

Testimony for the Interim Committee on Senior Citizens and Veterans

Committee Chairman, Assemblywoman, Kathy McClain

Connie McMullen, Chair

Strategic Plan Accountability Committee (SPAC) for Senior Citizens.

Re: Overview, Accomplishments, Challenges

I'm here today to provide a brief overview of the Strategic Plan for Senior Services, and the Strategic Plan Accountability Committee (SPAC) appointed to track its progress.

Referring to your handout called *Preparing for the Future*, The Strategic Plan for Senior Services was authorized in 2001. The Plan was designed to address the needs of Nevada's seniors and outline goals to meet those demands, covering a ten-year period.

In 2003, the Governor appointed a Strategic Plan Accountability Committee, better known as SPAC, to implement the plan. The Committee currently has 9 members, representing the aging population. The mission of the Plan is to enable seniors to remain independent, a prevailing theme that runs throughout the document with the right balance of resources and services available.

To chart progress of this effort, the Committee sought six overarching strategies. There are also six target areas guiding long-range and short-term goals. As you will note, the Strategic Plan Accountability Committee was appointed to monitor whether the state is achieving its targets and goals, and to update each biennium's successes and challenges.

An updated document on the status of the Plan now in its 4th year, was completed this Aug. 2007, and is also included in your packet for this presentation. In the 2007 report, the Committee documents the impacts of Nevada's 74th Legislative Session on the senior services network.

Before explaining the accomplishments and challenges that have resulted in implementing the Strategic Plan, it is important to note that the increase in senior services continues to lag behind the rate of growth in the senior population in Nevada. Until last year, Nevada had been leading the nation as the fastest growing state with regards to seniors particularly in the 85 plus demographic.

Accomplishments Advanced in 2005

- Funds for dental services
- Funding of the Nevada 2-1-1 system
- Enhanced self directed care
- Licensed non-medical home care agencies
- Eliminated the patient liability in the CHIPS waiver
- Created an Olmstead decision unit in the budgeting process
- Increasing the Personal Care Assistance rate
- Continued funding of the Alzheimer's demonstration grant
- Expansion of the Senior Rx program to include dental and vision services
- Enhanced pharmacy benefits.
- Progress on the Single Point of Entry/Nevada Care Connection initiative
- Enhancements in home ownership

- Expanded senior transportation services
- Increased housing/living arrangement opportunities.

Many of the challenges SPAC faced in 2005 the Committee also faces today. Among the more crucial in our rapidly growing senior population is our critical workforce shortages; insufficient data collection; a continued shortage of home and community based services to enable people to remain in their own homes and live independently; inadequate transportation programs throughout the state; lack of affordable housing to meet the needs of the population; and a fragmented delivery system of resources and services.

In 2006, the Committee met to set priorities for the 2007 Legislative Session. The priorities listed in the Annual Report, include both agency budgetary items and legislative bills. In addition, the Committee formed three workgroups to focus on specific long-term goals: *Out-of-State Placements of Nursing Home Residents, Health, and Transportation/Housing.*

Budget Priorities for the 74th Legislative Session

- To increase the number of slots in the Medicaid Waivers, which shift the funding from institutional care to home based care.
- To strengthen the infrastructure of the Division for Aging by adding Information Technology.

Legislative Priorities:

- Creating a Standing Legislative Committee for Seniors, ‘Adults with Disabilities, and Veterans.
- Permanent funding of Nevada 2-1-1.
- Creation of an online affordable and accessible housing registry
- Amend NRS 439A to include a reporting requirement for any health care facility discharging or transferring an individual to a nursing home.

Workgroup Priorities:

- Work with the Washoe County, Second Judicial District Court, Task Force on Out-of-State Placements.
- Expand dental care to make it more assessable and cost effective for all seniors through Legislative funding of an expansion of the Senior Rx program. Encourage Medicaid to cover preventive and restorative care for adults..
- Expand transportation/housing services through public/private partnerships with local government entities and agencies.

