



# Never Too Old

Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan  
2011 Annual Report



*"You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream."*

-- C.S. Lewis



## From the Executive Director

Many Baby Boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) are now in their 60s and challenging the idea of what it means to be a “senior.” The term is no longer associated with being inactive or unable. In fact, many are demonstrating that even older adults with physical or mental limitations are never too old to be healthy, independent or live in their own home.

The Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan (AAAWM) helped reinforce this theme in Fiscal Year (FY) 2011 through:

- **Healthy Aging Classes.** The Arthritis Foundation Tai Chi class was added to the menu of healthy aging classes offered throughout our region. There are now seven options that blend physical activity with concerns such as falls or chronic conditions.
- **Ridelink.** The county-wide transportation program combines the efforts of five providers to improve efficiencies and enable older adults to be independent, even if they don't drive.
- **MI Choice Medicaid Waiver.** This program brings services to a client's house to help them remain living in their own home.

AAAWM will continue to assist older adults and those with disabilities; ensuring they are never too old to be given the opportunity to be healthy, independent or live in their own home.



Tom Czerwinski  
AAAWM Executive Director

## Healthy Aging Programs



The Arthritis Foundation Tai Chi class was added to the evidence-based health promotion programs offered in our region. There are now seven different options for older adults who want to stay active and be healthy.

In FY 2011, the following Healthy Aging programs were offered:

**A Matter of Balance-** Allegan, Ionia, Kent, Lake, Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Newaygo and Osceola counties.

**Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program-** Ionia, Kent, Mecosta and Montcalm counties.

**Arthritis Foundation Tai Chi Program-** Ionia and Mecosta counties.

**EnhanceFitness®-** Ionia, Kent and Mecosta counties.

**Healthy Moves for Aging Well-** Lake and Osceola counties.

**PATH (Personal Action Towards Health)-** Ionia, Kent, Mecosta and Montcalm counties.

**Senior Health Club-** Kent County.



## Michigan Medicare/Medicaid Assistance Program (MMAP)

Region-wide, a team of 40 dedicated volunteer counselors spent nearly 5,000 hours assisting Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries. Older adults and those with disabilities were educated and empowered to make informed decisions regarding Medicare, Medicaid and prescription drug coverage. One-on-one contacts were made with 5,270 individuals in FY 2011.

MMAP staff and volunteers also participated in outreach activities through articles, radio interviews, health fairs, and educational presentations totaling an additional 675 volunteer hours.

## Ridelink

Ridelink is a collaboration of five human service agencies in Kent County. Ridelink, which began in 2008, simplified access to transportation for older adults in Kent County by providing one number to call. The program is funded primarily by the Kent County Senior Millage. In 2011, 45,744 trips were taken through Ridelink.



Sandra Fleming spent most of her 76 years working with non-profit organizations and volunteering in her community.

She doesn't drive much anymore, but that doesn't stop her from getting around. She even continues to volunteer multiple times a week.

She has used Ridelink many times, including trips to the airport, grocery store, credit union, medical appointments and social visits. She used to ride the bus, but found that the extra walking was too difficult. With Ridelink, a vehicle picks her up at the entrance to her apartment building and drops her off at the door of her destination.

**“Ridelink was a blessing...a true blessing for me.”**



## Kent County Senior Millage

Kent County voters approved the Senior Millage in 1998 for eight years. In 2006 a renewal and slight increase received overwhelming support. Residents will have the chance to renew the Millage again in 2014.

In 2011, \$6.4 million in Kent County Senior Millage funding was allocated to 33 agencies that provide 46 unique services.

## Older Americans Act (OAA) Services

Type of Service	Clients	Units
Adult Day Services	104	32,233
Care Management	294	2,244
Caregiver Education Training and Support	372	361
Congregate Meals	4,321	214,423
Counseling	144	430
Disease Prevention/Health Promotion	384	75
Elder Abuse Prevention Education	933	315
Home Delivered Meals	4,305	747,230
Home Support	53	287
Homemaker	1,074	34,017
Information and Assistance	---	19,638
Legal Assistance	481	1,138
Long Term Care Ombudsman	795	1,255
Outreach and Assistance	1,035	3,530
Personal Care	167	12,370
Respite	205	24,557
Senior Center Staffing	---	4,382
Transportation-Assisted	1,125	15,248
Transportation-Public	118	10,132

## Older Americans Act (OAA) Services

In FY 2011, Creating Confident Caregivers, a collaboration with the Alzheimer's Association and the Veterans Administration Outpatient Clinic, conducted six series (30 classes) to educate those caring for family members with dementia.

Caregivers need a break from the demands of caring for another person. In order to meet this need, the respite service definition was broadened in the rural counties to include homemaker, home chore and personal care assistance. The demand for respite certificates also increased region-wide by 60% in FY 2011.

