



Achieved Program Outcomes FY 2024

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.

Services we provide are delivered in client homes, at satellite sites located throughout the county and at our Senior Center in downtown Ionia.

Annually we poll clients to learn how we might improve current services and how we might develop new services or resources to address needs in our community. Each year this feedback is crucial in developing plans for the new year. And each year polling gives results that both challenge and inspire us to best serve Ionia County.

Completing renovations on our facility in FY 2025 remains a key deliverable for our clients and for our agency. Feedback on the renovations completed in 2022 were universally applauded. Our goal in completing renovations is to provide a solid foundation for our agency for decades to come.

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 2024

Supportive Services Programming

In Home Services, Respite and Homemaker

Homemaker Survey Results:

- 97% of responses indicated that Ionia County Commission on Aging (ICCOA) Homemakers performed all the tasks assigned (146 of 150 replies).
- 99% of replies indicated that they would recommend ICCOA Homemaker Services to others (146 of 148 replies).
- 99% of responses received indicated that ICCOA direct care workers providing homemaker services are respectful and communicate effectively (149 of 150 replies).

Respite Survey Results:

- 95% of respondents indicated services helped them accomplish the things they wanted to do (answering *yes* or *somewhat*, 19 of 20 replies received).
- 65% of caregivers reported relief as a result of receiving services (13 of 20 responses, indicating 6 or higher on a 10 point scale with 10 being *extremely relieved*, with 20% of these respondents indicating they were *extremely relieved*). An additional 25% or all respondents indicated a 5 (out of a total of 20 responses).
- 82% 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*, 28 of 34 replies).
- For those clients who completed 2 surveys in the fiscal year (16 total), 31% indicated no change in their personal health score, 13% indicated improvement and 56% indicated decline.

Analysis: Our agency met or exceeded the targets set in all three standardized outcomes for Homemaker Services. Respite surveys indicated how important these services are and that they are needed now perhaps more than ever.

FY 2024 built on the success of FY 2023, delivering more Direct Care Worker service hours¹ than any prior year going back to FY 2015. We also served more individual clients with these services² than in any year going back to when these records are available, FY 2013. To both grow service hours, and maintain a high degree of client satisfaction, is a goal which we believe we are achieving.

¹ Including Homemaker, Respite and Home Health Aide (personal care) Services, funded through Older Americans Act, Ionia County Senior Millage, contributions and donations, etc.

² Again, including all funding sources.

We also saw a significant shift in services: Homemaker Hours decreased from 2023 to 2024, from 5,503 hours to 5,037. And Respite Hours grew, from 1,581 in 2023 to 2,616 in 2024, achieving a key goal for FY 2024.

We also noted that while Homemaker responses indicate near perfect numbers for client satisfaction, Respite feedback is more nuanced, indicating to us both greater need and the need for additional help.

For example, 25% of respondents answered 5 when indicating their relief level from receiving Respite Services, on a scale of 1 to 10, perhaps indicating that help is more about maintaining health and mental health while their duties as caregiver may be increasing in complexity. Additional resources may also be needed.

Our strategy to help address increased needs is to supplement services in the home with our Memory Café and Respite Certificates. We are also working to launch our own Adult Day Program in FY 2025. Additional help is available through our Caregiver Support Group, caregiver training/programming, our Alzheimer's/dementia lending libraries and info & referral.

Some additional takeaways:

- We continue to survey Homemaker clients twice per year, at each of their bi-annual assessments. We feel this helps to maintain open lines of communication between client and agency and more quickly respond to changing needs. The most recent survey received is included in tabulating the results.*
- We continue to feel that the DCW premium has been instrumental in building and retaining a strong team of Direct Care Workers. Less turnover = more highly trained staff. More highly trained staff deliver better care to Ionia County Seniors, plain and simple.*

Assisted Transportation

- 97% 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 (58 of 60 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 (60 of 60 responses).
- 100% of respondents said their experience with Ionia County Commission on Aging Transportation Services was positive (60 of 60 responses).
- 100% of responses indicated Ionia County COA Transportation has reduced their stress and helped them maintain their independence (60 of 60 responses).

Analysis: All standardized outcomes for Transportation were achieved.

Showing just how important this program is to clients, more than half of respondents (33 of 60 surveys returned) added a note about how much they appreciated the service and/or how impressed they are with our drivers/coordinator. One sample message: “Your services are of great value to our community. My experiences have been top notch! Thank you very much.”

