

2024 MCOA Conference Workshop Schedule*

Wednesday, October 23, 2024

Session I | 10:45am – 12:00pm

Building Strong Teams: Supporting Trust and Ownership

Want to unlock the power of teamwork? This workshop is for you! Learn to build communication, trust, and problem-solving skills that will make any team thrive. Leave with practical tools to take back to your work and community!

Presenter: Carrie Stack

TRACK: Professional Development

Hoarding's Impact on Older Adults, Avoiding Elder Abuse

Oftentimes family are asked to help when a loved one's hoarding and clutter reach problematic levels. Rarely though, are family looked at as individuals who need empathy and assistance themselves, be it in the home or separately from it. Join me to learn how "the stuff" hurts people who need help, be they partners, children, or extended family, as we consider compassion for all parties, while discussing health and safety measures. Watch for when a family member's hoarding crosses the line into elder abuse. Q & A will enable us to get into your direct questions as time allows. We'll discuss health for the whole household.

CEU eligible

Presenter: Becca Belofsky

TRACK: Livability, Mobility, & Accessibility

Protective Services Overview and How to Work Together

Protective Services (PS) in Massachusetts is dedicated to safeguarding older adults 60 years and older living in the community from abuse, neglect, exploitation, and self-neglect. Learn about the types of abuse investigated, signs and symptoms, what happens when a report is made and how we can work together to best protect and support older adults in the community.

PS collaborates closely with community partners to ensure comprehensive protection and support. Adult Protective Services in Massachusetts plays a crucial role in protecting vulnerable adults. By working collaboratively with community partners, PS can ensure a robust support system that effectively addresses the needs of at-risk individuals and prevents abuse. Community involvement and cooperation are key to creating a safer environment for all adults.

Presenters: Taryn Lee-Turgeon & Jonathan Fielding

TRACK: Community Connections

Honoring Cultures: Options Beyond the Conventional Funerals

This workshop will present various cultural and spiritual tradition's perspectives on utilizing natural, DIY, and community approaches to deathcare and disposition. It intends to inspire participants to explore their own cultural heritage regarding end of life, death, post-death care and funerary rituals.

Presenting a local Wampanoag family's story as a case study, practical considerations and techniques for preparing, presenting and preserving the remains of a community member will be explored. Green burial and other eco-friendly disposition options will be presented. This presentation by non-commercial, seasoned death educators is intended to be an example of what can be offered at local MA COA's.

Presenters: Heather Massey & Viennia Lopes-Booth

TRACK: Healthy Aging

Financial Protection and Empowerment for Older Adults

This session presents an opportunity to learn about and how to use a variety of resources, tools, and steps to empower older adults and aging stakeholders in protecting financial security as people age.

Presenters: Michael Herndon & Dubis Correal

TRACK: Social Support & Inclusion

Community Rowing for Healthy Aging

Rowing provides a unique opportunity for social connection and physical and mental wellness. Community Rowing, Inc. (CRI) in Boston, provides a broad array of opportunities

for gaining access to the sport and to the Charles River, including creative programs for seniors like the Octogenarian Eight, a team of competitive rowers consisting of people in their 80s who have raced in the past two Head of the Charles Regattas. CRI has recently launched two pilot programs with the Boston Age Strong Commission and Somerville Council on Aging. In this workshop, COA staff, CRI staff, and rowers will present the successes and challenges of these two pilots, followed by a discussion on how this program might be replicated by your COA and ideas for outside-the-box programs that create stronger interpersonal relationships, connection to a broader community, increase socialization and build physical health.

Presenters: Ted Benford, Tyisha Jones-Horner, Ashley Speliotis, & Bob Linscott

TRACK: Healthy Aging

Transportation Roundtable Discussion

Join fellow mobility coordinators for our third annual roundtable discussion to ask questions, problem solve and learn from one another about the most efficient ways to accommodate transportation needs within our communities.

Presenters: Carlee Castetter & Abigail Butt

TRACK: Livability, Mobility, & Accessibility

Navigating Feasibility Studies for Senior Center Projects

We will address the critical aspects of initiating and executing feasibility studies for senior center projects. Recognizing the pressing need for clarity in addressing the inception and process of such studies, our presentation aims to provide a concise yet comprehensive guide that acknowledges the multifaceted nature of senior center projects.

Getting Started: We delve into the initial steps of launching a feasibility study, including defining project goals, assessing community needs, and assembling a team.

Understanding the Process: With a focus on clarity and coherence, we outline the various stages and methodologies involved in conducting a feasibility study for senior center projects, from building committee engagement to site selection to public outreach.