74th Session Accomplishments:

SPAC made advancement in many of its priorities during the 74th Legislative Session as listed in the Annual Report. Bills were monitored by SPAC and DAS staff during the session; testimony, and supporting data was provided when necessary.

- The Division received a total of 175 new slots in all the waivers. The Division has struggled with recruitment of social workers to serve waiver clients and meet caseload growth. While the Division negotiated extensively on reasonable caseload growth with the Legislative money committees (a result of the state's workforce crisis), there was still an advancement in the number of slots over the next biennium. (Waivers for the elderly include: Community Home-Based Initiatives Program (CHIPS); Waiver for Elderly in Adult Residential Care (WEARC); Assisted Living (AL) Waiver, and (COPE) Community Options Program for the Elderly.)
- The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) approved the new Assisted Living waiver effective July 1, 2006 for low-income elders.
- The Division expanded Information Technology with Synergy software, and its Beacon Information and Referral components. This Information Technology is the backbone for the Divisions new Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs), as well as the integration of data for most division grantees beginning in Oct. 2007. The Nevada Care Connection and ADRC's will serve to provide a Single Point of Entry for people in need of assistance. The Legislature continued funding the Nevada 2-1-1 system.
- The Legislature approved an Interim Committee to Study Senior Citizens and Veterans issues.
- Assembly Bill 439 directs cities or counties that are required to include a housing plan in their master plan, to implement a plan for maintaining and developing affordable housing to meet the needs of the community. In addition, plans must include an inventory of existing affordable housing.
- Assembly Bill 182 expands Senior Rx to include hearing aids and other hearing devices to the list of benefits available for both senior citizens and persons with disabilities. This bill also allows certain veterans to receive such benefits if they qualify as a senior citizen or person with a disability. Additionally, the bill provides dental and vision coverage under Senior Rx (to the extent funding is available), eliminates the Task Force for a Fund for a Healthy Nevada thus streamlining the granting process through the Grants Management Unit in DHHS, and allows DHHS to participate in a federal program that provides assistance to persons with HIV or acquired immunodeficiency syndrome.
- AB 629 appropriated \$250,000 to the Department of Transportation for rural transit operations for the elderly and persons with disabilities.
 - The Senior Ride Program in Clark County was expanded to allow for an increase in taxi ride coupons for eligible seniors age 60 plus.
 - CitiCare, a non-profit in Washoe County, contracted with the Regional Transportation Commission to fund nearly 13,000 additional paratransit and taxi rides for people with disabilities in the FY 2006, funding made available through grants and donations.

- The Washoe County Senior Ride program as of October 2007, began providing rides for people under age 62 who are disabled and qualify for paratransit services.
- Fixed route service or other types of service were established in smaller communities statewide (Incline Village, Carson City, Lyon and Douglas Counties).
- The UNLV Cannon Research Center conducted two surveys ascertaining elder and baby boomer demographics statewide.
- An informational campaign called Elders Count was completed by the UNR Sanford Center for Aging, highlighting the gaps in services in our growing senior population. This data allowed the establishment of baseline data.
- The Division continued to fund the Medication Management Project through the Sanford Center. The project deals with senior misuse of medication by promoting ongoing periodic professional reviews of medication.
- The Division received an extension to the Alzheimer's Disease Demonstration Grants to States (ADDGS) from the Administration on Aging for one year to fund respite "vouchers." This grant provides a minimum of \$155,000 per year for caregivers of individuals suffering from dementia. The Division also funded 921 unduplicated recipients of respite care through its Independent Living Grants in the period Oct/1/05 to Sept/30/06 out of its share of Nevada's tobacco settlement funds.

Challenges:

- The Division requested an additional 311 slots during the 2007 Legislative session for the Community Based Care programs. The request was cut by 44% due to the lack of social workers to manage the caseloads. The challenge continues to be a workforce shortage which directly affects the ability to obtain additional funding for needed services.
- No action was taken by the 2007 Legislature to implement a reporting repository for persons at risk of entering a nursing facility.
- The number of Nevada seniors placed out-of-state (80+) is still unacceptably high. Ongoing efforts of the Task Force for Out-of-State Placements continue to pursue solutions to this problem.
- The Personal Needs Allowance for persons in nursing facilities is \$35. per month, and has not been increased in many years. Residents have difficulty purchasing personal care items with this limited amount of allowance. Steps to increase this allowance should be pursued.
- Universal access for seniors to dental care, both preventive and restorative is not available.