The Caregiver Resource Network website ([www.caregiverresource.net](http://www.caregiverresource.net)) updated their look in FY 2011 to help caregivers better find service, resources and calendar information.

## MI Choice Medicaid Waiver

The MI Choice Medicaid Waiver program (Waiver) provides in-home services to older adults and those with disabilities who are eligible for nursing home care. In FY 2011, AAAWM served 730 Waiver clients. Approximately 28% of MI Choice clients had been living in a nursing home prior to enrollment.

MI Choice assists people who qualify for long term care services in their own homes as well as in group settings (adult foster care and homes for the aged), allowing for a broader choice for long term care assistance. In FY 2011, 56 individuals received assistance through the Waiver in adult foster care settings and licensed homes for the aged.

Self-Determination (an option for Waiver clients) offers individuals more flexibility and control in directing their services at home. Through this option individuals can: choose and employ their own personal care workers, decide when care is provided (time of day, days of week, etc.), recruit, hire, train and supervise their workers. There are 68 individuals who have chosen this option.

## Community Living

The Community Living Program educates adults 60 and over and their support systems (friends, family, etc.) about services available to maintain independent living. In FY 2011, 128 individuals and families met with an Independent Living Consultant to learn about individual and community resources.



John Grady (age 67) had not been able to walk or feel his legs for the past twenty years due to a work accident. After foot surgery and a series of falls, he went to a nursing facility for rehabilitation but had a desire to live on his own again.

He was referred to the Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan and was able to move to an apartment in Big Rapids. “It’s quiet up here,” he says of his new place. “I love having my own apartment.”

John is pretty independent, though he uses an electronic wheelchair most of the time. A homemaker provides an hour a day of chores (laundry and cleaning) and an hour of personal care (bathing, shaving, etc.) a day. He also receives home delivered meals and has a Personal Emergency Response System.

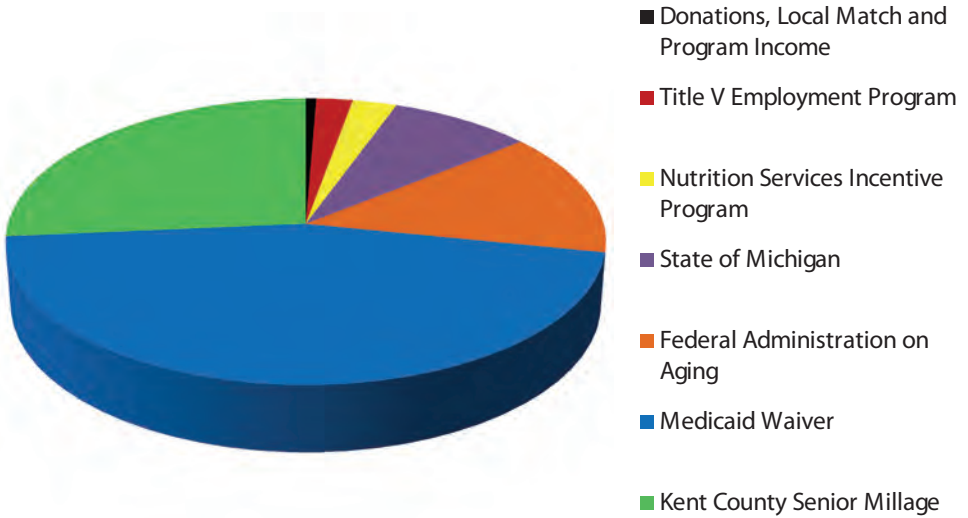
After a series of surgeries on his back and neck, he is able to walk again with the use of a walker or a cane. He now is seen walking the apartment hallways every chance he gets. He feels blessed and credits the MI Choice Medicaid Waiver program with his success.

**“I really appreciate what ya’ll did for me.”**



## **Nursing Facility Transition (NFT)**

The Nursing Facility Transition (NFT) program helps those currently living in a nursing home return to the community. In FY 2011, NFT began working with 194 clients and families; 119 of those individuals have successfully transitioned.



## FY 2011 Revenues

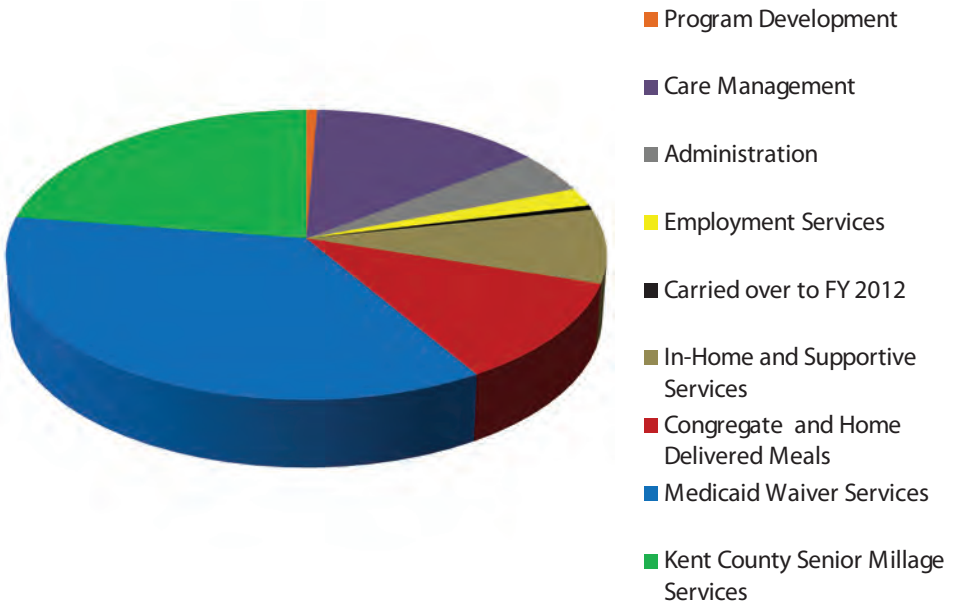
Program Income	\$	13,674
Donations		20,302
Local Match		133,643
Title V Employment Program		577,765
Nutrition Services Incentive Program		706,101
State of Michigan		2,272,633
Federal Administration on Aging		3,666,620
Medicaid Waiver		11,912,408
Kent County Senior Millage		6,921,273
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>26,224,419</b>

*AAAWM receives program funding from the Older Americans Act and Older Michiganians Act through the Office of Services to the Aging. Other programs are funded through the Michigan Department of Community Health and the Kent County Senior Millage.*



## FY 2011 Expenditures

Program Development	\$ 170,758
Care Management	3,663,987
Administration	1,192,353
Employment Services	534,309
Carried over to FY 2012	134,472
In-Home Services	1,174,445
Supportive Services	987,243
Congregate Meals	796,513
Home Delivered Meals	2,199,446
Medicaid Waiver Services	9,443,763
Kent County Senior Millage Services	5,927,130
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 26,224,419</b>



## Board of Directors

The AAAWM Board of Directors consists of elected officials and consumers from nine counties and the city of Grand Rapids.

Board members provide leadership to the organization and ensure the agency is fulfilling the mission of helping older adults and those with disabilities live with independence and dignity.

### AAAWM Board of Directors

#### Allegan County

Com. Don Black  
Eleanor Nielsen, Chairperson

#### Ionia County

Com. Larry Tiejema  
Tom Lee  
Robert Reynolds\*

#### Kent County

Com. Carol Hennessy  
Al Page, Vice Chairperson

#### Lake County

Com. Colleen Carrington  
Marilyn Burns, Secretary  
Com. Scott Williams\*

#### Mason County

Com. Susan Boes  
Com. Bob Erickson\*  
Hal Madden\*

#### Mecosta County

Com. Bill Routley  
Com. Art Adleman, Treasurer

#### Montcalm County

Com. John Johansen  
Ralph Harrington

#### Newaygo County

Com. Barbara Geno  
Marilyn Snell

#### Osceola County

Com. Larry Emig  
Richard Karns

#### City of Grand Rapids

Com. James B. White,  
Member-at-large  
Esther Van Hammen

\* denotes former members

## Advisory Council

The AAAWM Advisory Council consists of representatives from nine counties and the city of Grand Rapids. Advisory Council members help identify the needs of older adults, disseminate information about available services and the aging network in their communities, identify available untapped resources, advocate on behalf of older adults in West Michigan and present their recommendations to the Board of Directors.

## Advisory Council

### Allegan County

George Smeenge\*

### Ionia County

Judith Kalmanek, Vice-Chair

Norma Kilpatrick

Ojars Smits

### Kent County

Com. Jack Boelema

F. Robert Deane, M.D.

### Lake County

Nellie Blue

Nicolette McClure

Com. Colleen Carrington\*

### Mason County

Paula Estle

Robert Sundholm, Chairperson

Ronald Townsend

Fran Nash\*

### Mecosta County

Dorothy Birtles

Jerrilyn Strong

### Montcalm County

Ben Witbrodt

### Newaygo County

Adele Hansen

Josephine Toliver

### Osceola County

Barbara Hazlett

Mary Lou Proefrock

### City of Grand Rapids

Keith D. Vandercook

### Emeritus

Louise Thomas

### Advocates for Senior Issues

Tom Appel

Bill Thomas\*

### Grand Valley State University

Priscilla Kimboko, Vice-Chair

\* denotes former members



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Established in April 1974, the Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan (AAAWM) exists to help older adults and persons with disabilities live in their community with independence and dignity. AAWM is part of a national network of 629 Area Agencies on Aging and a statewide network of 16 Area Agencies on Aging.