Established as a private nonprofit organization in 1973 and governed by a Board of Directors, the Agency provides services for older adults and caregivers residing in Planning Service Area (PSA) 15, which includes the City of Richmond and the Counties of Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, and Powhatan. The Agency also serves as the Region’s designated No Wrong Door Service Program. Additionally, the Agency co-manages the Greater Richmond Age Wave Coalition with the Department of Gerontology at VCU.

Senior Connections is designated as the Area Agency on Aging for the development and enhancement of comprehensive, coordinated home and community based services for older adults and caregivers. Roles and responsibilities include: Planning, coordinating services, information/assistance, leadership, partnerships, collaboration, focal point for services, assessing/meeting the needs of older adults and advocacy. This designation is from the U.S. Administration for Community Living (ACL) through the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS).

Our Vision
“Seniors with improved quality of life.”

Our Mission
“Empowering seniors to live with dignity and choice”
Summary of Services

In support of addressing social connections and helping individuals age successfully, Senior Connections is proposing these program and services as part of the 2020-2023 Area Plan for Aging Services:

- **Adult Day Care** (Partnership with Local Adult Day Care Centers)
- **Care Coordination** (Assessment of Services Needs)
- **Care Transitions** (Hospital-to-Home Partnership with Hospital Systems to Reduce Readmissions and Help Older Adults Connect with Community Resources)
- **Caregiver Counseling and Support** (Information and Assistance to Help with Duties)
- **Communication, Referral, Information and Assistsances** (CRIA - a Program Component of No Wrong Door)
- **Congregate Meals and Activities** (Friendship Cafes)
- **Emergency Services** (Critical Needs: Help with Payments for Housing, Utilities and Medications)
- **Employment and Training Assistance** (Job Training and Referrals/Matches)
- **Health and Wellness Classes** (Evidence Based Workshops on Chronic Disease Self-Management and Fall Prevention)
- **Home Delivered Meals** (Meals on Wheels; Partnership with FeedMore, Inc)
- **Legal Assistance** (Partnership with Central VA Legal Aid and Senior Law Day)
- **Long-Term Care Ombudsman and Elder Abuse Prevention** (Information and Complaint Resolution)
- **Money Management** (Check Writing for Bills and Budget Management)
- **No Wrong Door** (Virtual System and Statewide Network of Shared Resources Designed to Streamline Access to Long-Term Care Services and Supports)
- **Options Counseling** (Choices for Service Selection)
- **Personal Care, Homemaker and Respite Services** (Partnership with Home Care Providers for Caregiver Support)
- **Public Information & Education** (Presentations, Health/Resource Fairs, Newsletters, Publications, Press Releases, Advertising, Website and Social Media)
- **Socialization & Recreation** (Exercise, Arts and Activities)
- **Telebridges Telephone Support** (Volunteers Connect with Seniors)
- **Transportation and Mobility Management** (Ride Connection for Medical Appointments)
- **Virginia Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program/VICAP** (Help with Medicare and other Insurance)
- **Volunteer Opportunities** (Opportunities for Engagement)

Planning for the Future

The Agency’s Board of Directors, Advisory Council and Staff are engaged in a multi-year Planning Process. This process involves the integration of several planning initiatives: Support of the Greater Richmond Regional Age Wave Readiness Plan, Updating of the Strategic Plan, Implementing the Four-Year Plan for Aging Services, which is approved by the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS). Also, the Board is adopting a Communications Plan.

The Greater Richmond Regional Age Wave Coalition

Senior Connections continues to partner with the Department of Gerontology at VCU to lead work of the Coalition. The Coalition is intended to guide creation of livable communities for all ages. Senior Connections has a key role in implementing several important service components of the Coalition: Transportation Coordination, Housing Stability Pilot Program, Longevity Project Support and the No Wrong Door partnership expansion with focus on increasing social connections.
Strategic Plan Update

Strategic Plan Update sets goals and directions for Agency Programs and Activities based on three focus areas:
1. Visibility/Marketing    2. Programs/Services    3. Funding/Resources

Goals are:
✿ Create distinctive and recognizable public image (brand) for Senior Connections.
✿ Increase development and delivery of comprehensive and collaborative programs that address the short term and long term needs of older adults, adults with disabilities and their caregivers.
✿ Develop diverse, sustainable funding sources while continuing strong stewardship of all resources.

The Strategic Plan is in the process of being updated as the current plan ends September 30, 2019.

Area Plan for Aging Services

Area Plan for Aging Services serves as the blueprint for the work of Senior Connections and is the official funding application to the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS). It also informs interested persons about the intent of the Agency to deliver services outlined under the Older Americans Act. The Plan also describes the manner in which the Agency will continue to develop a comprehensive and coordinated delivery system for older adults, caregivers, and their families. This is a Four Year Plan that covers the time period October 1, 2019 – September 30, 2023.