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

Our volunteers continue to use agency fleet vehicles for transportation, not their private vehicles. We believe this has helped us retain volunteers, given insurance cost for using personal vehicles, and has helped professionalize volunteer drivers to stand shoulder to shoulder with our staff drivers.

Our goal for the new year is to continue to grow our numbers, through increased efficiencies with scheduling and by adding more volunteer drivers. In the past year we did retain one additional vehicle, which is also wheelchair accessible, which can be used by volunteers.

Disease Prevention/Health Promotion

Including Arthritis Exercise, EnhanceFitness™, A Matter of Balance and Tai Chi.

DP/HP is a core service at our agency. We offer a robust class schedule at our Senior Center in Ionia along with in-person classes at various “satellite locations” located throughout the county.

We also offer EnhanceFitness, Tai Chi, and now also Arthritis Exercise, via Zoom. We’re excited to give clients this option especially as we move into the colder months, when ice and snow can make leaving the house perilous at times. 45% of survey respondents indicated they had taken a class via Zoom this year.

Surveys were distributed at our Ionia Senior Center and mailed out to those who took classes at other sites in our county in FY 2024: Lake Odessa, Belding and Saranac.

Polling showed a high level of satisfaction from clients:

- 95% of respondents indicated that they would take the class again (36 of 38).
- 100% indicated they would recommend the class to others (38 of 38).
- 97% felt that their balance and stability had improved due to the class (37 answering yes, 1 maybe).
- 97% said their overall fitness level had improved because of the class (37 answered yes, 1 maybe).
- 100% said they felt the class was fun and a good social experience (38 of 38).

Additional comments and analysis:

Each year we look to grow our program and to try new approaches to encourage more seniors to join DP/HP (or Wellness) classes.

We feel it's important to offer a selection of choices to satisfy clients at all fitness levels. One way we do this is to sketch out an annual plan at the start of the year to make sure we do our best to serve our whole community. That strong foundation also allows us to try new things – different times, locations, classes - based on client feedback and to do outreach/promotion to reach as many clients as possible.

We continue to see high satisfaction levels, but needs can change over time and as we welcome new participants. Bringing back Arthritis Exercise has been a real success. And we are seeing more participants join EnhanceFitness at all fitness levels.

In FY 2025 we are rolling out new equipment - including a new mixer, microphone and fitness headsets - to enhance instruction in-person and online. Our wellness specialist will also present at several Lunch and Learns again this year about how to join DP/HP using their smartphones or tablets on Zoom. We're also adding an additional EnhanceFitness Instructor!

Our plan is to host in-person classes in Lake Odessa, Belding, Saranac and Portland, in addition to Ionia, in FY 2025.

Senior Center Activities

Our Senior Center in Ionia hosts recurring and unique activities, programming and services. It is also a hub for information where seniors can learn more about our services or get info and referral for other resources in our county.

The goal of polling is to make sure our staff have the resources they need to help clients, as well as to inform our plans for programming that best serves our community in the new year.

Results showed:

- 100% indicated ICCOA staff were courteous and helpful (31 of 31 responses)
- 90% replied that staff *always* helped them gain access to appropriate services (28 of 31 responses), up from 79% last year.
- 93% indicated they were *very* satisfied with our agency's range of services (27 of 29 responses)
- 90% indicated they found the information in our newsletter helpful always or usually (27 of 30 responses)
- 100% indicated they would recommend our agency to a friend (32 of 32 responses)

- Of 30 replies, 18 indicated they felt they had a voice in activities or services our COA offers, 8 said they were unsure and 4 respondents indicated they did not feel they had a voice.

Analysis + goals for the new year:

Our goal for the new year is to continue to develop the resources and services our clients need and to offer activities and programming that clients enjoy and that offers real benefits.

With that in mind, in FY 2024 our agency also conducted a “Listening Tour” at multiple satellite sites, before or after Congregate Meals or DPHP Programming. Observations and feedback from these sessions led to a number of changes for the new year.