Differentiating Renovations vs. New Construction: We address the distinct challenges and considerations associated with renovating existing facilities versus constructing new ones.

Presenters: Chris Wante & Rebecca Moriarty

TRACK: Professional Development

Solo Ageing: Legal Concerns, Thoughts and Options

Ageing alone presents unique worries and too often we don't acknowledge the options that allow a senior to age in place with independence and grace. Whether without family, or because family and friends are too far away to make their presence felt and be helpful, no one should ever feel truly alone. Let's discuss planning tools, including estate planning documents, that can assist with independence and control, and talk about housing and care options and how to find the right resources and advocacy. **CEU eligible**

Presenters: Andrea Witt & Christine Hurley

TRACK: Healthy Aging

Session I | 1:15pm – 2:30pm

Field Demonstration Grant Learning Collaborative

Five recipients of the 2024 Field Demonstration Grants will discuss the successes and challenges of implementing their projects.

Presenters: Jodi Breidel, Madeline Noonan, Lydia McCoy, Colleen Letourneau, Lindsay Famariss, & Sarah Fontaine

TRACK: Professional Development

Activity Relay & Replication

Looking for new and exciting activities and events for your senior center or older adult facility? Want to brainstorm with other programming professionals in a fun and interactive way? Join us for a relay of ideas in this team challenge environment! Walk away with a list of energizing ideas of weekly, monthly and annual events you can replicate in your community. Post-conference, the resource conversation continues through a brief survey collecting practical, programmatic information so none of us are reinventing the wheel. Contacts of fellow workshop attendees, pictures of the idea lists generated, and the results of the survey will be emailed to you, post-conference. Have you attended this workshop in the past? Happy to have you back! The ideas and programs discussed change with each new group. Plus, the new focus on post-conference connection will make the most of our networking and keep workshop take-aways fresh on our minds.

Presenters: Bethany Loveless, Alicia Smith, & Amy Cowen

TRACK: Community Connections

Showcase of AARP Speakers Bureau Presentations

AARP Massachusetts has a robust volunteer-led Speakers Bureau that offers free in-person and virtual presentations across the state. This workshop will highlight the newest presentation titled "Adapting and Transitioning as we Age" which touches upon many of the most frequently requested presentations such as Prepare to Care, Downsizing & Decluttering, Age-Friendly, and 6 Pillars of Brain Health. Three Speakers Bureau volunteers will also provide information on all of the 13 presentations that are available, details on how to request presentations, and frequently asked questions about this popular program.

Presenters: Theresa Chaklos, Dennis Hohengasser & Sam Docknevilch

TRACK: Healthy Aging

Through the Closet Door: Welcoming LGBTQ+ older adults

COAs and Senior Centers have launched a variety of LGBTQIA+ welcoming programs across Massachusetts over the past decade. Lisa Krinsky, LICSW, Director of the LGBTQIA+ Aging Project at Fenway Health will moderate this roundtable discussion with COA/Senior Centers from across Massachusetts who will share their unique approaches, successes, challenges to creating welcoming spaces for LGBTQ+ older adults.

CEU eligible

Presenters: Lisa Krinsky, Josie Dutil, Hayley Bolton, Deborah Oliviere-Llanes & Emily Williams

TRACK: Community Connections

Don't Do It Alone: Designing Dining Program

This extended session allows participants to ask questions, brainstorm, and share ideas when creating or improving dining programs.

Presenters: Tara Hammes, Jodi Zepke & Bob Blancato

TRACK: Healthy Aging

You've Got the Power: A Guide to Shaping Public Policy

This presentation delves into the world of public policy and empowers you to make a difference. It breaks down the policy-making process, highlighting key players such as

legislators, advocacy groups, and citizens like yourself.

We'll explore effective strategies for influencing policy, from crafting compelling messages to building coalitions with like-minded individuals. Learn how to research proposed legislation, contact your representatives, and participate in public hearings.

The presentation emphasizes the importance of data and storytelling in advocating for change. It equips you with tools to communicate your policy goals effectively, both in writing and verbally.

Presenters: Paul Lanzikos & Richard Moore

TRACK: Healthy Aging

Unlocking In-Home Dementia Care: A New Model for Seniors

Massachusetts is facing a growing crisis: caring for our aging population with dementia. Families are struggling to provide the complex care needed, often facing burnout and financial hardship. The current system leaves many seniors without the support they need to live fulfilling lives in their homes.

