.

An additional takeaway, we feel the DCW premium/higher pay, a change to full-time career positions, additional training and professionalization of the role, are all leading to increased satisfaction numbers and better care overall. Less turnover, more highly trained staff, more experience in the field all combine to deliver better care, plain and simple.

Assisted Transportation

- 100% of respondents indicated they were better able to maintain their health – through medical appointments and/or community connections – thanks to transportation provided by the Ionia County Commission on Aging Assisted Transportation (17 of 17 responses).
- 100% of responses indicated clients were able to get to their scheduled appointment(s) on time when using transportation provided by the Ionia County Commission on Aging Assisted Transportation Program (17 of 17 responses).
- 100% of respondents said their experience with Ionia County Commission on Aging Transportation Services was positive (17 of 17 responses).
- 100%* of responses indicated Ionia County COA Transportation has reduced their stress and helped them maintain their independence (16 of 17 responses, *1 no reply/ wrote in reply that stress remained the same).

Analysis: All standardized outcomes for Transportation were achieved.

Showing just how much of a lifeline this program provides, six respondents went out of their way to add a personal note about how much they appreciated the service and/or how impressed they are with our drivers. One client also sent a letter as a special thank you.

Our goal for the new year is to continue to grow our numbers and to help more seniors with trips to the grocery store, to attend congregate meals, to visit a friend, for medical services. One way we hope to do this is by adding an additional vehicle.

Our fleet grew from 5, to 6, then to 7 vehicles over the years from 2017 to 2023. We hope to grow the fleet to 8 transportation vehicles in December 2023 or January 2024. The larger fleet has helped us mitigate the loss of volunteers using their own cars for transportation, particularly starting at the time of the pandemic.

As OAA funded transportation is now provided by both staff drivers and volunteers, survey results include all transportation surveys returned.

Disease Prevention/Health Promotion

Including EnhanceFitness™, Tai Chi, A Matter of Balance and our own Armchair Exercise.

Participation in DP/HP was at the highest level since comparable records are available, 2013, (as measured by participants x classes offered). Total, unique participants is just below pre-Covid numbers with new participants joining at all fitness levels. We're happy to offer choices for seniors, with different classes, or even within the same class by adding weights or seated options, to match the participant's needs.

Polling came from our Ionia Senior Center and satellite locations where we hosted classes in FY 2023: Lake Odessa, Belding, Portland and Saranac. Our plan for FY 2024 will continue to offer classes throughout the county.

Polling showed a high level of satisfaction from clients:

- 100% of respondents indicated that they would take the class again (64 of 64).
- 100% indicated they would recommend the class to others (64 of 64).
- 98% felt that their balance and stability had improved due to the class (60 answering yes, 1 no, 3 maybe).
- 91% said their overall fitness level had improved because of the class (58 answering yes, 2 no, 4 maybe).
- 100% said they felt the class was fun and a good social experience (64 of 64).

Additional comments and analysis:

Satisfaction is high, and we aim to continue our approach by: offering classes where it's convenient for participants to join, having a team of instructors to offer a variety of wellness options throughout the year and by supporting DP/HP programming with solid training and equipment provided in a welcoming atmosphere.

A case in point, we continue to host EnhanceFitness and Tai Chai via Zoom because we know clients are making use of this option for a variety of reasons (inclement weather, caregiving responsibilities, etc). 31% of clients indicated they attended via Zoom from time to time, and 27% indicated they would like to learn how. That's an increase over last year when 28% of respondents indicated they had attended by Zoom and 22% indicated they'd like to learn how.

In FY 2024 we will add Arthritis Exercise to our suite of HP/DP classes. We are already incorporating some of the Arthritis Exercise movements into our Armchair Exercise class. And participants are already sharing that they appreciate the new content and additional information this evidence-based program provides.