- Ongoing funding for an Elders Count in Nevada needs to be secured, which would provide updated statistics on Nevada's seniors.
- Ongoing funding for medication management activities needs to be secured.
- The Accountability Committee still lacks the kind of information required to assess the status of senior housing in Nevada in order to properly track, monitor and evaluate senior housing issues.
- Transportation services for seniors and persons with disabilities continue to be inadequate, especially in the rural areas.
- Although Synergy allows intra-agency database integration, the challenge is to continue to make progress towards a fully integrated single point of entry system that establishes inter-agency integration of client and service data, and allows the tracking of selected health and long-term care indicators as called for in the Strategic Plan.
- The 2-1-1 system still does not have a permanent funding source. The 2009 Legislature should commit to providing some ongoing state funding to this vital service in conjunction with local governments and the private sector to assure that the public has access to needed information.
- The Division received a three-year federal grant to establish ADRCs around the state. The grant began October 1, 2005. To-date, three ADRC sites have been established: Rebuilding All Goals Efficiently (RAGE) in Las Vegas, Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living and Washoe County Senior Center in Reno. The Division is in negotiations with the Family Resource Center to establish a site in Carson City.

Strategic Plan Accountability Committee Priorities for the 75th Legislative Session:

- 1.) To create a fund for a local Match to help Nevada leverage federal funding for senior services for small non-profits and partner grantees.
- 2.) Expand transportation initiatives by developing private/public partnerships to fund or enhance services statewide, including participating in federal initiatives with the Federal Transportation Administration and the Administration on Aging.
- 3.) Eliminate the Institutional Bias and continue efforts to shift from institutional care to home based care.
- 4.) To encourage *access to long-term care*; there continues to be a need for more services to enable seniors to live independently.
 - A. Workforce development - DAS continues to have a social worker shortfall of five, and is constantly recruiting to reduce its waiting list and manage its caseload. There is also a workforce shortage in all phases of health care professionals and specialty providers, particularly in northern Nevada.

- B. Out-of-State Placements - The state continues to send and pay for between 80-90 people of all ages located in institutions out of state because nursing homes do not accept residents with perceived challenging behaviors and because many do not have the capacity to care for these residents.

5.) Elder Abuse/Guardianships – Self neglect continues to be a leading concern of our elders along with abuse, and exploitation; improvement in guardianship laws are needed for the states most vulnerable wards.

Next Steps

The Committee will continue to reassess status of the original Strategic Plan, set priorities, and develop strategies and initiatives for the next Legislative session. Over the next year the Committee will meet at least quarterly, realizing it is faced with deadlines for budget concepts and Bill Draft Requests during the first half of 2008 in preparation for the 2009 Legislative Session.

The Accountability Committee will continue to coordinate efforts with the SPAC for Persons with Disabilities moving common priorities. In addition, the committee will utilize the Legislative Commission's Interim Study on Senior Citizens and Veterans as a forum for raising the level of awareness of senior issues and needs. This forum may also be the avenue needed to bring forth legislation and budget support for senior issues in the upcoming session.

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
STRATEGIC PLAN FOR SENIORS
YEAR FOUR PLAN STATUS
August 2007**

INTRODUCTION

The *Strategic Plan for Senior Services* was authorized in 2001. The Plan was designed to address the needs of Nevada's seniors and outline goals to meet those demands covering a ten-year period. In 2003 the Governor appointed a *Strategic Plan Accountability Committee* that was charged with monitoring progress on the plan. This Report assesses the fourth year of the Plan, ending July 1, 2007 and includes the impact of Nevada's 74th Legislative Session on the senior services network.

The increase in services for seniors continues to lag behind the rate of increase in the senior population in Nevada. Up until last year, when Arizona overtook Nevada, Nevada had been leading the nation as the fastest growing state with regards to the senior population.

The fourth year activities of the accountability committee focused on the upcoming Legislative Session and the accomplishments the committee wanted to successfully see through the session. The Senior Strategic Plan Accountability Committee worked closely with members of the Strategic Plan Accountability Committee for Persons with Disabilities. It was this coordination that proved instrumental in championing many of the issues through the session. The committee also focused on building a stronger coalition to bring those issues to the forefront.

This report will identify both Accomplishments and Challenges related to the original six goals of the Plan.

MEMBERSHIP

The committee met quarterly over the past year in preparation for the 2007 Legislative Session. The committee consists of 10 members and is staffed by the Division for Aging Services. Staff from the Department of Health and Human Services and the Division of Health Care Financing and Policy also attends the meetings.

2006 PRIORITIES

During 2006 the committee set priorities for the 2007 Legislative session. These priorities included both agency budgetary items and legislative bills. In addition, the committee formed 3 workgroups to focus on Out-of-State Placements; Health; and Transportation/Housing. Each of these workgroups developed priorities within their topic areas to pursue during the 2007 session.

The 2006 committee priorities follow:

Budget Priorities:

- Increase the number of slots in the Medicaid waivers, which shift the funding from institutional care to home based care. The waivers for the elderly include: Community Home-Based Initiatives Program (CHIP), Waiver for Elderly in Adult Residential Care (WEARC) and Assisted Living (AL).
(Accomplished – See Goal One, #1)
- Strengthen the infrastructure of the Division for Aging Services by adding Information Technology personnel. This increase in agency infrastructure is critical to assure the continued development of technology to support single point of entry, consolidation of data and the Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC) initiatives.
(Accomplished – See Goal Six, #7)

Legislative Priorities:

- Restore clergy and attorneys as mandatory reporters of elder abuse under NRS 200.5091.
(Not Accomplished – See Goal One, #18)
- Create a Standing Legislative Committee for Seniors, Adults with Disabilities and Veterans.
(Partially Accomplished – See Goal Six, #4)
- Establish permanent funding for the statewide 2-1-1 system.
(Partially Accomplished – See Goal Six, #6 & 12)
- Create an online affordable and accessible housing registry that would require any builder who uses state, local and federal funds to register any available openings.
(Partially Accomplished – See Goal Four, #3)
- Shift to home and community based services from institutional care.
(Partially Accomplished – See Goal One, #1 & 10)
- Amend NRS 439A to include a reporting requirement for any health care facility discharging or transferring an individual to a nursing home. Nevada should consider the adoption of an approach to rebalance its budget to ensure appropriate resources for community services as individuals leave nursing facilities. This initiative would provide an opportunity to transition individuals from nursing facilities to community residential settings without increasing Medicaid costs to the state.
(Partially Accomplished – See Goal One, #10)

Workgroup Priorities:

Out-of-State Placements:

- Support passage of the Elder Justice Act
(The committee encouraged all Nevada Congressional leaders in 2006 to sign onto the Elder Justice Act.)
- Support continued funding by Congress of Alzheimer's initiatives within the Administration on Aging budget.
(The committee encouraged all Nevada Congressional leaders to support continued funding for Alzheimer's treatment and respite.)
- Committee members worked with the Washoe County Second Judicial Court Task Force on Out-of-State Placements to develop initiatives and work with Health and Human Services, Division Administrators (Mental Health and Developmental Services, Aging Services, and Health Care Financing and Policy) to solve the Out-of-State Placement issue. SPAC and Elder Rights Attorney Sally Ramm met with Legislators and State staff. The matter was also brought to the attention of Governor Gibbons. Assemblywoman Sheila Leslie promised to bring the matter back during the Interim Health Committee in 2007. The Out-of-State Placement Task Force will meet again in fall 2007 to renew efforts.

