



# introduction

what we do makes a difference

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## MESSAGE FROM THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

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“ I commend the national aging network of state, local, and tribal organizations, service and healthcare providers, caregivers, and millions of dedicated volunteers for your daily efforts on behalf of our senior citizens. ”

— From President George W. Bush’s 2002 Older Americans Month Proclamation

I am pleased to bring you the 2002 annual report of the Administration on Aging (AoA). This report provides us the opportunity to highlight the positive results that AoA, the states and the communities across the nation continue to produce for Older Americans. It also addresses the many activities we performed in fiscal year (FY) 2002 that will support improved results for elders in future years.

AoA took a significant step forward in 2002 when we began to assess Older Americans Act (OAA) programs from the perspective of the elderly consumers and caregivers we serve. We conducted national consumer assessment surveys across five service domains: home-delivered and congregate meals, transportation, information and assistance, homemaker services, and caregivers. The preliminary results we shared with the Congress as part of the President’s Fiscal Year 2004 budget confirmed the success of OAA programs. Elderly consumers and caregivers are highly satisfied with OAA services. They confirmed to us that the programs and services are useful and help them stay independent.

Our program results, presented throughout this report, allow AoA, other agencies throughout the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and the state and local program entities that administer the programs across the country, to be confident in the effectiveness of the initiatives and activities described here in supporting the needs of older Americans.



As a former community service provider and a caregiver, I know how important our community-based programs and services are to the American people. We are working to integrate health and social services. We are building bridges between these two systems of service at the federal level and raising the bar for the state and local levels to enhance coordination of services, to provide more flexibility, and to make access easier for the consumer.

We are concerned with the health and well-being of older persons and strive to ensure both. We are working to promote the President's HealthierUS Initiative through our continued health promotion and disease prevention activities including the Elderly Nutrition Program and USA on the Move in collaboration with the President's Council on Physical Fitness. Ensuring the rights of older people and preventing their abuse, neglect, and exploitation is another major priority for us.

Additionally, we would like to take this opportunity to recognize the efforts of our National Aging Services Network partners. State units on aging, area agencies on aging, and local service providers help make OAA programs and services possible and we are thankful for their hard work. Together, we make it easier for older people to access an integrated array of health and social supports, help older people stay active and healthy, support families in their efforts to care for their loved ones at home and in the community, and ensure the rights of older people. Together, we make a difference in the lives of older Americans.

  
Josefina G. Carbonell

“We must continue to pledge our support for older Americans by improving their health and well-being - through accessible and quality health care and affordable prescription drug coverage, and through support for community-based programs such as those provided by the Administration on Aging.”

— From Health and Human Services  
Secretary Tommy G. Thompson's  
statement regarding Older  
Americans Month 2002



# our mission

who we are and what we do

## WHO WE ARE

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The Administration on Aging (AoA), an agency in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), was established by the Older Americans Act (OAA) in 1965. AoA was created to serve as the federal focal point and advocacy agency for older persons and their concerns. In this role, we work to heighten awareness among other federal agencies, organizations, groups, and the public about the valuable contributions that older Americans make to the nation and alert them to the needs of vulnerable older people.

AoA also administers various grant programs in conjunction with state and local efforts that include a comprehensive and coordinated system of care for older people and their family caregivers. We carry out our grant programs and advocacy



in collaboration with the National Aging Services Network that includes 56 State Units on Aging, 655 Area Agencies on Aging, 243 tribal organizations, over 29,000 local community service organizations, 500,000 volunteers, and a wide variety of national organizations.

## OUR MISSION

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By administering our advocacy and grant programs, we carry out the mission of the AoA. Our mission, as embodied in the OAA, is to promote the dignity and independence of older people, and to help society prepare for an aging population.

## OUR VISION FOR OLDER PEOPLE

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Our vision for older people is based on the American value that dignity is inherent to all individuals in our democratic society, and the belief that older people should have the opportunity to fully participate in all aspects of society and community life, be able to maintain their health and independence, and remain in their own homes and communities for as long as possible.



## OUR PRIORITIES

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- Strengthening the leadership role of the Aging Network in developing a more balanced, consumer-oriented long term care system.
- Helping older people to stay active and healthy by promoting disease prevention and health promotion interventions to motivate and support responsible health choices.
- Supporting families in their efforts to care for their loved ones at home and in the community through the National Family Caregiver Support Program and other efforts.
- Ensuring the rights of older people and preventing elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.



## Advocates for Older Americans

AoA is promoting the dignity and independence of older people