



Iowa Association of Area Agencies on Aging 2020 POLICY AGENDA

Older adults may become vulnerable to exploitation and abuse if they:

- Are dependent upon others to manage finances
- Are socially isolated from friends and/or loved ones
- Have difficulty attending medical appointments
- Are undernourished
- Cannot access healthcare due to cost and/or transportation
- Are confused, depressed, or at risk of opioid abuse

Older Iowans have the right to be free of abuse and exploitation; Iowa policies must ensure that they are.

Iowa's aging network provides community-based services and supports that promote optimal aging, enhance independence, and limit risk for abuse and exploitation.

Priority 1: DIFFERENTIATE ELDER ABUSE IN IOWA

Elder Abuse is broader than Dependent Adult Abuse

- It is time to enhance protection and services for older Iowans vulnerable to elder abuse.
- Elder abuse follows civil proceedings for legal relief. Unless otherwise determined in different criminal aspects of Iowa law, elder abuse itself does not have criminal relief.

I4A supports the establishment of specific penalties for acts of elder abuse including assault, theft, financial exploitation, consumer frauds, and dependent adult abuse.

- Elder Abuse Prevention and Awareness program (EAPA) through the aging network is underfunded.

I4A supports a \$400,000 appropriations increase for EAPA supports and services.

See back of handout for additional data and details.

Priority 2 RETURN TO COMMUNITY IMPROVES CHOICE

The aging network requests an increase of \$400,000 in appropriations for Return to Community expansion.

Current pilot programs have successfully transitioned older Iowans from long-term care and hospital environments to their preferred, less restrictive communities.

Expanding this program will help older Iowans who can utilize supports and services to live as independently as possible in their communities of choice.

Priority 3 INVEST IN COMMUNITY LIVING & INDEPENDENCE

The aging network requests an increase of \$400,000 appropriations for Elderly Services that help older Iowans remain independent in the home.

Examples of Elderly Services programs and services:

LifeLong Links (Information/Assistance, Options Counseling)
Family Caregiver Services
Congregate and Home-Delivered Meals
Elder Abuse Prevention and Assistance Services
Evidence-Based Health Promotions Programs
Home Modifications, Material Aid and Chore services

AAAs MAKE SENSE

- Provided access to information for over 46,000 family caregivers in FY19.
- Helped over 18,000 people with information for services and supports in FY19.
- Served over 2 million meals reducing social isolation and improving health to nearly 26,000 Iowans in FY19.

AAA's help Iowans preserve their resources so they can stay in their home and community of choice.

| Differentiate Elder Abuse | |
|---|--|
| Dependent Adult Abuse (Iowa Chapter 235E) | Elder Abuse (Iowa Chapter 235F) |
| <i>Requires</i> that any adult be dependent upon the care of the person alleged to be committing abuse | <i>Does not require</i> that the vulnerable older adult be dependent upon the care of another for abuse to occur |
| Physical Abuse | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Causing pain or injury to a dependent adult | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pain or injury caused by someone other than a caregiver |
| Emotional Abuse | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal degradation or humiliation to a dependent adult | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not defined in Iowa. Example: inflicting mental pain, distress through verbal and nonverbal acts |
| Sexual Abuse | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sexual exploitation by a caregiver | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sexual abuse defined in Chapter 709 or Section 726.2 of Iowa Code. Includes nonconsensual sexual contact and coercion |
| Neglect | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deprivation of food, shelter, clothing, medical care | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Definition is the same <i>and</i> requires a caregiver |
| Exploitation | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caregiver deliberately endeavors to misuse funds, assets, medication, or property | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial exploitation is when a person of funds, assets, medication, or property trust endeavors to deceive, coerce, fraud, or belongings or assets |

Data You Need to Know

- AAAs provided EAPA services to 426 Iowans in FY19 but funding limitations limited meeting demand for supports and services.
- Average expenditure per client in FY19 = \$1,240 but limitations on flexible funding prevented additional safety and supports.
- Over \$130,000 of federal and state funding was needed to support EAPA that could have been used in other programs.

Increasing EAPA appropriations by \$400,000 will:

- Reduce pressure on other essential services to cover EAPA services and supports.
- Meet the increasing demand for supports and services related to elder

Area Agency on Aging Experience:

A 68-year-old Iowan with severe health challenges was evicted after her son was arrested. She did not have the resources to pay for deposits for a new place and the shelters were full. Agency funding allowed for a short stay at a motel, but not housing deposits to ensure her long-term safety.

Area Agency on Aging Experience:

Our Elder Rights Specialist provided intervention for a client who was scammed out of \$30,000 and faced foreclosure of her home.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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