Health:

- Create a standing legislative committee on seniors and veterans.
(Partially Accomplished – See Goal Six, #4)
- Make dental care available and cost effective for all seniors through Legislature funding expansion of Senior Rx. Medicaid should cover preventive and restorative care for adults.
(Partially Accomplished – See Goal Three, #3)
- Expand waivers so more persons can receive care at home.
(Accomplished – See Goal One, #1)

Transportation:

- Expand transportation services through public/private partnership.
(Partially Accomplished – See Goal Five, #1-5)

ACCOMPLISHMENTS/CHALLENGES

Goal One: More Nevada Seniors Live in the Setting of Their Choice with Support to Remain as Independent and Healthy as Possible.

Accomplishments

1. The Division has struggled with recruitment of social workers, especially in Las Vegas, and this inability to hire staff negatively impacts the ability to serve clients and increase caseload numbers. The Division negotiated extensively on reasonable caseload growth with the money committees during the 74th Legislative Session due to this workforce crisis. The Legislature increased the Division for Aging Services' Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) slots for the next biennium, to include:
Assisted Living Waiver: Increased by 25 slots during the last quarter of the biennium to accommodate opening of Deer Springs in LV in spring 2009.
CHIP: Increased for demographic growth by 96 slots. The decision unit for addressing the wait list was not approved.
WEARC: Increased for demographic growth by 45 slots.
Community Options Program for the Elderly (COPE formerly State CHIP): Increased by 9 slots to address Olmstead compliance.
Total new slots = 175. Governor recommend was 311.
2. Assembly Bill 68 expands the list of crimes to include the abuse, neglect, exploitation or isolation of elderly or vulnerable persons that are grounds for the Health Division to deny, suspend or revoke a license to operate a facility for intermediate care, facility for skilled nursing or residential facility for groups, or to operate an agency to provide personal care services in the home.
3. Assembly Bill 87 requires financial institutions to provide training to employees regarding identification of the possible exploitation of older persons and further requires the employees to report possible exploitation.
4. Assembly Bill 158 requires the Secretary of State to establish and maintain the Registry of Advance Directives for Health Care. AB629 appropriated \$200,000 for this website.
5. Assembly Bill 226 creates the Unit for the Investigation and Prosecution of Crimes Against Older Persons within the Attorney General's office.
6. Assembly Bill 463 requires the Health Division to expand the registry on residential facilities for groups to include certain information that would be helpful to agencies that provide police, fire-fighting, rescue or emergency medical services.

7. Assembly Bill 576 provides for the certification of an Intermediary Service Organization (ISO) by the Office of Disability Services. ISOs are authorized to provide certain services related to personal care to persons with disabilities.
8. Senate Bill 150 expands the jurisdiction of elder rights advocates to Homes for Individual Residential Care (HIRCs).
9. Senate Bill 314 requires facilities that offer combined independent living and assisted living services within the same facility to provide notice of the services provided. The Department of Health & Human Services will develop a brochure and website to assist older persons seeking residential care or services in determining the appropriate level of care and services available at different facilities.
10. Nevada Medicaid now has the flexibility to move funds from institutional to community-based care options with Interim Finance Committee (IFC) approval in all waivers except the MRRC waiver under Mental Health, Developmental Services. Medicaid will be setting up a pilot for Aged, Blind and Disabled population
11. The “Silver Sky” affordable assisted living facility was completed in July 2006. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services approved the new Assisted Living Waiver effective July 1, 2006.
12. An interagency task force lead by Judge Doherty continues to work on the issues related to out-of-state placement of clients such as those with dementia that have behavioral problems.
13. The Division’s budget request for two Ombudsman Supervisors was approved. These positions will allow for better supervision and case triaging of the complaints/reports received by the Ombudsman unit. The positions will be located in Las Vegas and Reno. The goal is to off load some supervisory work from the Social Services Managers, so they can begin establishing volunteer programs to address nursing facility transitions and create a more constant presence in facilities.

Challenges

14. The Division for Aging Services requested an additional 311 slots during the 2007 Legislative session for the Community Based Care programs. The request was cut by 44% due to the lack of social workers to manage the caseloads. The challenge continues to be the workforce shortage which directly affects the ability to obtain additional funding for needed services.

15. No action was taken by the 2007 Legislature to implement a reporting repository for persons at risk of entering a nursing facility.
16. The number of Nevada seniors placed out-of-state (80+) is still unacceptably high. Ongoing efforts of the task force for out-of-state placements continue to pursue solutions to this problem.
17. Personal Needs Allowance for persons in nursing facilities is \$35.00 per month and has not been increased in many years. Residents have difficulty purchasing personal care items with this limited amount of allowance. Steps to increase this allowance should be pursued.
18. Assembly Bill 267 during the 2005 session weakened the elder abuse reporting law because it removed attorneys and clergy as “mandatory reporters.” Attempts to get these two disciplines put back into the mandatory reporting law during the 2007 session failed.

Goal Two: More Nevada Seniors Engage in the Occupation of Life.

Accomplishments

1. The Division for Aging Services received an extension to the Alzheimer’s Disease Demonstration Grants to States (ADDGS) from the Administration on Aging for one year to fund respite “vouchers”. This grant provides a minimum of \$155,000 per year for caregivers of individuals suffering from dementia.
2. The Division for Aging Services also funded 921 unduplicated recipients of respite care through its Independent Living Grants in the period 10/1/05 to 9/30/06 out of its share of Nevada’s tobacco settlement funds.
3. Assembly Bill 629 appropriated \$365,000 to the Nevada Commission for National and Community Service to match federal funding for continuation of its program dedicated to promoting citizen volunteerism.

Challenges

4. Medicare only covers short-term day programs for seniors in need and then only in acute care hospitals. Additional resources for respite care to family caregivers are needed.

Goal Three: More Nevada Seniors Have Improved Health Outcomes.

Accomplishments

1. Assembly Bill 6 authorizes a board of county commissioners to enter into a contract to provide residents of the county with discounts on prescription drugs.
2. Assembly Bill 128 requires wholesalers and manufacturers who employ persons to sell or market the drug, chemical, device or appliance to adopt a written marketing code of ethics.
3. Assembly Bill 182 expands Senior Rx to include hearing aids and other hearing devices to the list of benefits available for both senior citizens and persons with disabilities to the extent money is available. This bill also allows certain veterans to receive such benefits if they qualify as a senior citizen or person with a disability. Additionally, this bill provides dental coverage under Senior Rx to the extent funding is available, eliminates the Task Force for a Fund for a Healthy Nevada thus streamlining the granting process through the Grants Management Unit in DHHS, and allows DHHS to participate in a federal program that provides assistance to persons with HIV or acquired immunodeficiency syndrome.
4. Assembly Bill 232 requires the Department of Health & Human Services to post the usual and customary price that pharmacies charge for prescription drugs so that consumers may compare the prices currently being charged. AB629 appropriated \$160,000 for the establishment of this website.
5. Assembly Bill 235 requires prescription labels to include the symptom or purpose of the medication.
6. Assembly Bill 146 established and Assembly Bill 629 appropriated \$250,000 to the Department of Health & Human Services to establish programs to increase public awareness of health care information concerning hospital and surgical centers and to establish a website to contain the information regarding quality of care and cost comparisons.
7. Assembly Bill 629 also appropriated \$223,821 to the Health Division for the costs relating to the appointment of a Coordinator of Vascular Health.
8. Senate Bill 409 revised provisions governing insurance coverage for a vaccine to protect against cervical cancer and screenings for prostate cancer.
9. The Department of Health and Human Services provided funding to UNR, Sanford Center on Aging to produce an Elder Count in Nevada. This data

allowed the establishment of baseline data, for example, for Nevada seniors 75 and older who are severely disabled. The challenge is to secure a way to pursue a mechanism for funding an Elder Count in Nevada, which would provide updated statistics on Nevada's seniors on a regular basis.

10. The Division for Aging Services has continued to fund the Medication Management Project through the Sanford Center on Aging at UNR. The project deals with senior misuse of medication by promoting ongoing periodic professional reviews of medication.

