

## Waushara County Department of Aging Services 2008 Summary

Waushara County Department of Aging serves over 4,000 unduplicated adults each year in a variety of ways including through the nutrition program, transportation, benefit assistance, public information, in-home support services, caregiver support, health programming, medication management, or with general information and assistance through the Aging & Disability Resource Center. In 2008, staff provided over 130,000 units of service; 90% of services were for individuals age 60 or older and 10% were to persons under 60 with disabilities.

### INFORMATION & ASSISTANCE – RESOURCE CENTER

At the heart of the Aging & Disability Resource Center are trained Information & Assistance Specialists, Options Counselors, and Disability Benefits Counselors who provide quality assistance to consumers and caregivers as they sort through life changing events, caregiver concerns, or long-term care needs. In 2008, Waushara County's Aging & Disability Resource Center responded to over 3,300 requests for assistance from 1,483 individuals. Topics for assistance include assistive technology support, chore service, in-home services, financial concerns, energy assistance, lifeline systems, housing options, questions about moving to a nursing home, employment needs, general disability assistance, nutrition needs, homemaker assistance and many other needs. The Department of Aging provides Information & Assistance staff for the tri-county Aging & Disability Resource Center and staff for maintaining the tri-county resource database and for production of the annual Community Resource Directory. In June of 2008, Waushara County became a Family Care county, and the Resource Center became responsible for determining Family Care eligibility. The Aging & Disability Resource Center is a local partnership with Department of Human Services and operates as a tri-county program serving Green Lake, Marquette and Waushara counties.

### ELDERLY BENEFIT SPECIALIST

A trained Benefit Specialist is available to provide information and assistance regarding public benefit programs such as Social Security, Medicare, Medicare D and SeniorCare, and to assist with homestead taxes, health insurance, and other areas of concern. In 2008, the Benefit Specialist was extra busy assisting with economic stimulus rebates. The legal pro-bono provided assistance to 32 individuals needing legal advice on a variety of topics including wills, life estates, bankruptcies, etc. In 2008 the Benefit Specialist assisted a total of 1,340 consumers and provided 2,767 units of service. Waushara County reported a monetary value of \$398,879 in savings to people who enrolled in SeniorCare, Medicare Part D, or other public benefit programs during 2008.

### HEALTH PROMOTION & MEDICATION MANAGEMENT

The Department of Aging continues to oversee Health Promotion programming for the tri-county Aging & Disability Resource Center. Programs in 2008 included *Sure Step* fall assessments, *Stepping On*, *A Matter of Balance*, and *Living Well with Chronic Conditions* workshop series. A total of 53 Waushara County residents participated in an in-home fall prevention assessment or one of the fall prevention or chronic disease self-management class series. For those providing data showing no additional falls during 2008, an estimated savings in emergency room visits totaling \$3,200 may be assumed and an additional average savings of \$19,358 for each person who was not hospitalized because of a hip fracture or other complication of the fall. Medication management efforts assisted 84 individuals in the home, and 275 others with information and general assistance.

### HOME REPAIR PROGRAM

The Volunteer Senior Home Repair Program is a cooperative effort with Department of Aging Services, Human Services, and Waushara County Habitat for Humanity. The home repair program uses skilled volunteers to provide a variety of home repairs for older adults to help prevent falls and maintain the ability to live alone independently. Individuals receiving service pay for the cost of materials and mileage reimbursement for the volunteers. Home repair volunteers provided 277 hours of service in 2008 and assisted 26 individuals.

### NATIONAL FAMILY CAREGIVER SUPPORT PROGRAM

The National Family Caregiver Support Program provides assistance to individuals caring for a person age 60 or older, as well as grandparents raising grandchildren. The Caregiver Support Group is the core component of this program, and a group of 22 individuals participated in 2008. Other informal caregivers were supported with respite service or personal care assistance for the care recipient. Additionally, a large number of informal caregivers received information and assistance service provided through the Aging & Disability Resource Center and Department of Aging staff. Support services for caregivers were also provided with funding from United Way.

### NUTRITION SERVICES

Hot, nutritious meals are provided Monday through Friday at 8 dining centers located throughout the county and to individuals needing home delivered meals. In February, a new Dining Center opened in Poy Sippi. A total of 1,218 unduplicated individuals took part in the nutrition program, and 55,787 meals were served. Of this total, 48% of all meals were served to participants at meal sites and 52% to those receiving home delivered meals. Of those participating in the nutrition program, 16% receive a meal delivered to the home; 84% attend a Dining Center. A total of 54 persons were identified as being at high nutrition risk. The Senior Farmers' Market Program was offered for the 6th year, and 147 vouchers were dispersed.

### TRANSPORTATION

The Waushara County Coordinated Transportation System is a program administered by the Department of Aging Services, serving clientele of the Department of Aging, Human Services, and Veterans Services. Transportation is offered to individuals age 60 or older, disable persons, and veterans of any age with no other means of transportation. Volunteer drivers are used almost exclusively for medical appointments. The mini-bus provides transportation to medical appointments as well as grocery shopping, banking, and other personal errands.

During 2008, 24 volunteer drivers made 5,664 one-way trips; the mini-bus made 7,104 one-way trips for a total of 12,768 transportation trips. A round-trip average of 532 trips was coordinated each month throughout the year with 58% of all trips for medical related reasons. Volunteer drivers logged 171,098 miles and provided 8,046 hours of service. The mini-bus vehicles logged 39,206 miles and spent 2,809 hours on the road. Of the nearly 400 unduplicated individuals who used the transportation system, a total of 86 new participants registered during 2008.

### VOLUNTEER SERVICES

Volunteers make it possible for the department to provide services at a much higher level than funding would otherwise permit. Without the dedication of over 150 volunteers, many programs would not exist. In 2008, volunteers logged 17,911 hours of service for a total monetary value of \$133,621.