Senior Center Activities

Our Ionia Senior Center is not just a location for activities, it is also the face of our agency where seniors can learn more about our services or get a referral for another resource in our county. It's important that those who reach out are satisfied with our response and the information we provide. Polling this year focused on those who visit our Senior Center so can develop resources seniors indicate they need, delivered in a courteous and helpful way.

Results showed:

- 100% indicated ICCOA staff were courteous and helpful (30 responses)
- 79% replied that staff *always* helped them gain access to appropriate services (22 of 28 responses), and 21% indicated staff *usually* do (6 of 28 responses)
- 100% indicated they were *very* satisfied with our agency's range of services (26 responses)
- 96% indicated they found the information in our newsletter helpful always or usually (25 of 26 responses)
- 100% indicated they would recommend our agency to a friend (29 of 29 responses)
- Of 28 replies, 68% indicated they felt they had a voice in activities or services our COA offers, 29% said they were unsure and 1 respondent indicated they did not feel they had a voice.

Analysis and goals for FY 2024:

Our goal again this year is to respond to the specific feedback we receive from clients with Senior Center Activities that they indicate they'd like to see us host. We also look to continue to develop resource guides on a variety of services that our agency either does not deliver or for which we are unable to fully meet client demand.

One way we are looking to continue this conversation, and to gather additional direct client feedback, is through our new "Coffee Klatch" gathering every Monday morning from 9-10:30. From here we can listen and develop programming organically, offer informal support and services that can develop into addressing larger needs, and overall have an open door to the community. We also hope to get feedback to develop additional resources and much more with the help of this new program at our Ionia Senior Center, and could potentially rolling this out to other satellite locations as well.

Survey results for Congregate and Home Delivered Meals also follow.

We look forward to the new year!

This report covers outcomes for services funded under Older Americans Act: Homemaker and Respite Services, Assisted Transportation, Senior Center Services and Healthy Aging/Disease Prevention with some reference to services provided with other funding sources such as Senior Millage and MDOT. Survey results for Congregate and Home Delivered Meals also follow.

Congregate Meal FY 23 Outcomes

Instructions: Enter number of responses in the appropriate box. Percentages will automatically calculate.

	#	%
1. In general, I like the taste of the meals.		
Agree	90	97%
Disagree	3	3%

2. The meal I receive is a good value for the requested donation.		
Agree	90	97%
Disagree	3	3%

3. Overall, my basic food needs are met/I have enough food to eat at home.		
Agree	92	99%
Disagree	1	1%

4. Why do you attend the meal site?		
Activities	80	38%
Socialization	83	40%
The food	45	22%

HDM FY 23 Outcomes

Instructions: Enter number of responses in the appropriate box. Percentages will automatically calculate.

	#	%
1. Meals on Wheels is my main source of food.		
Agree	74	56%
Disagree	58	44%

2. In general, I like the taste of the meals.		
Agree	126	95%
	6	5%

3. The meal I receive is a good value for the requested donation.		
Agree	126	95%
Disagree	6	5%

4. Since receiving MOW, I eat more fruits and vegetables.		
Agree	121	92%
Disagree	11	8%

5. Overall, my basic food needs are met/I have enough food to eat at home.		
Agree	122	92%
Disagree	10	8%

	#	%
6. Before you began receiving MOW services, did you ever go to bed hungry?		
Yes	34	26%
No	98	74%
Do you ever go to bed hungry now?		
Yes	9	7%
No	123	93%

7. Since receiving the meals, my health has improved.		
Agree	95	72%
Disagree	37	28%

8. The meals I receive have helped me remain in my home.		
Agree	120	91%
Disagree	12	9%

Standardized Outcomes	Achieved %	Outcome Achieved
90% of clients will like the taste of their meals. (Q2)	95%	Yes
70% of clients will report eating more fruits and vegetables. (Q4)	92%	Yes
90% of clients will report having enough food to eat. (Q5)	92%	Yes
70% of clients will report that their health has improved since receiving the meals. (Q7)	72%	Yes
	91%	Yes