The "Guiding an Improved Dementia Experience" (GUIDE) Model offers a transformative solution. This new program from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) provides tailored care plans, caregiver training, respite services, and financial incentives for high-quality care. The GUIDE Model empowers seniors to stay in their homes, reduces caregiver stress, and aims to manage costs effectively.

Presenters: Ben Kline & Dr. Nancy Berley

TRACK: Healthy Aging

Basics of Estate Planning for the Older Adult

This program is to educate COA workers/volunteers on what the basic documents of estate planning consist of (health care proxy, power of attorney, will, trust), why they are important, and some signs/trigger words to look out for from constituents who may be in need estate planning.

Presenter: Elizabeth Caruso

TRACK: Social Support & Inclusion

Creating Supportive Communities for Solo Agers: Best Practices and Innovations

One of the greatest challenges facing solo agers is the lack of and tools required to build and maintain a reliable support network. After an overview of the unique needs and concerns of solo agers, this presentation will focus on innovative best practices for creating and sustaining supportive communities for solo agers. We will examine successful case studies of community programs, peer support groups, and virtual networks that provide essential social connections and resources. Attendees will gain insights into the development and implementation of these programs, including strategies for collaboration, outreach, engagement, and sustainability. Additionally, during her presentation, Ailene will suggest ways for professionals to partner with independent patient/ health care advocates and other key allied professionals to help solo agers in their community plan for a dynamic and secure future.

CEU eligible

Presenter: Ailene Gerhardt

TRACK: Healthy Aging

SESSION III | 3:00pm – 4:15pm

Current Trends in Elder Law 2024

This seminar will present this year's trends in elder law and invite healthy discussion from participants. Year after year, seniors are worried about the impact the dreaded estate tax may have on their families. With recent changes made at the state level, and more changes set to take effect at the federal level soon, these concerns have drastically multiplied this election year. Similarly, after the enactment of the SECURE Act and the SECURE Act 2.0, seniors approaching their golden years are faced with new laws dictating distributions of their retirement assets. To further complicate matters, the IRS has issued several Notices on the matter which have only served to further convolute retirement planning. This past year we've also witnessed a proliferation of clients seeking to terminate their irrevocable trusts. Once hailed as the asset protection tool everyone needs, seniors have learned

these trusts are anything but. Finally, we will discuss the transition from MOLST, the standard of the last decade, to the new POLST.

CEU eligible

Presenters: Andrea Witt & Christine Hurley

TRACK: Professional Development

No Wrong Way: Scalable Age and Dementia Friendly Initiatives

There are 120 MA communities that have committed to working towards being dementia friendly, and 117 communities that are members of AARP's Age-Friendly network (and several of these are working to meet both Age- and Dementia-Friendly goals!). Most of these efforts have begun with ambitious staff members at COAs, but each one brings a diverse array of resources, staffing, partnerships, and creativity to the table. This presentation is meant to highlight some distinct examples of the work being done in MA, introduce the general process for involvement and recognition, and, most importantly, will emphasize that any community can be involved in these movements, setting their own pace and scale.

Presenters: Hayley Wood, Antron Watson, James Fuccione, Madeline Noonan & panelists

TRACK: Livability, Mobility, & Accessibility

Helping Seniors Stay Mobile and Connected with Smartphones

There are a growing number of alternatives for older people to stay connected when they need to cut back on driving trips. However, many of these programs require familiarity with using apps and smartphones. While 16.8% of the U.S. population is 65 or older (ACS, 2022) they come from a generation that was not raised with smartphones. Many lack experience and are less tech savvy with their phones. We risk leaving behind older people and others unfamiliar with smartphones as transportation and telecommunications continue to merge.

In 2021 The Brookline Council on Aging received a grant from the Massachusetts

Department of Transportation to help seniors overcome the digital divide and use their phones to access more transportation services. A series of videos, and training materials, targeting both students and instructors, were developed. In 2024 the Massachusetts Council on Aging augmented this program. We have developed a useful set of tools to help seniors bridge the digital divide and use technology to stay mobile.

Presenters: Jane Gould & Maria Foster

TRACK: Livability, Mobility, & Accessibility

A New Tool to Improve Wellbeing and Address Disparities

BetterAge is a new digital service designed to help individuals learn more and act more to improve their own health and wellbeing. BetterAge partners with senior centers and area agencies on aging to provide personalized guidance and assistance to each individual while simultaneously generating new data and insights to improve community health outcomes and help organization's more effectively advocate for funding. The service is growing rapidly across the United States. Learn about the early experiences of Massachusetts early adopters and about powerful new data and actionable insights that can help your organization to thrive.

