

CLARK COUNTY
COMMISSION
on
AGING

2022
ANNUAL
REPORT





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FROM THE CHAIR

DEAR COMMUNITY MEMBERS, This year, the Commission on Aging is celebrating ten years as community ambassadors. Over the past decade, valued relationships have been built with neighbors, community organizations and county leadership. These dynamic connections have helped sustain us during challenging pandemic protocols when we couldn't gather together, share some coffee conversation, or greet each another face-to-face. And although the commission couldn't welcome you into our meetings in person during the first months of 2022, we could still hear your voices and listen to your concerns. You can only imagine the commission's excitement as we began our first hybrid meeting in May, ready

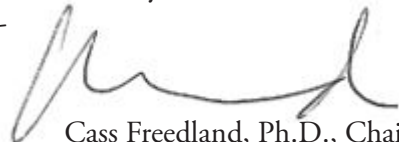
to continue the important work of serving our community.

Thanks to you, Clark County neighbors, this year's work has shone a light on the creativity and resilience of our community partners as they navigated extraordinary circumstances. The need to connect meaningfully, empathetically, and effectively with aging adults and their families continues to drive collaboration and innovative thinking.

In this annual report, we look forward to sharing the evolution of the 2022 "Innovation Through Connection" focus, and how this focus area grew and blossomed through your participation in our

2021-22 Community Survey. We will also summarize select insights gathered from regional and national experts during our monthly fireside chats and look forward to these ideas informing our updates of Aging Readiness Plan, the foundational document of the commission. We look forward to seeing you in person in 2023!

Thank you,



Cass Freedland, Ph.D., Chair
Commission on Aging

WHO WE ARE

AGING READINESS PLAN

In 2010, knowing more than 10,000 people nationwide turn 65 each day, the then-Board of County Commissioners appointed a 24-member panel to assess the county's capacity to serve its older residents. The Aging Readiness Task Force developed the Aging Readiness Plan, which identified five focus areas: housing, transportation, supportive services, healthy communities and community engagement. The plan includes perspectives about how to effectively cultivate and protect what residents say they want most – the ability to age in the home and community where they live.

COMMISSION ON AGING

The Commission on Aging was established on May 20, 2012, and is tasked with leading and managing the implementation of the Aging Readiness Plan and fostering county-wide awareness, dialogue and insight into challenges and opportunities for residents of all ages, incomes and abilities. The commission is supported by volunteer members appointed by the Clark County Council. Commission members provide leadership, education, advocacy and community awareness and serve as community ambassadors

2022 Members

- Sue Cameron
- Nancy Dong
- Cass Freedland, Chair
- Chuck Green
- Amy Gross
- Franklin Johnson, Vice-Chair
- Meghan McCarthy
- Mel Sanchez
- Larry Smith
- Tanya Stewart
- Pamela Wheeler

Commission on Aging Mission As community ambassadors, the Commission on Aging provides leadership, advocacy, community awareness and partnerships to initiate change toward an all-age-friendly, livable community.



2022 FOCUS ON INNOVATION THROUGH CONNECTION

INTRODUCTION

Each year, the Clark County Commission on Aging (COA) devotes attention to a thematic issue that affects aging adults in our community and aligns with topics outlined in the Aging Readiness Plan (ARP). This year, the commission reached two important milestones: it marked the commission's ten-year anniversary of partnership-building within Clark County; it also signaled that it was time to update the original ARP document, which had so perceptively outlined future opportunities and challenges facing our county when it was adopted in 2012.

In the summer of 2021, as commission members reflected on the approach of this significant moment in its history, aging adults in our communities were still experiencing a host of negative impacts as a result of isolation during a prolonged pandemic. Our members were thinking about the stories that were uncovered during monthly fireside chats in 2020 and 2021, especially in hearing from local service providers as they experimented with a variety of strategies to connect aging adults with much-needed services.

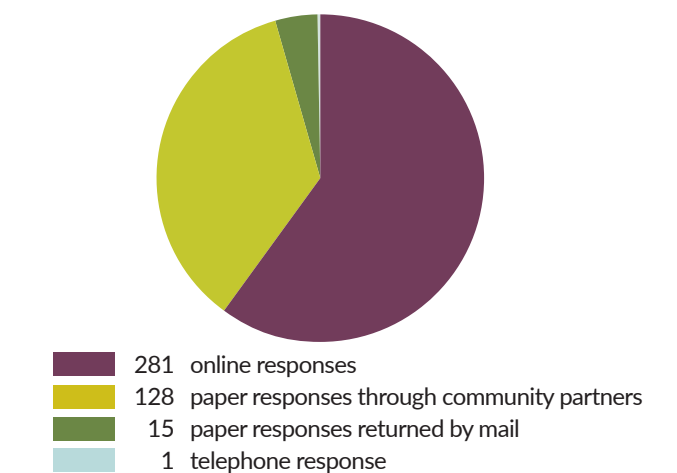
With the idea of effective connectivity at the forefront of the conversation, *Innovation Through Connection* was named as the 2022 focus area. In October 2021, commission members collaborated with the regional support agency, Area Agency on Aging and Disabilities of Southwest Washington (AAADSW), to create a countywide survey that would uncover the most prevalent connectivity issues that diverse members of the county were facing.

The community member survey posed eight (8) connection-themed questions, with additional demographic questions that were voluntary and remained anonymous. Questions examined how aging adults in Clark County interacted with family, service providers, caregivers and each other. The results of the survey informed a series of future fireside chats with service providers, caregivers, community-based organizations and community members around the

challenges faced in effectively connecting with one another. By working in concert with community partners, the commission anticipated that these conversations would facilitate the creation of innovative connectivity strategies.

An online portal to the survey was opened in late November 2021 and was advertised through Commission on Aging and Clark County Community Planning email distribution lists; commission website and Facebook page; the AAADSW Aging and Disability Resource Network; Clark County and City of Vancouver neighborhood associations; news release and two newspaper articles. Paper copies were distributed December 2021-January 2022 through eight community partners: American Medical Response, Cascade Inn, Clark County Food Bank, Community in Motion, C-Tran, Fairway Village Homeowners Association, Vancouver Fire Department, and Vancouver Housing Authority. Surveys were provided in English, Spanish and Russian. Vancouver Housing Authority staff provided additional translation support in Farsi.

The online portal was closed on January 11, 2022, and paper copies were retrieved shortly thereafter. The survey resulted in 425 responses:





The commission was so thankful for the participation of our community in the survey and know that the insights gleaned from the responses will help us better understand how to connect people with resources.

The following sections outline the results of the commission's Community member survey, how it informed our monthly conversations around connectivity with community members and organizations, and what those conversations revealed.

Some Findings from the Community Member Survey

The responses were analyzed to identify emerging themes. Grouped as a whole, the responses mirrored many of the stories that the commission heard from experts during fireside chats in 2020 and 2021:

QUESTIONS 1 & 2: Aging adults rely on family to provide key connection and assistance on a regular basis, and respondents preferred this connection to be in-person (most popular) or over the phone. But other important connections were also noted: friends, neighbors and faith community members (clergy, church members).

QUESTIONS 3, 4 & 5: When connecting with service providers and community organizations, aging adults similarly preferred in-person and phone contact over other modes of communication (email, video conference, postal mail).