Funding Sources

Senior Connections receives funding from the federal Older Americans Act and the Virginia General Assembly through the Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services (DARS). The Corporation for National and Community Service provides funding for volunteer initiatives— the Foster Grandparent Program and RSVP. Funds for Ride Connection for rides to and from medical appointments is funded by the Virginia Department for Rail and Public Transportation. Other federal and state funds support the Agency’s Programs and local funds are provided by city and county governments. Senior Connections also receives contributions from citizens in the communities it serves in addition to grants from the United Way of Greater Richmond & Petersburg, local corporations and foundations. Corporate sponsors include Dominion, Genworth, Bon Secours, and Owens & Minor. Local foundations include the Richmond Memorial Health Foundation, The Community Foundation, and Jenkins Foundation. The Agency also receives grants from Altria’s Employee Community Fund. Local fundraising efforts include the Empty Plate Campaign which provides money to help meet critical needs and service gaps.

Needs Assessment

Impact of demographics

The Area Plan reflects important population trends in the Region, Planning and Service Area (PSA) 15. The number of older adults in PSA 15 is increasing, with an estimated 197,910 individuals age 60 and over according to the 2011-2015 American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates. The number of persons age 85 and over is the fastest growing group. The population is also becoming more diverse and there is a growing minority population of older Asian Americans and Hispanics. By the year 2030, there will be a doubling of the older population, with the Baby Boomers continuing to retire. At-risk groups include older adults with low incomes, older adults living with disabilities, individuals aged 85 and older, older adults living alone, and older adults who are geographically isolated. Advanced age, disability, poverty, and geographic isolation are risk factors in and of themselves, and the combination of two or more of these risk factors is likely to have significant impacts on the independence and well-being of older adults, putting them at-risk for decreased quality of life, social isolation, loss of independence, poor health outcomes, and shortened lifespan. Living alone is another factor that can put individuals at risk for social isolation and reduced quality of life. In our region, approximately 28.9% of older adults aged 65+ live alone.
### Community Input

Over the past four years, Senior Connections has held meetings with local officials; community discussion sessions with older adults, community partners and concerned citizens; and Friendship Café and Community Partner visits. Themes that emerged from the meetings are:

1. Transportation resources need to be both accessible and affordable for medical and personal business. Limited transportation service in rural areas.

2. There are many examples of collaboration and coordination between local service providers and these partnerships should continue to be strengthened.

3. Friendship Cafés are a highly visible resource, providing food, activities and connections for participants.

4. Information about services and resources to older adults and their families using a variety of means to disseminate information.

5. Senior Law Day (Wills, Powers of Attorney and Advance Medical Directives) and education about Advance Care Planning are much needed services for older adults and caregivers.

6. Home Care provides support to caregivers need for respite care services. Limited home care providers in rural areas and a shortage of personal care aides.

7. Affordable housing is difficult to locate in some areas and there is a shortage of affordable home repair and maintenance services.

8. Concerns for the safety and well-being of older adults involve the need to educate individuals, businesses and medical providers regarding abuse, neglect and exploitation and checking on individuals who are vulnerable and isolated.

9. Information and assistance to Veterans and their families.
Priorities for the Four Year Plan for Aging Services

1. Continue Older Americans Act core programs including Access and Supportive Services, Health and Wellness, Caregiver, and the Elder Rights Programs. Programs and services need to be defined individually based on local needs.

2. Increase access to Mobility Management Services to help residents find and use accessible and affordable transportation services, especially for medical needs.

3. Expand Care Transitions and Evidence-based Programs, including Chronic Disease Self-Management and Fall Prevention.

4. Provide person-centered planning for older adults and their caregivers across the spectrum of long-term care services, including home, community and institutional settings.

5. Work with other community stakeholders to develop “Risk” Index / Social Network Scale (rubric) to identify and connect clients at-risk and to provide data necessary to support interventions and service strategies to address isolation.

6. Expand the No Wrong Door System to add additional community partners in order to capture information for referral networks that can both inform regional dashboard of community health for our aging demographic and lead to pre-emptive interventions that improve access to services and reduce risks of social isolation.

7. Expand volunteer opportunities within and outside of the Agency by integrating internal Agency volunteer programs and coordinating a forum on volunteering in the Greater Richmond area.

8. Continue to participate in Age Wave implementation which promotes engagement and connectedness of older adults in our community.

9. Promote use of advance planning through assistance with legal documents such as wills, powers of attorney and advance medical directives and through education concerning other end of life issues.

10. Develop strategies to reach and serve culturally diverse older individuals and caregivers.

11. Provide information, referral and assistance to Veterans and Military Dependents and family members.

12. Work with local governments to ensure that information about resources and services is available to their citizens by increasing our presence on locality websites and partnering with local agencies, such as libraries, as a means to distribute information about resources and services.

13. Provide information, referral and assistance to caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer’s disease and other dementias.

14. Facilitate counseling related to housing assistance and transitions.

15. Conduct training/classes on the use of Smart phones and related technology.

Area Plan Waivers

Wherever possible, the Agency contracts for services with qualified vendors. We request waivers for services that are appropriate to provide directly based on needs and Agency capacity: Care Coordination, Care Transitions, Checking, Congregate Meals, Disease Prevention/Health Promotion, Emergency Services, Employment, Money Management, and Volunteer. We also request a waiver to use nonfederal funding for In-Home Services to meet the required spending percentage.

Please submit comments and questions by Monday, July 1, 2019 to Ms. Marge Boynton, Senior Connections, 24 E. Cary Street, Richmond, VA 23219; or email mboynton@youraaa.org; or call (804) 343-3054.