Challenges

11. Universal access for seniors to dental care, both preventive and restorative is not available.
12. Ongoing funding for an Elder Count in Nevada needs to be secured, which would provide updated statistics on Nevada's seniors.
13. Ongoing funding for medication management activities needs to be secured.

Goal Four: More Nevada Seniors Live in Homes That Are Safe, Fully Accessible and Affordable.

Accomplishments

1. Assembly Bill 216 requires a landlord to submit a resident impact statement to the local governing entity when proposing to close or convert a manufactured home park.
2. Assembly Bill 283 requires certain child care facilities and facilities that provide care of adults during the day to maintain and provide certain information to parents, guardians, and legal representatives of persons cared for in the facility.
3. Assembly Bill 439 directs cities or counties that are required to include a housing plan in their master plan to implement a plan for maintaining and developing affordable housing to meet the needs of the community. In addition, plans must include an inventory of existing affordable housing, including, "housing that is available to rent or own, housing that is subsidized either directly or indirectly by this State, an agency or political subdivision of this State, or the Federal Government or an agency of the Federal Government, and housing that is accessible to persons with disabilities."
4. Assembly Bill 483 increases Homestead exemption from \$350,000 to \$550,000.

Challenges

5. The Accountability Committee still lacks the kind of information required to assess the status of senior housing in Nevada in order to properly track, monitor and evaluate senior housing issues.
6. Insufficient data still exists to determine percentage cost of housing and utilities for seniors' income, both those in private and public housing.
7. AB172, AB210 and SB179 all proposed to increase the amount of property tax rebate paid to seniors. These bills did not pass and the maximum amount a senior may receive in rebate remained at \$500.

Goal Five: More Nevada Seniors Who Are Frail or Disabled Go From One Place To Another When They Need To.

Accomplishments

1. The Senior Ride Program was expanded by \$390,014 in each year of the biennium. This increase is funded by participant fees and funds transferred by the LV Taxicab Authority. This will allow for increase sales of cab ride coupons for eligible seniors (60 +) in the LV area.
2. Assembly Bill 629 appropriated \$250,000 to the Department of Transportation for rural transit operations for the elderly and persons with disabilities.
3. CitiCare in Washoe County funds on average \$140,000 in rides per year which is an average of 500 rides/month. Recent service changes for subscription and reservation periods have reduced trip denials considerably in 2006. To-date there have been no denials for CitiCare services in the north.
4. The Washoe Senior Ride program is now being funded by county taxes, stemming from a tax increase that was passed in Washoe County by voters. As of August, 26, 2007 Washoe Senior Ride will be opened to paratransit riders with disabilities under the age of 60. It is estimated that an additional 568 rides will be provided in 2007-2008.
5. A fixed route transit system called JAC was established in Carson City and Lyon County. Shuttle services was also established in Incline Village in partnership with Washoe County Senior Services and Incline Village Parks and Recreation.

Challenges

6. Data continues to be incomplete on number of seniors statewide using public transportation.
7. Transportation services for seniors and persons with disabilities continue to be inadequate, especially in the rural areas.

Goal Six: More Nevada Seniors Get The Benefits, Services and Supports They Need.

Accomplishments

1. The Division's Single Point of Entry (SPE) system, which is largely funded out of Administration on Aging's National Family Caregiver Support Program funds continues to increase its statewide scope and now includes an additional pilot site in Henderson (Central Christian Church) as well as upgrading the equipment and training of the following SHIP-based Project NEON (Nevada Elders on the Net) senior center sites: Searchlight, Mina, Carson City, Overton, Tonopah, Amargosa, Beatty and Pahrump.
2. The Division's Synergy software and its Beacon Information and Referral components will be able to supply the electronic backbone for Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) as well as integrate data of most Division grantees beginning in October '07 via a revised National Aging Program Information System (NAPIS) software package as required by Administration on Aging.
3. The Division for Aging Services has purchased the "Synergy" software package that will allow the integration of all internal databases, including Division grantees, and will facilitate uniform access and referral forms and procedures, thus moving Nevada closer to the goal of a fully integrated single-point of entry system.
4. ACR 35 directed the Legislative Commission to conduct an interim study on issues relating to senior citizens and veterans. The committee shall evaluate issues including health and human services, elder abuse & exploitation, financial & physical wellness initiatives, housing & transportation; public outreach & advocacy. The Accountability committee sees this study as a mechanism for moving more of the goals of the plan forward in the 2009 Legislative session.
5. Assembly Bill 203 provided additional funding to Family Resource Centers.