QUESTIONS 6 & 7: The most popular services and supports that survey respondents listed as making life better included social activities, food/nutrition and fitness/wellness, but requests for accessible transportation, volunteer experiences and in-home support were also noted.

See pages 27 -33 for specific survey results

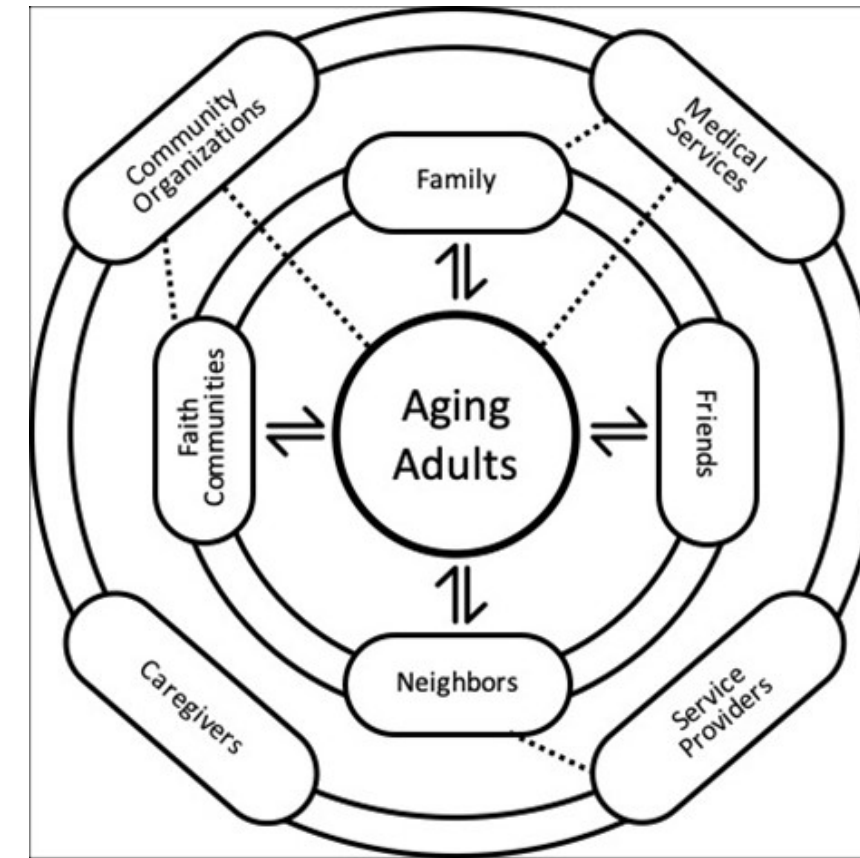
INTERTWINED & EMERGING THEMES FOR 2022

Commission members developed working themes for 2022 based on an analysis of the 2021 Community Survey data, in which several intertwined themes emerged:

- After family connections, aging adults in Clark County named friends, neighbors and faith communities as being most important in their daily lives.
- Survey respondents noted a strong desire to be linked to volunteer opportunities.
- Aging adults asked for more opportunities for social enrichment.
- Aging adults preferred to connect with others in-person or through the phone (call or text).

Commission members sought to develop a simplified way to visualize how residents and support systems connect with one another, and how the COA could facilitate the development of innovative, effective forms of communication during and after the pandemic. A Community Asset Mapping exercise (Kretzmann and McKnight, 1993) conceptually integrated these themes. The survey data revealed that aging adults have the most meaningful connections to family, friends, neighbors and faith communities. This primary support network is shown as a circle around the aging adults being supported at the center of the illustration. Arrows symbolize communication that occurs between the aging adult and the individuals within this primary support network.

In addition to this primary support network, aging adults also have connections to resources through the medical community, caregivers (who may be family), service providers and other community organizations. These secondary entities are placed in a circle just outside of the family/friends layer. When communication flow arrows are added, the complexity of connectivity can be seen – those in the primary circle can communicate with both the aging adult in the center and those in the secondary circle. Family may communicate with doctors; neighbors may reach out to



Primary support network for aging adults

service providers; and clergy may work with a faith-based community organization to support an aging adult.

In pre-COVID days, complex and interconnected networks could be mobilized to support aging adults. However, during a prolonged pandemic, the effectiveness of these connections can be seriously tested. Not only did the 2021 fireside chats reveal the great lengths to which service providers/medical personnel/community organizations were going to tirelessly connect with Clark County's aging adults, but survey respondents indicated that they did not have strategies to gain access to many types of support. The mapping exercise uncovered the many facets of support that could improve the health and wellbeing of aging adults in Clark County, if the various support networks are actively interconnected.

2022 FOCUS ON INNOVATION THROUGH CONNECTION

Key question: How can the Commission on Aging help service providers/medical personnel/community organizations develop innovative outreach?

communication strategies that can mobilize families, friends, neighbors, and faith communities to provide interconnected, knowledgeable support about programs and services for aging adults in Clark County?

To address this question, the subcommittee proposed the following fireside chat guests:

Service Provider Roundtable

- Christina Marneris, *Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities of Southwest Washington*, <https://www.helpingelders.org/>
- Bill Baumann, *Community in Motion*, <https://www.communityinmotion.org/>
- Ginger Barnwell, *CDM Caregiving Services*, <https://www.cdmcaregiving.org/>
- Kit Kuran, *Vancouver Housing Authority*, <https://vhausa.org/>
- Suzanne Washington, *Meals on Wheels People*, <https://www.mowp.org/>

Community Activists

Lynn Crawford, *HOPE Dementia Support*, <https://hopedementiasupport.org/>
 Arnie Dyer, *Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities of Southwest Washington Advisory Council*, <https://www.helpingelders.org/advocacy-and-planning/advisory-council/>
 Mike Reardon, *Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities of Southwest Washington*, <https://www.helpingelders.org/>

Faith Communities

Fouad Bayomy, *Islamic Society of Southwest Washington*, <https://issww.com/>
 Rabbi Elizabeth Dunsker, *Congregation Kol Ami*, <https://jewishvancouverusa.org/>
 Genise Dance, *Mt. Olivet Baptist Church*, <https://www.mtolivet.com/>
 Tim Dance, *Mt. Olivet Baptist Church*, <https://www.mtolivet.com/>

Service providers to join in the discussion:

Shawn Donaghy, *C-Tran*, <https://www.c-tran.com/>
 Jeananne Edwards, *Community in Motion*, <https://www.communityinmotion.org/>
 Christina Marneris, *Area Agency on Aging and Disabilities of Southwest Washington*, <https://www.helpingelders.org/>



Peer-to-peer educators

Chasity Charette, *Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities of Southwest Washington and Program to Encourage Active, Rewarding Lives (PEARLS)*, <https://depts.washington.edu/hprc/programs-tools/pearls/>

Volunteer Coordinators

Jon Seibert, *Blanchet House*, <https://blanchethouse.org/>
 Ulises Alvarez Olvera, *Meals on Wheels People*, <https://www.mowp.org/>
 Cendy Cruz, *Meals on Wheels People*, <https://www.mowp.org/>

Support Technology/Innovative Communication Providers

Stephen Farber, *Health Hive*, <https://www.healthhive.org/>
 Ali Ahmadi, *TCARE*, <https://www.tcare.ai/>

Caregivers

Beth Sanders, *LifeBio*, <https://www.lifebio.org/>
 Claire Houlding, *Three and Me*, <https://www.threeand.me/>

The commission's guest experts answered and discussed the following primary questions:

- 1 How do you connect most effectively with community members?
- 2 What information is most easily communicated?
- 3 What challenges do you continue to face around connecting and communicating with community members?
- 4 To better connect with aging adults, what innovative ideas or technologies might be just around the corner?

Commissions members reflected on the ideas/suggestions from those discussions to develop the key findings and recommendations in this annual report.





COMMISSION FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings

Older adults prefer in-person or phone communication when connecting with other people about information and resources (i.e. about local programs and services) in the community.

- ✿ In-person and phone communication (call or text) were preferred methods of connection. This finding resonated with several service providers who have experienced the same feedback through their work. For instance, at the time of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout, the process was complicated and the AAADSW staff helped connect almost 400 older adults to vaccines by talking on the phone and scheduling appointments on their behalf. Similarly, Meals on Wheels People initiated a Friendly Chat program when they could not be at their clients' doors delivering meals every day and more than 65% of clients opted into the call. During the pandemic, most CDM in-home care clients opted for in-person care and errands instead of phone check-ins and medication reminders.

- ✿ While we live in a technology driven community and society, not everyone has access to technology or access to the knowledge of how to use the technology. During the pandemic, service providers received feedback from older adults who experienced technology barriers related to using technology and/or access to internet and technology devices and/or cost of those services, re-enforcing the preference for in-person and phone communication methods.

- ✿ Communication can be an added challenge for older adults when English is not their first language.

- ✿ During the pandemic, some local programs and services shifted from in-person to online offerings, but there are limitations to building connections with other people virtually. For instance, the Program to Encourage Active, Rewarding Lives (PEARLS) provided tele-health options during the pandemic to connect with clients. However, PEARLS coaches who meet one-on-one with their clients noted that they were limited in the ways they can show empathy in a virtual session.

- ✿ Meals on Wheels People works with thousands of volunteers in the region who deliver food to older adults at their home. Program staff offer two options to their volunteers for their delivery routes: 1) an app that navigates volunteers to each client's home and 2) a paper route book. Program staff find that younger volunteers tend to prefer the app while many older volunteers prefer the paper approach.

Community service providers pivoted and offered more services during the pandemic by leveraging their assets, networks, and other resources, and continue to experience gaps reaching more older adults in the community.

- ✿ The pandemic provided an opportunity for many local service providers to try new things, hear from people who were in an extended space of need, and see how the organizations could continue to consistently meet their clients' needs in a way that built trust and deepened relationships.

- ✿ Several local organizations leveraged their assets to help communicate during the pandemic about

available services or to deepen connections and reduce isolation. For instance, Meals on Wheels People has a robust door to door delivery service and volunteer pool, where they were able to deliver items other than food to older adults and were able to use volunteers to call their clients when they did fewer in-person visits. Community in Motion utilized their network of transportation vendors to not only transport people, but also deliver essential goods and to share information about other programs and services. VHA serves people across a wide range of ages and used the tech savviness of their younger residents to help older residents with technology

- Some of AAADSW's pre-pandemic strategies were also helpful during the pandemic. The organization, for example, often asks other community organizations about how they might work together and if there is a need that AAADSW can meet. AAADSW also continued to facilitate its Aging Disability Resource Network (ADRN) through the pandemic, which is a network of 119 organizations and 235 individuals, with 30-40 people attending virtual quarterly meetings. Involved members share what is going on in their organizations, so there is cross-training and cross-pollination throughout the network.



- As a result of the pandemic, some providers have now expanded their emergency response services. Meals on Wheels People, for instance, started an emergency preparedness committee to help take care of clients when there is a heat wave or excessive ambient smoke from wildfires. They can now deliver fans to those who need one during heat waves, and feel better prepared to be able to pivot and shift services with open communication to clients and volunteers in future emergency situations.
- Meals on Wheels People is also pursuing two new programs: Safe Home for Seniors program allows clients to request a volunteer to help with yard work and small fixes in the home; a Home Share program allows people with an extra room to offer it to a senior who needs a place to stay. The organization is building off of its existing strengths to be able to connect individuals to more services.
- Recently, Blanchet House began offering trainings to the public on trauma informed care, rest and resilience, and various topics that are relevant to working during a pandemic and with the individuals they serve. These are opportunities for people to learn more about the different issues that may present themselves in individuals benefiting from the organization's meal services. These trainings emerged as a result of the many changes related to the pandemic.
- Some community organizations expressed interest in having a centralized resource to contact when they have a question about one of their clients, congregation members, or community members.
- In general, it seems that many members of the public, including leaders of several community organizations and faith groups are not aware of the vast array of services offered through AAADSW. Because AAADSW wants to be the first stop for people to share the information about available resources in the community, more outreach is needed.



- To better meet the differing needs of cultural or religious populations and those in rural areas, future program development should address the special needs and challenges that these populations are facing.

There is high demand for volunteers to help community organizations deepen their connection and offerings to community members.

- Volunteers serve many essential roles as they help service providers reach more deeply into the community, connecting aging adults with essential services.
- Providing clear communication and building trust with volunteers is an important part of an organization's role and best practices can be shared between organizations. Ensuring consistency in services, so everyone knows what to expect, is a main goal. Recognizing and honoring the commitment of volunteers is critical.
- Some organizations try to provide opportunities for volunteers to take a lead on different projects or events. This allows the full-time staff to connect with volunteers on a more personal level and have them become more involved in the organization's mission and vision.
- One successful strategy in engaging and empowering volunteers has been to offer additional workshops and training to highlight different issues that may be present in someone who uses to the organization's services.
- Allowing volunteers to choose between several types of opportunities is also important for attracting and retaining volunteers.

- Virtual resources were and continue to be preferred by many volunteers, and organizations are discussing how to leverage virtual offerings as a resource moving forward. To encourage continued participation, it is important to provide options that everyone is comfortable with, such as word of mouth, in-person and other traditional communication methods.

- Some organizations want volunteering to be accessible to nearly everybody and have as few barriers as possible to becoming a volunteer, while others require more vetting, such as through background checks. The variations reflect the nature of the volunteer work and what is needed to keep clients and volunteers safe in their work.

Unpaid family, friends, faith community members, and neighbors are an essential part of the local support network both as connectors and service providers.

- Families provide key connection and assistance.
- The survey revealed that faith communities, friends, and neighbors were also essential connections for aging adults.
- In addition to isolation of older adults, family caregivers experienced isolation during the pandemic.
- Support groups in the community, like HOPE Dementia, which offers support groups to people caregiving for someone with dementia, are invaluable resources. However, these groups struggle to find enough volunteer facilitators to run the support groups.



- ✿ Within some local faith communities, many needs of older people within a congregation are provided by volunteers within the faith community. Sometimes there are not enough volunteers to assist with needs.
- ✿ Larger regional faith resource hubs and groups have been useful for some faith groups looking to provide assistance to their community, especially for specialized needs.
- ✿ Some faith communities also connect with state and local government officials to share and communicate the needs of their members. Having a seat at the table and coordinating with government officials also allows the flow of timely information back to those faith communities.
- ✿ Due to the challenges of the pandemic, some faith-based organizations organized monthly phone calls to

elder members of their community to engage and have discussions with their older community members.

- ✿ Activities and programs where older adults can share stories with family members, other older adults, or younger generations, such as offerings from LifeBio, can positively impact the mental health of the older adults.
- ✿ Art enrichment programs, such as those offered by the City of Camas Parks and Recreation and Three and Me, provide offerings for social interaction between older adults and their friends and family.

Although family, friends, and faith community members provide critical caregiving roles, the health care system and the community often do not sufficiently take care of the needs of caregivers, which can lead to issues like burnout, distress, and depression.

- ✿ It is challenging for everyone involved with the care of a person to see the same information, especially accessing health information from various sources.
- ✿ Because there is no universal healthcare code/number/identifier linked to each patient, barriers for technical and processing solutions frequently arise.
- ✿ There are few payment mechanisms for family caregiving.
- ✿ Many individuals and families do not plan ahead to address aging issues and are not prepared when a significant healthcare situation arises.

receive a life-altering diagnosis of dementia don't get the support they need nor are pointed towards tools to help them adjust to the progressive course of the disease.

- ✿ There are existing programs designed for providing geriatric training to people who work in the healthcare field such as the Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Center (GWEC) program: <https://www.helpingelders.org/nwgewec/>.
- ✿ Programs like PEARLS and HOPE Dementia could benefit from increased connection and exposure to healthcare providers and clients to potentially increase enrollment and referrals.

Growing demand for professional caregivers with geriatric expertise is a gap in available resources.

- ✿ There is a shortage of paid in-home caregivers in Clark County. The shortage applies to caregiving positions for all ages, from infants through older adults. (Cornwell, 2022; Mapp, 2021; Workforce Southwest Washington, 2022)
- ✿ In early 2022, it could take up to 16-weeks to bring a caregiver into someone's home in rural Clark County. The provision of psychological care as an added service is also needed, but getting some aging adults to accept such assistance can be difficult.
- ✿ Many physicians have not received specialized training in caring for someone with dementia; many people who



Recommendations

The 2023 Aging Readiness Plan update project should consider and address the following questions:

- 1 How can the Commission on Aging and other community organizations support AAADSW in promoting itself as the go-to, one-stop-shop for aging resources?
- 2 How can the Aging Readiness Plan better address the needs of unpaid family/friend/faith caregivers?
- 3 How can the Aging Readiness Plan better address the professional caregiver shortage in Clark County?
- 4 What, if anything, can the Aging Readiness Plan do to support changes in health care such as: allowing everyone involved with the care of an aging adult to see the same information, including accessing health information from various sources, while also honoring an older adult's right to privacy; utilizing a universal healthcare code/number/ identifier for each patient, to alleviate technical and processing issues; and providing payment mechanisms for family caregiving?
- 5 How can the Aging Readiness Plan better support individuals and families in planning ahead to address aging issues, thereby smoothing the transition when significant future healthcare situations develop?
- 6 How can the Aging Readiness Plan better support community organizations to strengthen the use of preferred older adult communication methods like phone and in-person, while also moving new technology methods forward?
- 7 How can the Aging Readiness Plan better support community organizations in removing communication barriers to access their programs, i.e. if someone speaks a language other than English?
- 8 How can the Aging Readiness Plan support the innovative solutions community organizations developed during the pandemic, with particular focus on 1) revising policies/laws to allow those programs/adaptations to continue; and 2) identification of sustainable funding sources to replace time-sensitive emergency funding?



- 9 How can the Aging Readiness Plan support the development and implementation of local programs where older adults can share stories with family members, other older adults, and/or younger generations, such as offerings from LifeBio?
- 10 How can the Aging Readiness Plan promote the growth of existing local enrichment programs for older adults and caregivers and the addition of new ones, such as the art enrichment programs offered by City of Camas Parks and Recreation and Three and Me?
- 11 How can the Commission on Aging serve as a convener to better facilitate implementation of Aging Readiness Plan strategies?
- 12 How can the Aging Readiness Plan align with Commission on Aging strategic and active communication and community engagement?



In 2023, the Commission on Aging should:

- 13 Implement intentional, strategic and active communication and community engagement throughout the year related to the Aging Readiness Plan update project and implementation of Plan strategies.
- 14 Use its role as a convener/facilitator to move forward Aging Readiness Plan strategies during the second half of 2023.



SILVER CITIZEN AWARD

Katlin Smith

Clark County recognizes that older adults are valuable contributors to the vitality of this community. To encourage and support older adults for their contributions, the Clark County Commission on Aging has established a program to recognize older adults by means of an annual award presented at a Commission on Aging event.

The Silver Citizen Award recognizes the valuable contributions older adults make to the vitality of the community and is open to any county resident 60 years or older who has enhanced the community through their life's work, engagement of others, volunteerism and or other impactful acts of service to the community for any age group. Major emphasis is placed on contributions to the community made by the individual after reaching age 60. Service in any field of endeavor will be considered (e.g., education, radio, television, business, healthcare, art, music, journalism, faith-based, athletics, politics, volunteer service). A couple may receive the award jointly when both have been involved in service and various community endeavors.

The recipient of the 2022 Silver Citizen Award is Katlin Smith. Katlin is 72 years old, a resident of Vancouver, and has devoted her professional and volunteer time to community service. The impact of Katlin's service with FISH of Vancouver Food Pantry particularly stands out. In 2014, Katlin joined the FISH Capital Campaign Committee, supporting the \$1 million+ campaign that enabled the purchase of a new 10,000 square foot building/warehouse in downtown Vancouver. She joined the organization's Board of Directors in 2016 and has been president of the board since 2017.

Under Katlin's leadership, FISH of Vancouver evolved from an all-volunteer organization open a few hours a day to the bustling enterprise it is now – three full time employees, more than 120 volunteers, and approximately 1.3 million pounds of food distributed last year. In April 2022, FISH changed the model of the typical food pantry/food bank, from clients receiving pre-packaged boxes to a client choice grocery store model. The



Mobile Pantry is another new addition to FISH services. The Mobile Pantry takes food to clients, traveling to senior centers, low-income medical clinics and other often overlooked locations, delivering fresh produce, staples, dairy, and meats.

The Commission on Aging is truly appreciative of Katlin's thoughtful, passionate, and impactful commitment to tackling hunger within our Clark County community.





Peter Kindersley

IMPLEMENTING THE AGING READINESS PLAN

HOUSING

In 2022, notable progress was made on Aging Readiness Plan strategies related to housing.

Shared Housing:

✿ In 2022, Faith Partners for Housing launched a Home Share Program. This program is implementing strategy 3f of the Aging Readiness Plan, which is to develop a shared housing program. Meals on Wheels People is about to start piloting a Home Share program.

Housing options, “visitability,” and universal design :

✿ The Clark County Council, at a May 17, 2022 hearing, approved the Housing Options Study and Action Plan, a document that provides guidance for county staff, elected officials, and other decision-makers to encourage the construction of additional affordable and market-rate housing that meets the unincorporated Vancouver Urban Growth Area’s current and future housing needs. The recommended strategies include potential changes to the comprehensive plan, county code, zoning map, and/or other non-regulatory recommendations. County Council also provided direction to staff to begin work on implementing the short-term strategies, along with interest on an additional five strategies identified as medium and/or long term. County staff anticipate bringing at least two batches of housing code changes for council consideration in 2023. There are strategies in the plan that relate to Aging Readiness Plan and Commission on Aging recommendations, including:

- Remove barriers to building regulated affordable housing projects. These strategies relate to Aging Readiness Plan housing strategy 1a, expanding rental housing for seniors with incomes below 60% of the area median income.

- Remove barriers to building accessory dwelling units (also known as ADUs or granny flats), duplexes, triplexes, and quadplexes. These strategies relate to Aging Readiness Plan housing strategies 3a and 3b.
 - Adopt a “visitability” program, either with voluntary incentives and/or code requirements, for the construction of a percentage of new housing units (where there are three or more units proposed). This strategy relates to a recommendation in the 2016 Commission on Aging Annual Report.
 - Work with aging and disabilities advocates in the community to develop a universal design program to encourage more housing options for those in the community who have a disability or experience mobility challenges. This strategy builds on recommendations in the 2016 Commission on Aging Annual Report and relates to the Aging Readiness Plan housing strategy 2b.
- ✿ The Vancouver City Council, at a June 27, 2022 hearing adopted changes to the city’s zoning code to allow more flexibility in the type and size of housing built in Vancouver. Vancouver housing code amendments included:
- Removing barriers to building ADUs
 - Creating new standards to allow clusters of small cottage housing surrounding open spaces in lower density residential zones
 - City staff are also developing expedited building permit review processes for new single family homes providing features that facilitate aging-in-place.



HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

The county council helped raise awareness about the importance of advanced care planning by proclaiming April 16, 2022 as *National Healthcare Decisions Day*. The commission’s advocacy to the council to recognize the day was based on a 2019 Commission on Aging Annual Report recommendation.

SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

In 2022, Clark County supportive service providers continued to adapt to challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic and creatively expand their services and support to older adults in the community. For instance, Meals on Wheels People continued their *Wellness Check* and *Friendly Chat* programs to call clients and help with challenges of isolation. They also launched new programs such as *Safe Home for Seniors*, where volunteers go to a client’s house who has requested yard work and small fixes in the home. The service provider is also piloting a Home Share program, as mentioned above. The organization has also been taking care of their clients by delivering other useful resources when they make deliveries, such as providing fans when there is a heat wave.

EDUCATION, AWARENESS, AND ADVOCACY

City councils. In addition to presenting to the county council, commission members also presented the 2021 Commission on Aging Annual Report and key takeaways to several city councils in Clark County, to keep them updated on the commission’s progress and discuss any local issues related to older adults.

Program highlights. The commission invited guests to provide brief presentations at their meeting to provide an overview of existing local programs in the community. 2022 program highlights and guests included:

- **Faith Partners for Housing Home Share Program.** Presenters from Faith Partners for Housing: Mark Maggiora and Tiffany Kostrba. Website: <https://www.faithpartners4housing.org/home-share-program>
- **Clark-Cowlitz Fire and Rescue CARES and Fall Prevention programs.** Presenters from Clark-Cowlitz Fire and Rescue: Sam Lewis. Website: <https://clarkfr.org/>
- **Property Tax Exemption for Senior Citizens/Disabled Persons.** Presenters from Clark County Assessor’s Office: Peter Van Nortwick, Stacy Martin, Roni Battan, Hailey Shannon. Website: <https://clark.wa.gov/assessor/property-tax-relief-programs>

Fireside chats. As discussed in the 2022 focus section of this report, the commission invited guests to speak with them and interested members of the public as a public monthly speaker/discussion series, to help the commission and members of the public learn more about an aspect of their annual focus topic.

Silver Citizen Award. To encourage and support older adults for their contributions to their communities, the Clark County Commission on Aging presented its third annual Silver Citizen Award program to recognize older adults who go above and beyond in service.

Community member survey. In late 2021, commission members created a community member survey to find out how older adults like to connect with other people and to resources. The survey was distributed county-wide in print and online formats, in collaboration with several community partners. Survey results were compiled and analyzed in 2022 and helped inform the commission’s work program.

Proclamations. The commission successfully advocated with community partners for the county council to proclaim April 16, 2022 as National Healthcare Decisions Day; May 2022 as Older Americans Month;

support for dementia awareness and education and urging all county residents to learn more about dementia and become a dementia friend; November 2022 as National Caregivers Month; and November 11, 2022 as Veterans Day.

Liaisons. Commission members volunteered as liaisons with various community organizations, groups, and projects. 2022 liaison roles included commission members joining project advisory groups such as the Clark County Housing Options Study and Action Plan Project Advisory Group and the Clark County Transportation System Plan Sounding Board. Commission

members also served as liaisons to Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities of Southwest Washington Advisory Council, Aging and Disability Resource Network, the Accessible Transportation Coalition, Clark County Public Health, and a Commission on Aging member was appointed to the new position on the Clark County Public Health Advisory Council to represent the Clark County Commission on Aging or aging community.

Advocacy. The commission chair participated in a roundtable discussion organized by U.S. Senator Patty Murray about prescription drug costs, Medicare reform, and the Inflation Reduction Act. The



event was hosted by the Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities of Southwest Washington and attended by a few community organization representatives.

🌿 **News Media.** Commission members participated in interviews with local newspaper reporters and Clark/Vancouver Television (CVTV) producers. Commission staff connected reporters with partner organizations.

🌿 **Community presentations.** Commission members gave presentations to community groups upon request, including the Clark County Developmental Disabilities Advisory Board and Fairway Village homeowners.

UPDATING THE AGING READINESS PLAN

The Aging Readiness Plan (ARP) celebrated its 10-year anniversary in 2022.

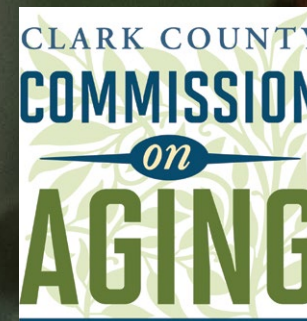
Although the Commission on Aging's annual focus areas and reports have outlined some changes since the ARP original adoption, there have been many strides forward since 2012 that need to be reflected in the

plan. The ARP Update project will refresh the plan to address these changes, update the data and maps in the document and ensure new technologies and services are incorporated. The ARP update will also add a new health and safety chapter, focusing on emergency preparedness, a topic that is not currently covered in the plan.

While this project will extend into 2023, 2022 project milestones included:

- County council approval of the project Public Participation Plan
- Contract signed with project consultant
- Data gathering and document review
- Evaluation of existing strategies in the current plan and benchmarking progress to date
- Stakeholder interviews and focus group meetings with local service providers and topical experts on age-friendly goals, solutions, and barriers for the next 10-years.
- Planning for public workshops in 2023

A consultant team was hired to assist Clark County Community Planning and the Commission on Aging to provide information, analysis, and technical writing skills to update the Aging Readiness Plan and technical assistance to usher it through the adoption process.



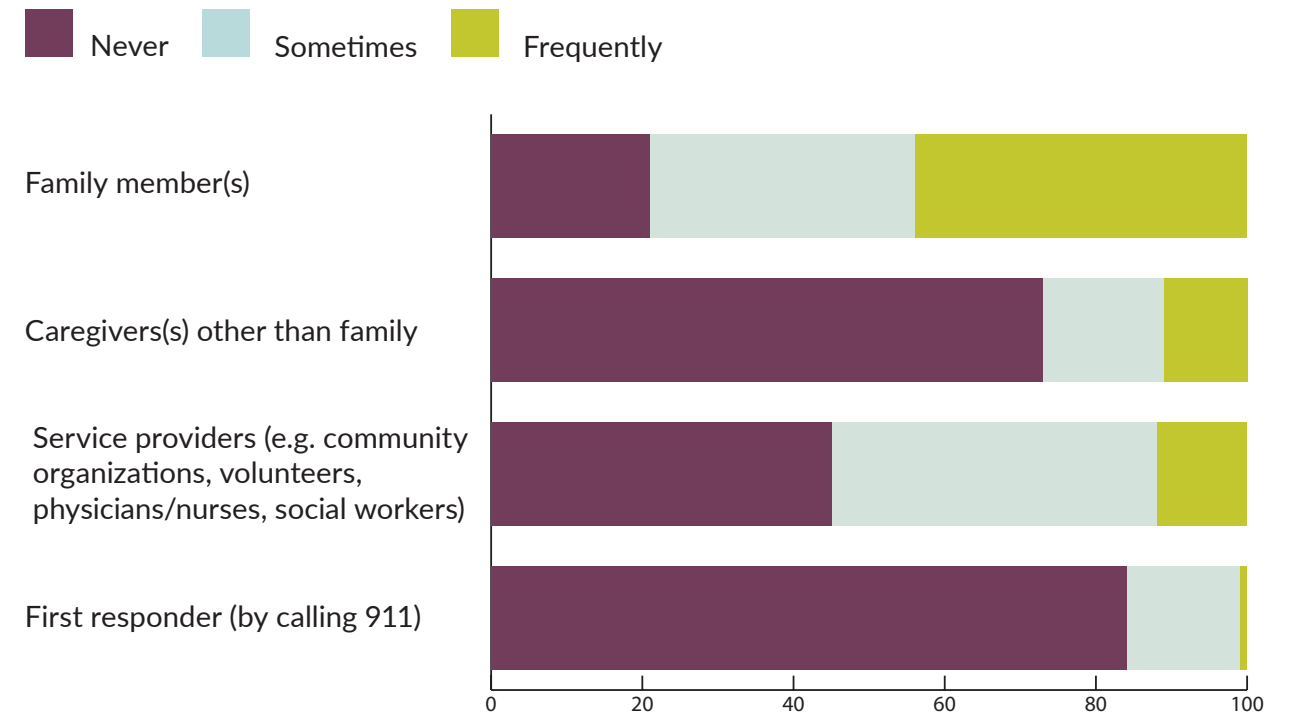
COMMUNITY MEMBER SURVEY



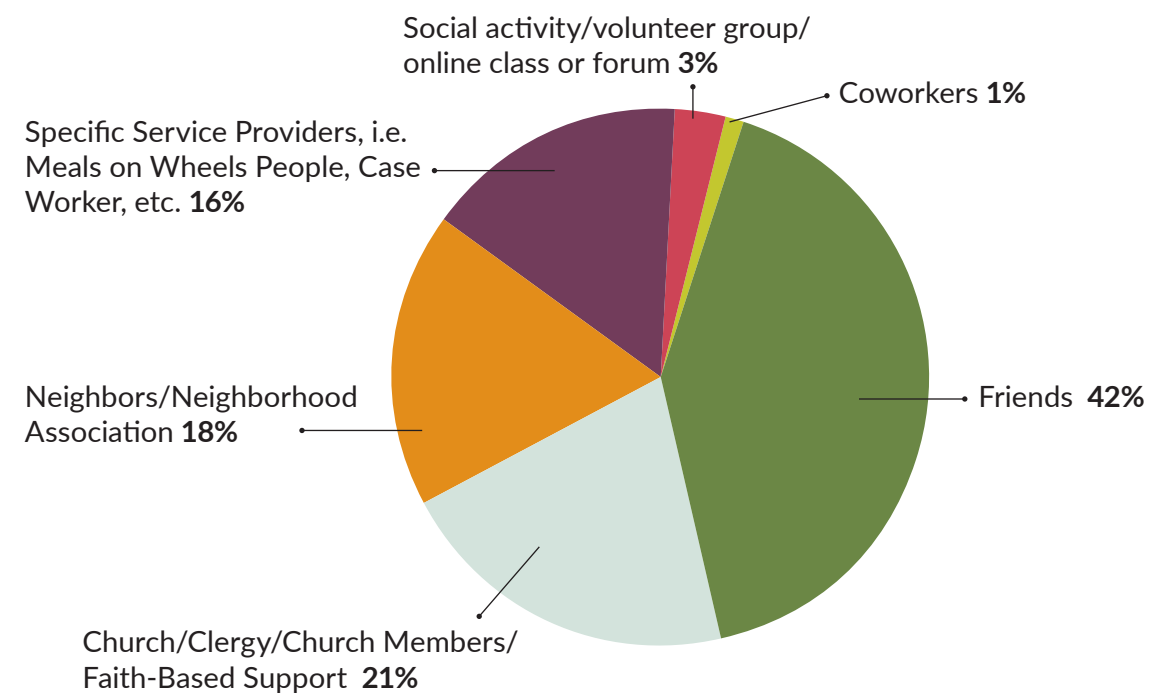
During December 2021-January 2022, the Clark County Commission on Aging (COA) conducted a Community Member survey in partnership with several community organizations in southwest Washington. The following results are from a subset of questions in the survey and include the responses received from 425 individuals. The intention of the survey was to help the COA better understand the ways in which Clark County residents (60 years and older), service providers, caregivers and organizations have been successful in the reaching out to one another, and where there are gaps in these connections. The information gained from the survey is intended to help the COA strengthen partnerships with foundations, service providers, and businesses to better connect community members to resources.

For a copy of the complete results from all survey questions, please email comm-aging@clark.wa.gov.

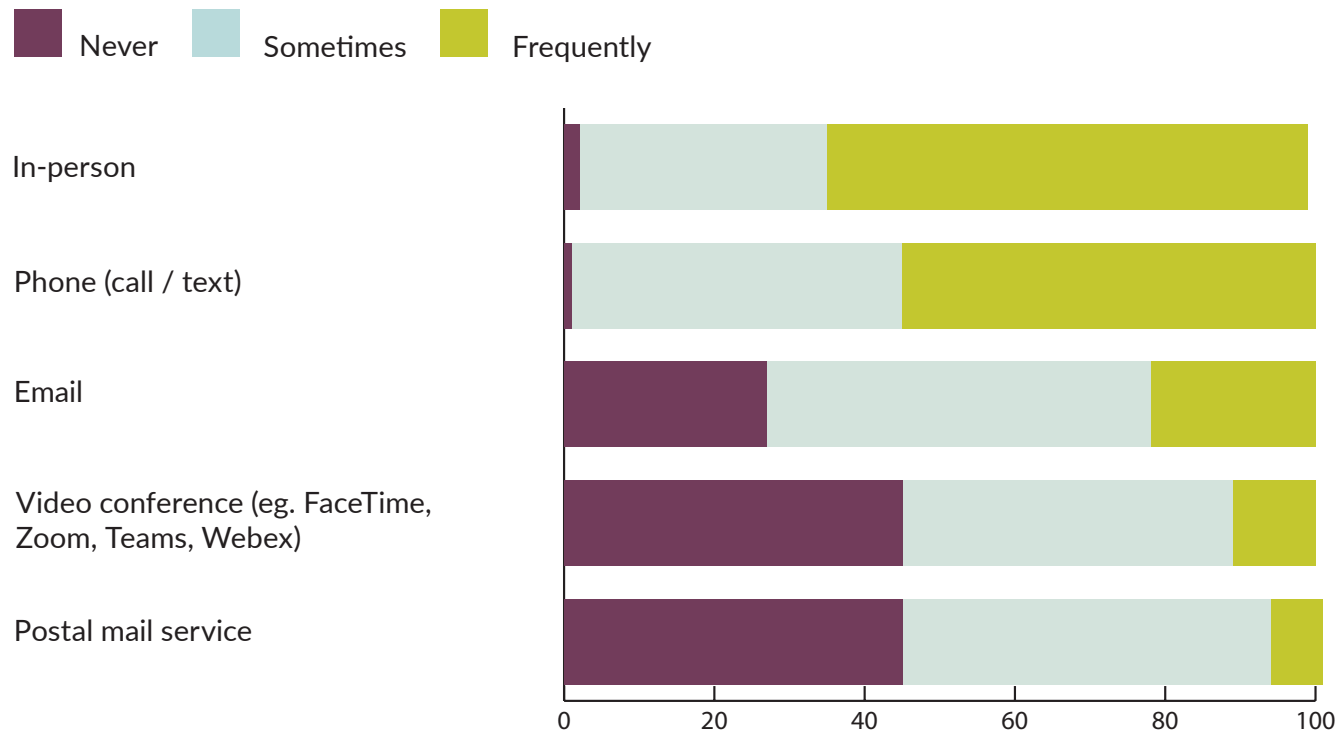
Q1. Who supports or speaks with you on a regular basis when you need assistance? Please indicate the amount of time you seek assistance from others.



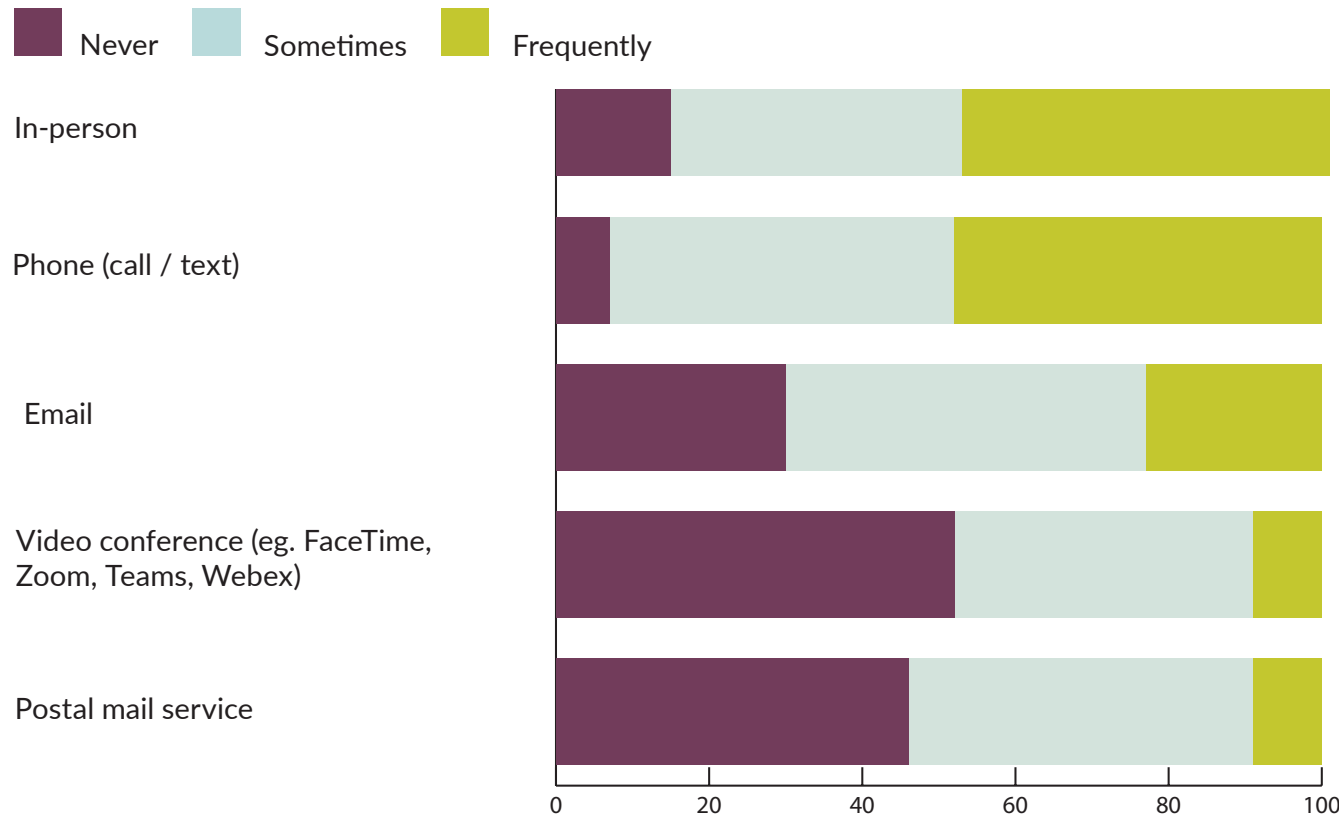
Q2. Other people or groups who support or speak with you that were not included in the above list?



Q3. What are your preferred ways to connect with family members, caregivers and other important people in your life?



Q4. What are your preferred ways to connect with service providers and community organizations?



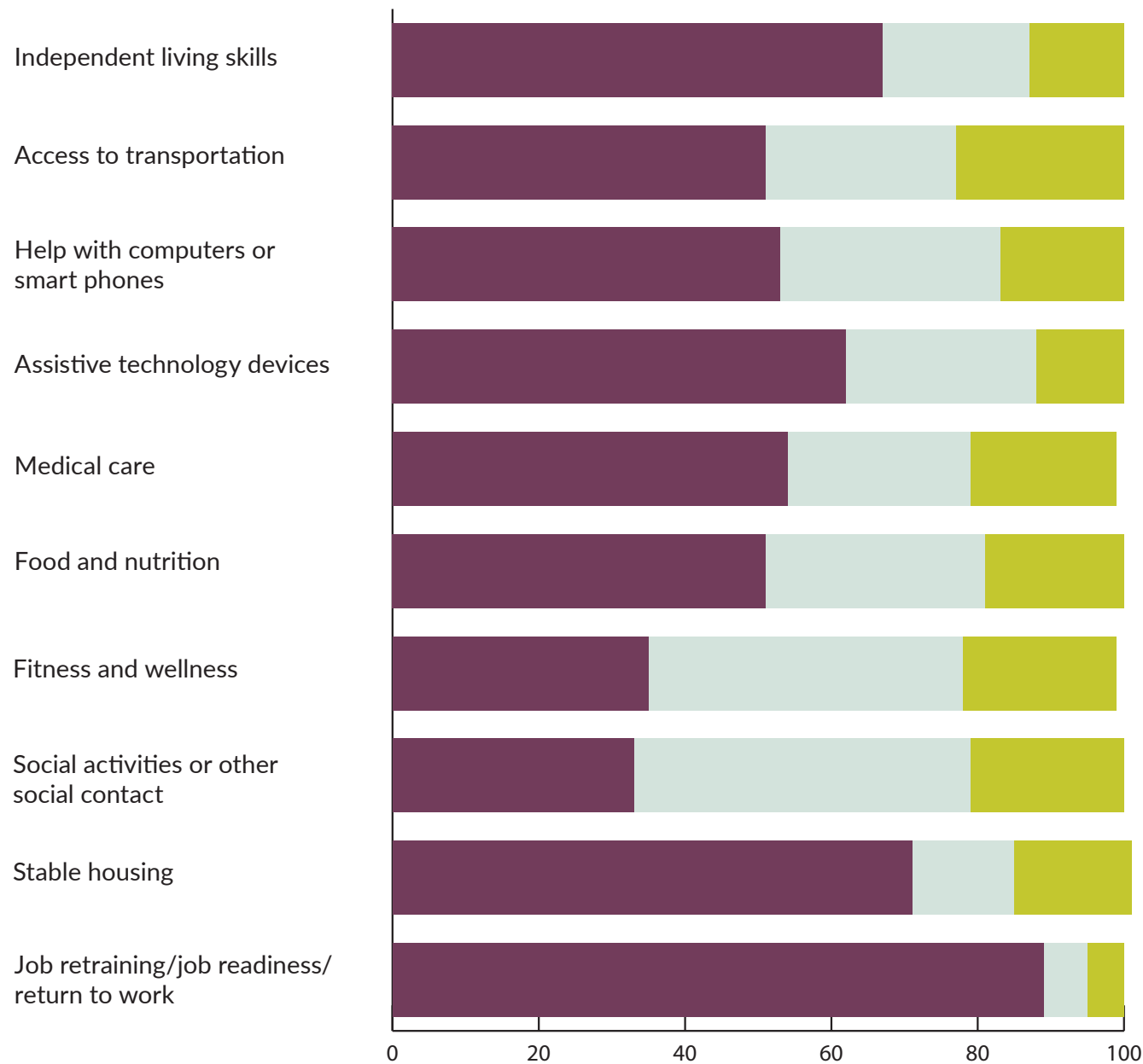
Q5. Are there other ways you prefer to connect with organizations, providers, and people in your life that are not included on the above list? If so, please share them here.

Social Media Text Family/Friends	Extended Family/Neighbors Website Messenger Newspaper	Church Newsletter Community Center
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Not the full list of responses received.

Q6. Please let us know which services or supports would make your life better.

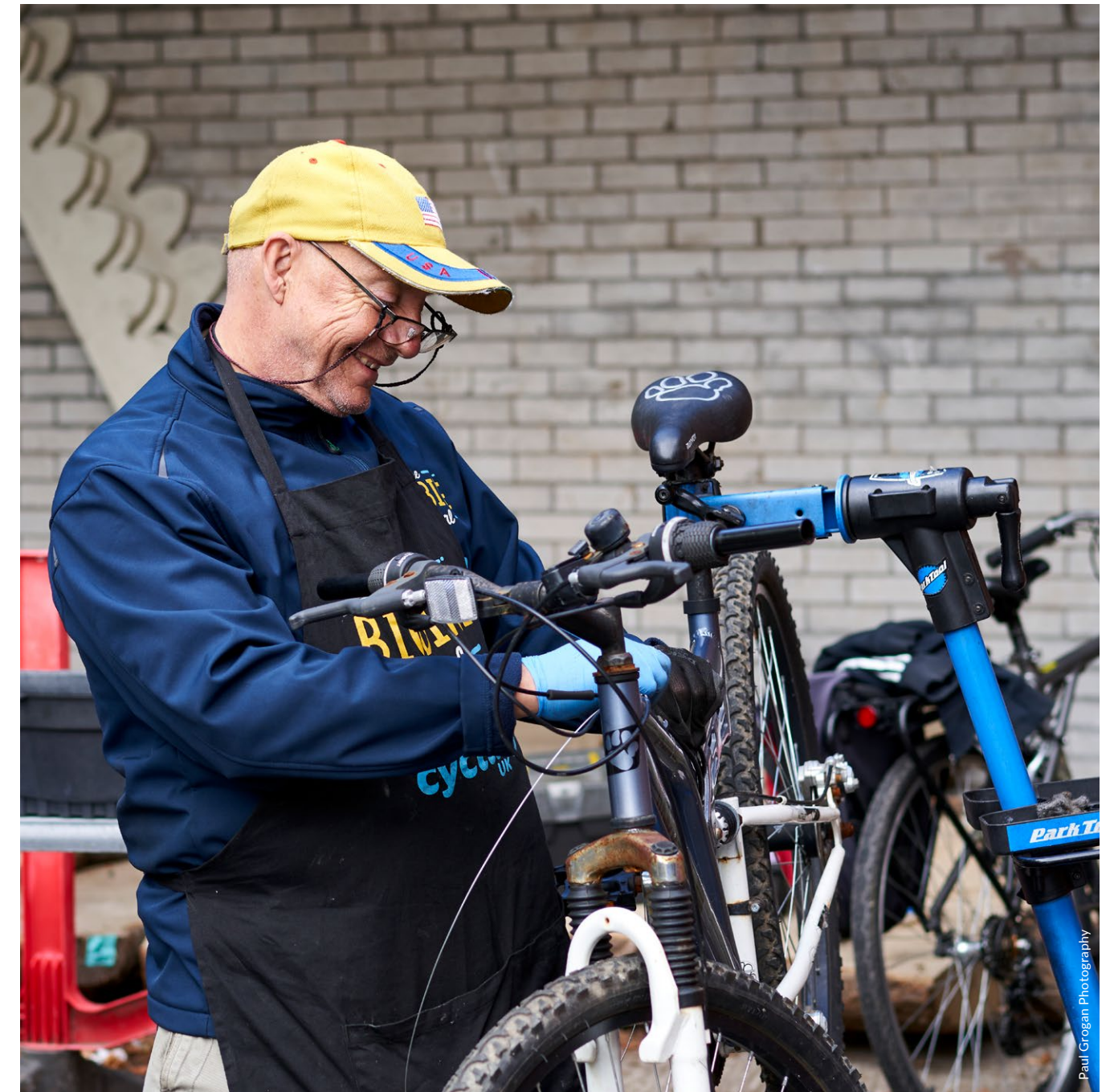
Never Sometimes Frequently



Q7. Are there other services or supports that would make your life better that are not included on the above list? If so, please share them here.

Help with house cleaning Affordable in-home care Volunteer opportunities	Handyman services Medicare transition help Night time transportation	Adult daytime social opportunities
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Not the full list of responses received.



Paul Grogan Photography

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For other formats

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