Presenters: Jim Firman, Marge Yetman & Melissa Donegan

TRACK: Healthy Aging

Don't Do It Alone: Designing Dining Program

This extended session allows participants to ask questions, brainstorm, and share ideas when creating or improving dining programs.

Presenters: Tara Hammes, Jodi Zepke & Bob Blancato

TRACK: Healthy Aging

Smart Branding Is Much More Than Logos and Tag Lines

Senior Center and COA staff do amazing work! Too often, community members (Town officials, residents/taxpayers, older adults, etc.) are not aware of the incredible services and programs offered, the daily success stories, and how the senior center saves the town money! Smart marketing and branding can change that! Smart Branding is much more than a logo or tagline. Properly implemented, branding provides senior centers with ways to be recognized by the varied constituents for their amazing work.

Drawing on over 15 years of working with many senior centers and other aging services

organizations as well as prior work with mission-driven organizations, the presenter will provide practical tools, tips, and examples to strengthen senior centers' branding. Attendees will have the opportunity to learn from the presenter as well as others in the session.

Presenter: **Barrie Atkin**

TRACK: Professional Development

Mapping Massachusetts' Journey to End Loneliness

This presentation will showcase exciting new findings from collaborative efforts between Boston College School of Social Work and the Massachusetts Coalition to Build Community and End Loneliness. We will begin by summarizing academic literature highlighted in the 2023 U.S. Surgeon General's advisory on loneliness and social isolation, followed by sharing background statistics currently available about rates of loneliness and social isolation in Massachusetts, and the various challenges and opportunities related to addressing these concerns.

Next, we will present findings from Stage 1 of our statewide needs assessment, a mixed methods study that gathered data on what community organizations and groups are doing (or not doing) to address the public health crisis of loneliness and social isolation. We worked with the Massachusetts Councils on Aging in Stage 1, where representatives from 64 COAs shared valuable insights into loneliness interventions and the status of their current efforts. We will conclude with implications and next steps, engaging the audience in a brainstorming session to help determine the next stage of our research.

CEU eligible

Presenters: **Christina Matz & Innessa Manning**

TRACK: Social Support & Inclusion

A New Approach to Clinical Mental Health for Older Adults

May of 2024 saw the successful conclusion of the first academic year of a new behavioral health services internship program, created by the also newly formed South Shore Elder Mental Health Consortium (SSEMHC), which worked collaboratively between an initial six Councils on Aging in coordination with funding from our local Area Agency on Aging (AAA) to increase public awareness of mental health disorders and remove barriers to diagnosis

and treatment. This included counseling, educational programming, supportive services and referrals if additional clinical support was needed beyond the home and community setting of Senior Centers. The SSEMHC vision is that older adults in participating communities will have access to mental health counseling and support in a nurturing and supportive environment that is cost effective and free from stigma that mental health issues may present. This panel-based presentation will discuss the process, the results so far, and how this innovative program can be replicated.

We intend to do a combination of a brief presentation and use a moderated Panel format of some combination of SSEMHC participating COA Directors, our Field Supervisor, and Interns (based on their availability) to impart:’

Presenters: Michelle Bratti, Emily Williams, & David Klein

TRACK: Healthy Aging

Caregiving Legal Basics

Empowering Seniors Through Essential Documents

Equip yourself to effectively guide clients through the complexities of caregiving legalities. This session explores essential documents and tasks, empowering you to support informed decision-making for seniors and their families.

Presenter: Erin Nunes

TRACK: Community Connections

Thursday, October 24

SESSION I | 9:00am – 10:15am

Strengthening COAs as Welcoming Places for All: Part 1

Recognizing the unique contexts in which COAs operate, EOEPA partnered with UMass Boston Gerontology to document and assess the landscape of policies and practices, capacity, and activities to cultivate equitable, inclusive, and accessible environments at COAs. Between 2023 and 2024, two surveys were distributed to the entire network to capture current capacity and practice. Several interviews with members of the COA/senior center network in Massachusetts were conducted to gain insights and build context around successes and challenges to creating and sustaining inclusive environments. Results from these efforts were synthesized into a final report and organized around 8 domains of capacity. This project yielded a wealth of valuable information so much so that presenting it requires two parts! Part 1 of this presentation will share results and foster discussion around four domains: philosophical approach to equity and inclusion; municipal context; organizational structure and personnel; facilities.

Presenters: Ceara Somerville, Caitlin Coyle, Elise Tierney & