

Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan

*Age
My
Way*



The Source for Seniors

**2021
Annual Report**

ABOUT

AREA AGENCY ON AGING OF WESTERN MICHIGAN (AAAWM)



Senior Neighbors



Kent County Community Action



Salvation Army



Grand Rapids Community College

OUR MISSION

To provide older persons and persons with a disability an array of services designed to promote independence and dignity in their homes and communities. AAAWM is The Source for Seniors in Allegan, Ionia, Kent, Lake, Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Newaygo, and Osceola counties.

WHAT WE DO

AAAWM connects individuals to quality services that promote and preserve their dignity, independence, and well-being, coordinates support and education for caregivers, and leads advocacy efforts on behalf of our clients.

HOW WE DO IT

AAAWM is a 501(c) 3 nonprofit organization. Services are funded through the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, the Bureau of Aging, Community Living, and Supports, and the Kent County Senior Millage.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan (AAAWM) Board of Directors consists of elected officials and older adults from our nine county region 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.

Allegan County

Rick Cain
Stuart Peet

Ionia County

David Hodges*
Dennis Sitzer
Ally Cook

Kent County

Carol Hennessy
Nancy Nielsen

Lake County

Betty Dermeyer
Marilyn Burns

Mason County

Ron Bacon
Kim Halladay

Mecosta County

Sharon Bongard
Bill Routley

City of Grand Rapids

Jane DeVries
Milinda Ysasi

Montcalm County

Michael Beach*
Linda Weger*
Chuck Havekamp
Kathy Bresnahan

Newaygo County

Kenneth DeLaat
Cindy LaBelle

Osceola County

Richard Karns*
Tim Michell

ADVISORY COUNCIL

The AAAWM Advisory Council consists of representatives from our 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 Western Michigan and present their recommendations to the Board of Directors.

Allegan County

Natalie Van Houten

Ionia County

Norma Kilpatrick
Kenneth Thompson

Kent County

Melaine Grooters
Harold Mast
Monica Sparks
Martha Burkett

Mason County

Robert Sundholm
James Thomas

Mecosta County

Mary Bechaz
Jerrilyn Strong

Grand Valley State University

Priscilla Kimboko

Montcalm County

Tim Reno
Ben Witbrodt

Newaygo County

Helen Taube

Osceola County

Barbara Hazlett
Mary Lou Proefrock

Kent County Veterans Services

Nelson Soto
Rachel Wustman

*Denotes Former Member

A MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

JACKIE O'CONNOR, AREA AGENCY ON AGING OF WESTERN MICHIGAN



*"I planned each charted course.
Each careful step along the byway
And more, much more than this.
I did it my way" - Paul Anka*

There's something to be said of doing things your own way. When it comes to aging, we all desire the freedom to age how we would like to. Of course, it's impossible to predict just how you'll age, yet throughout this unknown is the power of choice. The supports you may need as you age could vary, but being able to choose, trust, and rely on these resources is what it means to truly do things your way.

At the Area Agency on Aging of Western Michigan, we recognize the importance of this autonomy. We know that these past few years have left uncertainty for older adults and burnout for caregivers, and have emphasized how important continued services are for these individuals. Of course, we have an immense amount of gratitude for our Older Americans Act and Kent County Senior Millage partners, who also honor the importance of freedom and client choice while adjusting their services.

In this year's report, we'll take a closer look at the many ways older adults can remain in and be involved with their communities to truly "age my way". Supports that enable older adults to stay living at home, such as home-delivered or congregate meals, safe transportation options, in-home care, adaptive equipment, and more. The community connections that they make with their service providers and the programs they take part in can be a large motivator for individuals to feel a sense of purpose and belonging. Furthermore, the added layer of the pandemic and prioritizing safety has led to a number of creative innovations to continue service. We want all of our clients to be able to say "I'm aging my way" and we know that these services play a vital role in their doing so.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jackie O'Connor".

AGING IN PLACE

According to a national survey from AARP, 3 out of 4 older adults wish to “age in place”, which means staying in their own homes as they get older. However, there are often concerns about safety, getting around, and performing daily activities to care for themselves. Older Americans Act (OAA) and Kent County Senior Millage (KCSM) partners offer a number of services to help make this dream a reality through administering personal care, providing transportation, facilitating support groups, making home modifications, providing adaptive equipment, and many other services. When aging at home, older adults feel empowered and independent.