For example, based on our Listening Tour and other feedback:

- *New yard signs were developed for Congregate Meals sites, to reach more participants.*
- *We made our popular Tech Savvy Senior Workshop a recurring, quarterly event.*
- *We’re providing MMAP counseling at 7 satellite sites during open enrollment this year.*
- *We will deliver 4 lunch and learns, at all our meal sites, in FY 2025, the first being Healthy Living for Brain and Body in partnership with the Alzheimer’s Association.*
- *We launched a new, weekly Yarn Circle in Ionia.*
- *We continued our Meal and Movie Night series in Ionia.*
- *We adjusted the hours for our Coffee Klatch group and Caregiver Support Group.*
- *In FY 2025 we plan to launch a supplemental PERs program, to help additional seniors obtain this important service and get off the waiting list.*

Another new program we launched this year is our Memory Café. Hosted by Direct Care Staff (In-Home Aides), this program provides an opportunity for caregivers + care recipients to socialize together in an inclusive environment. A meal is offered along with activities. We hope Memory Café attendees might join our Blue Skies Adult Day Program once this is launched in FY 2025.

Another service launched in FY 2024 is our new Brief Bank. While a donation-based program had existed in the past, Brief Bank expanded on this with supplies received through community partners and the State of MI, which also gave us the framework for the program (clients qualify at up to 200% of FPL). This gave us an opportunity to identify, and meet the needs, of many more seniors.

Notes on Congregate and Home Delivered Meal Survey Results

For Home Delivered Meals, all standardized outcomes were achieved save one, 78% of clients reported that the meals helped them remain in their home, shy of the target of 85%.

On this question, we felt clients may not have seen a direct line between food and housing, and how the one affects the other. As an agency we're aware how the two issues are interconnected. In fact, for FY 2024 Meals on Wheels recipients at our agency, we show the average client comes in at just 143.8% of the federal poverty level. This shows us how needed the support is. Data from Meals on Wheels America also tells us that older Americans are living longer with less money.

For congregate meals, we saw high satisfaction numbers on meals and also that clients very much appreciate the activities and socialization the meals provide.

Our plan is to continue to offer special meals throughout the year and at all sites – Belding, Clarksville, Ionia, Lake Odessa, Portland and Saranac. And we'll continue with a series of Lunch and Learns throughout the new year.

Survey results for Congregate and Home Delivered Meals also follow.

This report covers outcomes for Older Americans Act services including: Homemaker and Respite Services, Assisted Transportation, Senior Center Services and Healthy Aging/Disease Prevention. Funding for these services includes Older Americans Act funding, MDOT funding and importantly, Ionia County Senior Millage Funds.

Congregate Meal FY 24 Outcomes

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

	#	%
1. In general, I like the taste of the meals.		
Yes	135	96%
No	6	4%

2. The meals are a good value for the suggested donation?		
Yes	139	99%
No	2	1%

3. Overall, my basic food needs are met?		
Yes	137	97%
No	4	3%

left no name to contact

4. Why do you attend the meal site?		
Total people who answered	141	
Activities	89	63%
Socializing with friends	112	79%
The Food	75	53%
Other	21	15%

Eucre, site hostess, SERA, volunteer
get out of house, donation amount
information/presentations

HDM FY 24 Outcomes

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

	#	%
1. Is the meal we deliver your main meal for the day?		
Yes	137	80%
No	35	20%

2. In general, the food tastes good?		
Yes	168	98%
No	4	2%

3. The meal I receive is a good value for the suggested donation?		
Yes	170	99%
No	2	1%

4. Since receiving MOW, I eat more fruits and vegetables.		
Yes	154	90%
No	18	10%

5. Overall, my basic food needs are met/I have enough food to eat at home.		
Yes	162	94%
No	10	6%

	#	%
6. Before you began receiving MOW services, did you ever go to bed hungry?		
Yes	50	29%
No	122	71%

Do you ever go to bed hungry now?		
Yes	14	8%
No	158	92%

7. Since receiving the meals, my health has stayed the same or improved?		
Yes	159	94%
No	11	6%

8. The meals I receive are one of the reasons I can stay in my home?		
Agree	133	78%
Disagree	38	22%

Standardized Outcomes	Achieved %	Outcome Achieved (Yes/No)
90% of clients will like the taste of their meals. (Q2)	98%	Yes
70% of clients will report eating more fruits and vegetables. (Q4)	90%	Yes
90% of clients will report having enough food to eat. (Q5)	94%	Yes
70% of clients will report their health has stayed the same or improved since receiving the meals. (Q7)	94%	Yes
85% of clients will report that the meals help them remain in their home. (Q8)	78%	No