6. Assembly Bill 629 appropriated \$200,000 to the Department of Health & Human Services for the continued operation of the statewide information and referral system (2-1-1).
7. The Division for Aging Services' budget request for an Information System Specialist III was approved. This will help the Division further develop case tracking and federal reporting compliance. This case tracking will improve our abilities to seek federal match funding from Title XIX for Ombudsman, Elder Protective Services and the Waivers (for the administrative tasks DAS completes).
8. The Division for Aging Services received a three-year federal grant to establish Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) around the state. The grant began October 1, 2005. This grant provides \$250,000 per year to help establish statewide ADRCs that will provide Nevadans with information/referral and eligibility access regarding long-term care. To-date, three ADRC sites have been established: Rebuilding All Goals Efficiently (RAGE) in Las Vegas, Northern Nevada Center for Independent Living and Washoe County Senior Center in Reno. The Division for Aging Services is in negotiations with the Family Resource Center to establish a site in Carson City.
9. Senate Bill 157 requires each board of county commissioners to establish an office of public guardian. In the past, counties without public guardians could choose to appoint any public official as a guardian of a person needing guardianship services. They could also choose not to appoint someone as guardian, thus resulting in persons going without the needed service. Establishing an office of public guardian will protect the rights of seniors requiring a guardian be appointed.
10. Senate Bill 219 created a gift account for veterans to be used for the support of outreach programs and services for veterans and their families.

Challenges

11. Although Synergy allows intra-agency database integration, the challenge is to continue to make progress towards a fully integrated single point of entry system that establishes inter-agency integration of client and service data, and allows the tracking of selected health and long-term care indicators as called for in the Strategic Plan.
12. The 2-1-1 system still does not have a permanent funding source. The 2009 Legislature should commit to providing some ongoing state funding to this vital service in conjunction with local governments and the private sector to assure that the public has access to needed information.

CONCLUSION

The Accountability Committee will be resuming its work towards moving the goals of the 10-year plan forward. Over the next year the committee will meet at least quarterly to review the accomplishments and set priorities for the upcoming 2009 Legislative Session, realizing that we are faced with deadlines for budget concepts and Bill Draft Requests during the first half of 2008.

The Accountability Committee will continue to coordinate efforts with the SPAC for Persons with Disabilities moving common priorities forward in anticipation of the next Legislative Session. In addition, the committee will utilize the Legislative Commission's interim study on senior citizens and veterans as a forum for raising the level of awareness of senior issues and needs. This forum may also be the avenue needed to bring forth legislation and budget support for senior issues in the upcoming session.

2007 Strategic Plan for Seniors Statewide Accountability Committee

First Name	Last Name	Organization	City
Barry	Gold	AARP Nevada	Las Vegas
Jerry	Johnson	Clark County Parks & Rec, Senior Advocate	Las Vegas
Wendy	Knorr	Senior Representative	Reno
Kathy	McClain	Nevada State Assembly	Las Vegas
Connie	McMullen	Senior Spectrum Magazine	Reno
Charles	Perry	Nevada Health Care Association	Las Vegas
Susan	Rhodes	Clark County Socail Services	Las Vegas
Jackie	Ridley	Senior Representative	Las Vegas
Liliam	Shell	Nevada Health Centers	Las Vegas
STAFF			
Carol	Sala	Division for Aging Services	Carson City
Cherrill	Cristman	Division for Aging Services	Carson City
Connie	Anderson	Health Care Financing and Policy	Carson City
Mary	Liveratti	Department of Health & Human Services	Carson City