"When I see my MOWWM driver pulling up, I know that I can eat now and it puts a smile on my face." - John

↑ Meals on Wheels of Western Michigan home-delivered meals senior John and his driver, Marla.

Alternatives in Motion client Roy with his mobility equipment which helps him safely navigate his home.



↓ Newaygo County Commission on Aging's meal delivery vehicle fleet



↓ Kent County Community Action outdoor congregate meals



COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Research from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has shown, that for older adults, staying engaged in enjoyable activities is associated with better physical and mental health. Many Older Americans Act and Kent County Senior Millage services support this community-focused mindset. This looks like senior centers where they can socialize with friends and take part in activities. Adult Day allows caregivers to receive respite while their loved one is able to engage in a safe environment. Healthy Aging classes go a step further than evidence-based exercise, giving an older adult a chance to establish friendships. Of course, aspects of these services changed during the pandemic, but the focus on these relationships and community never wavered.



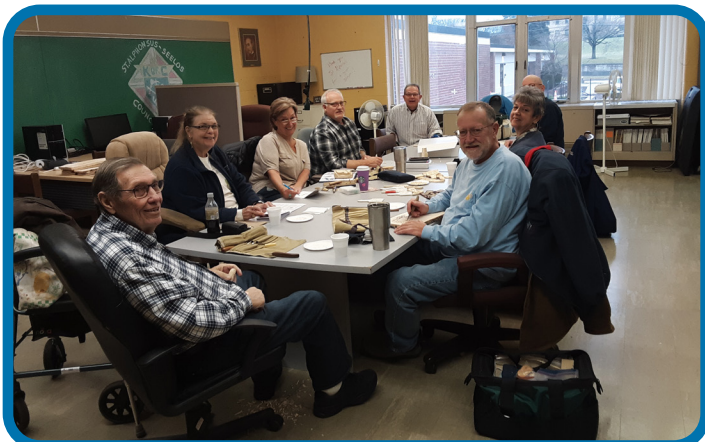
Osceola Commission on Aging's regular meal site client Fran recently celebrated her 100th birthday! Her friends, staff, and family threw her a surprise birthday party at the meal site filled with cake and snowmobiling, which Fran even drove herself! If that isn't aging her way, we aren't sure what is!



Puzzle time at Scottville Senior Center!



St. Alphonsus' Young At Heart program's woodworking crew.

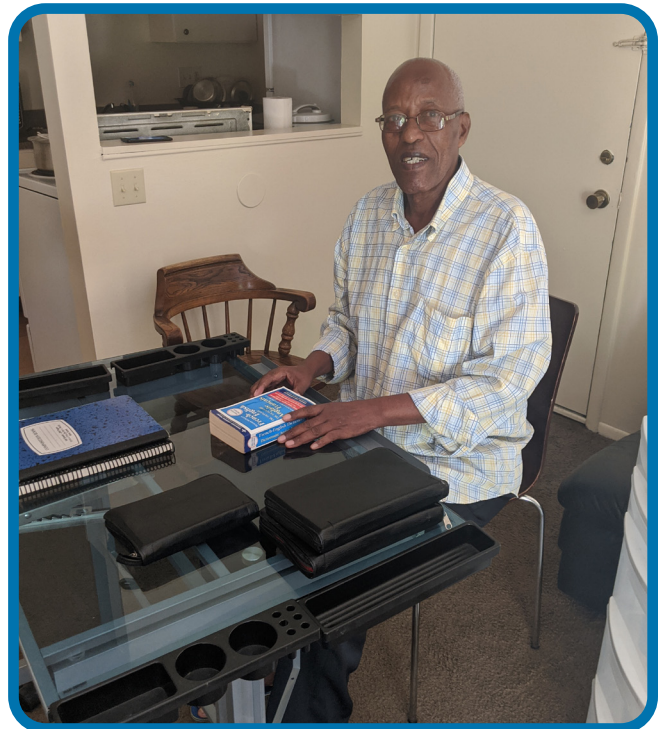


INNOVATION IN ACTION

The services through Older Americans Act and Kent County Senior Millage consistently have the wishes of older adults at their forefront. Asking clients what they want can seem a small thing, but it makes a large impact on their care. People deserve to feel heard and listened to, these client stories show this on full display with creative and out-of-the-box thinking from the service providers who care for them.



Life Therapeutic Solutions Stepping Stones program client Rita created detailed oil paintings for years, however due to barriers with her sight her sense of detail was missing. Her Recreational Therapist took her old pictures, changed them to black and white, and printed them on cards for her to add watercolors to her original paintings!



▲ *Democratic Republic of Congo refugee Simon came to the US determined to learn the English language. He wanted a workspace so he could read and write comfortably and reached out to Senior Neighbor's refugee program. Not only were they able to connect him to community resources, but also helped him procure a desk. Simon is now able to age his way while learning English in the comfort of his own home at his new desk!*



▲ *Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired client Tom lost his sight, but this has not stopped him from aging his way and taking part in a variety of activities. Tom took part in an ABVI/Mary Free Bed collaboration workshop on walking and running with a sighted guide. This past fall he completed a 5K walk/run with his son and daughter-in-law!*

OLDER AMERICANS ACT

2021 FISCAL YEAR

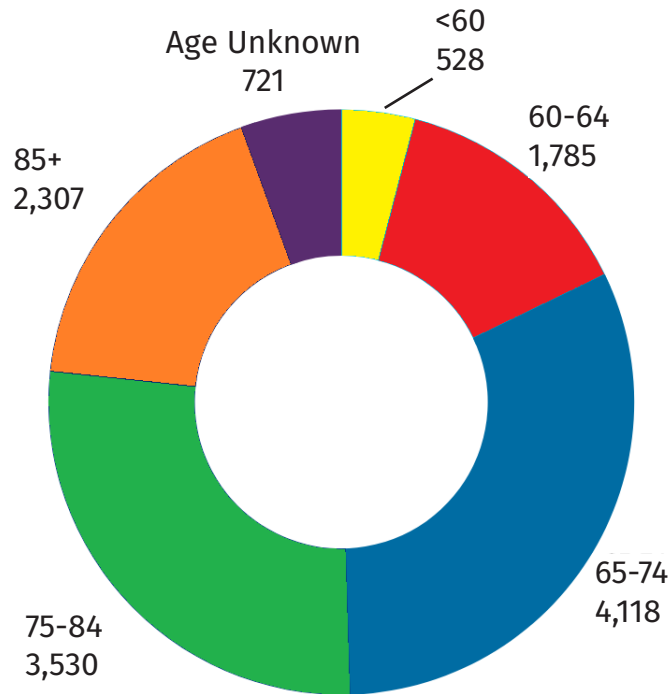
\$8,200,000 in service funding



AAAWM and our
network of partners
served

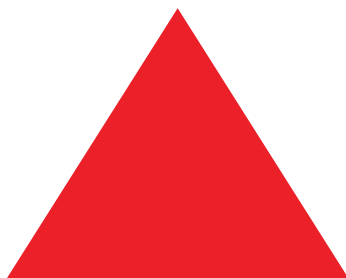
12,989

total clients

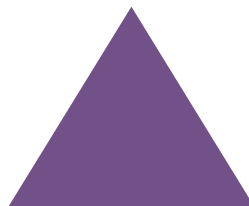


Clients by Age

Clients by Race
& Ethnicity



10,523 White



1,686 African
American



89 Asian



76 Native
American



18 Pacific
Islander



14 Other



583 Race
Unknown

3.24% Identify as Hispanic

1.25% Identify as Multiracial

47.24%

live alone



30.70%

below poverty



Top 5 Services



Nutrition



Transportation



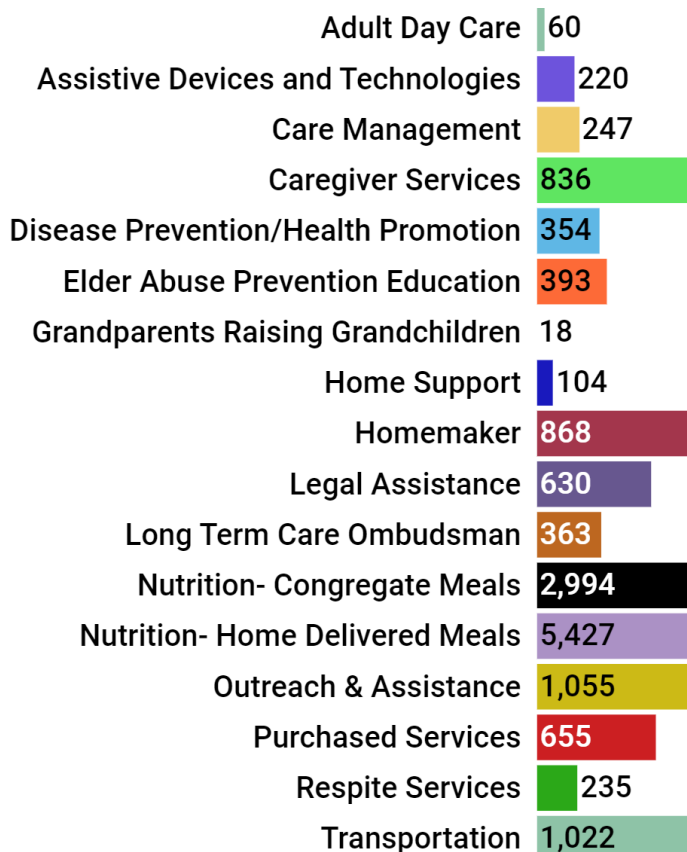
Homemaker



Caregiver Support

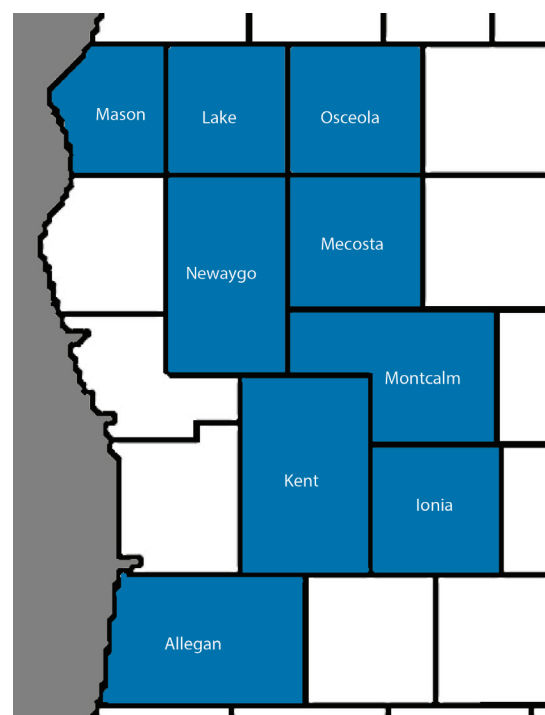


Outreach & Assistance



Clients Receiving Service

County	Clients Served	Percent
Allegan	833	6.41%
Ionia	939	7.23%
Kent	6,565	50.54%
Lake	517	3.98%
Mason	456	3.51%
Mecosta	757	5.83%
Montcalm	850	6.54%
Newaygo	841	6.47%
Osceola	589	4.53%
Other	134	1.03%
County Unknown	508	3.91%



