

# 2024-2027 Four-Year Area Plan Program Module

## Executive Summary

This section describes the role of ElderSource as a AAA and includes major highlights, key initiatives, and how the significant needs of the PSA will be addressed. **The suggested limit for the narrative response to this section is three pages.**

ElderSource's 2024-2027 Area Plan provides strategic direction for the work and activities of the agency over the next four years.

### **Highlights - About ElderSource- Role as an AAA**

ElderSource, the Area Agency on Aging (AAA) and Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC) for Northeast Florida administers federal, state and local funds for programs for seniors and their caregivers in Planning and Service Area 4 (PSA 4). The seven counties included in PSA 4 are Baker, Clay, Duval, Flagler, Nassau, St. Johns and Volusia counties. The Agency is a private, not for profit, independent agency that is part of a nationwide network of Area Agencies on Aging. Governed by a local volunteer Board of Directors and advised by an Advisory Council, the activities of ElderSource are funded by federal and state funding, local grants, private donations and endowments.

Within its seven-county service area, ElderSource, as the Area Agency on Aging, provides funding for a variety of services. Some of the programs funded by ElderSource include Community Care for the Elderly (CCE); Alzheimer's Disease Initiative (ADI); Home Care for the Elderly (HCE); Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders (SHINE); Older American's Act (OAA); Respite for Elders Living in Everyday Families (RELIEF); and Emergency Home Energy Assistance for Elders Program (EHEAP).

In 2007, ElderSource transitioned to an Aging Resource Center (ARC), allowing the agency to streamline access to information and referral services and the elder services delivery system. In 2011, ElderSource was officially designated as an Aging and Disability Resource Center (ADRC). As an ADRC, ElderSource helps to facilitate access to services for older adults and adults aged 18 and older with a disability seeking long-term care information or support. Additionally, ElderSource provides support to caregivers of older adults and adults with disabilities.

As an ADRC, ElderSource operates the ADRC Helpline for Northeast Florida. The ADRC Helpline is available to the entire community to answer questions, triage for services, assist with Statewide Medicaid Managed Care Long Term Care (SMMCLTCC)

and Food Stamp applications, eligibility determination or make referrals for services as needed.

## **ElderSource's Role in Addressing Significant Needs**

ElderSource serves as the focal point to which older adults, adults with disabilities, their caregivers and the general public can turn to for information, referral, assistance and answers relating to aging issues.

ElderSource's main responsibilities are to:

- Identify the needs of older adults and caregivers in our service area
- Develop plans to address these needs
- Contract with local agencies to deliver services using state and federal grants
- Provide oversight of contracts, ensuring good stewardship of funds
- Advocate on behalf of older adults, adults with disabilities and their caregivers

Through public hearings, needs assessments, surveys and other forms of data collection, ElderSource strives to identify the needs of its diverse older adult and adult with disabilities community, and is involved with allocating and managing funding to local agencies that can provide services that address the needs. Through its local contacts, ElderSource promotes the independence of these populations and by ensuring that options exist to assist people to remain in their homes safely and with dignity.

We strive to raise awareness of the needs of older adults, adults with disabilities and their caregivers in the broader community and to increase public awareness of ElderSource as the ADRC in order to get needs met.

## **Key Initiatives**

ElderSource has taken a leadership role in the development and ongoing coordination of several interagency collaborative efforts and initiatives to help enhance the community service system for the aging network and to help improve the lives of older adults, adults with disabilities and caregivers in PSA 4. Key initiatives are as follows:

- LGBT Initiative
- Benefits Enrollment Center
- Caregiver Coalition of Northeast Florida
- Senior to Senior Fund
- Senior Round Table
- Assistive Eating Device Fund
- Dementia Care and Cure Initiative
- Caring Connections (telephone reassurance program)

- Virtual Caregiver Support Group
- Veterans Directed Home and Community Based Services
- Age Friendly Communities

### **Significant Needs**

ElderSource, through public hearings, CIRTS data, client satisfaction surveys, ADRC Helpline data, needs assessments and SWOT analysis, has identified the following top six problem areas/issues faced by older adults within our seven-county service area:

- Limited finances/economic stability, including affordability of housing, as well as issues related to home maintenance/accessibility
- Social isolation and loneliness, as well as mental health issues; caregiver burnout and limited supports for caregivers
- Health care concerns, including medical care costs, as well as access to and acceptance of insurance for both primary and local specialist care
- Limited transportation options and other transportation-related issues
- A gap in knowledge of available services or resources focused on assisting older adults, adults living with disabilities and their caregivers
- The need for additional efforts and support related to community emergency-disaster preparedness, response, and recovery.

ElderSource staff, Board of Directors and Advisory Council will continue to concentrate efforts and strategies to address the aforementioned needs. As a result of ElderSource's 2022 strategic planning process, these strategic goals are included, but not limited to: increase awareness of services; pursue housing solutions; and pursue transportation solutions.

### **Summary**

ElderSource recognizes the need for partnerships and collaboration in order to achieve the goals and objectives outlined in the 2024-2027 Area Plan. AAA staff and leadership strive for continuous improvement and work to improve access to services for older adults in order to help them age with independence and dignity.