KENT COUNTY SENIOR MILLAGE

2021 FISCAL YEAR

\$12,700,000 in service funding

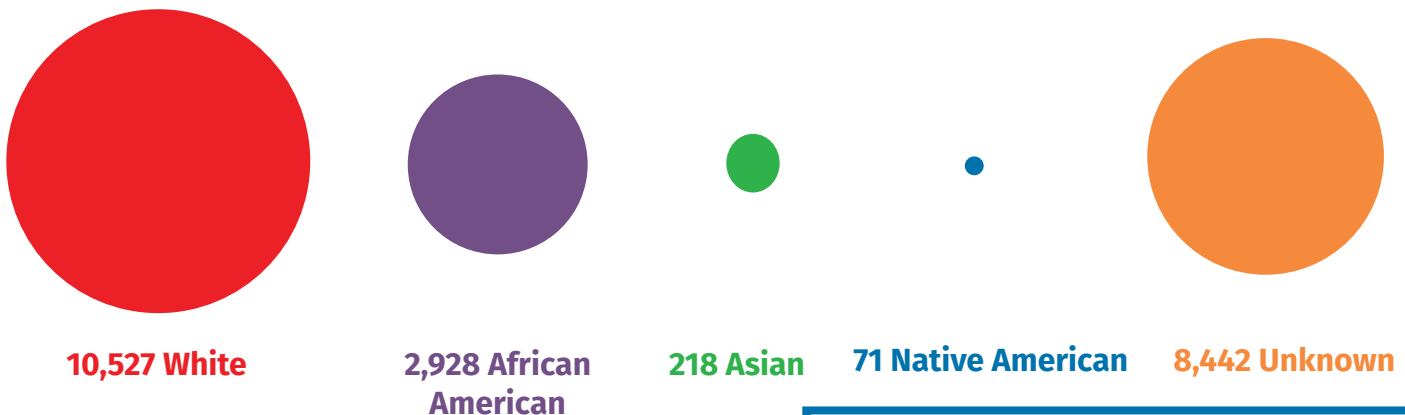
*Kent County
Senior Millage*

AAAWM and our network
of partners served

22,186
total clients



Clients by Race & Ethnicity



4.51% Identify as Hispanic

Clients by Gender



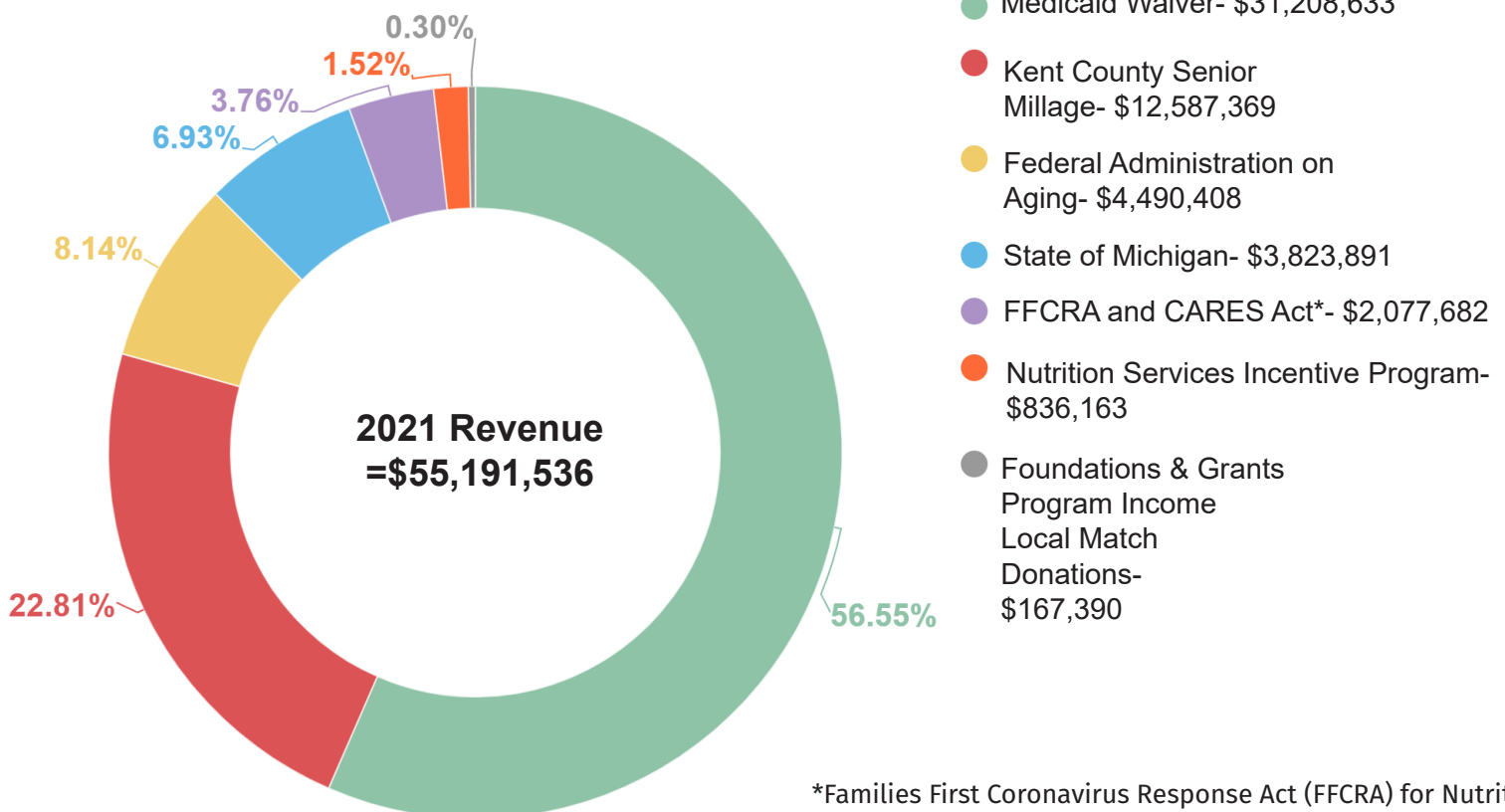
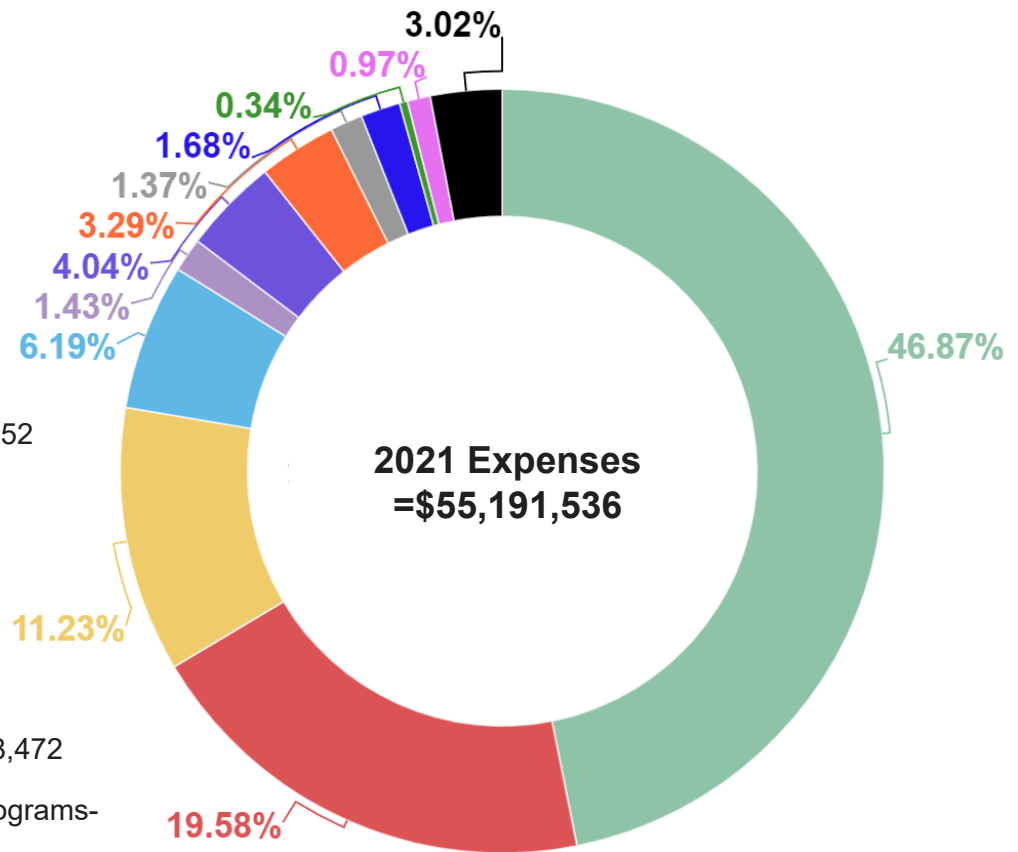
66.5% Identify as Female
33.41 Identify as Male
0.08% Unknown

Top Services (by client #)

Information & Referral- 8,228
Outreach & Assistance- 2,319
Prescription Assistance- 2,167
Transportation- 1,713
Senior Food Pantry- 1,710
Home Delivered Meals- 1,595
Care Management- 773
Personal Emergency Response
Systems (PERS) - 759
COVID-19 Senior Support- 757

FINANCIAL REPORT 2021

- Medicaid Waiver Services- \$26,100,786
- Kent County Senior Millage Services- \$10,903,019
- Care Management- \$6,253,109
- Home Delivered Meals- \$3,447,679
- FFCRA and CARES Act*- \$796,523
- In-Home Services- \$2,250,552
- Administration- \$1,830,715
- Supportive Services- \$764,057
- Congregate Meals- \$933,358
- Program Development- \$188,472
- Foundation & Mini Grant Programs- \$42,900
- Carried over to FY 2022- \$1,680,366



*Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) for Nutrition Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act



Many thanks to our partners who provided the majority of images you see in this report. We're grateful for the incredible work that they do and being able to recognize it in this way.



The Source for Seniors

AREA AGENCY ON AGING OF WESTERN MICHIGAN



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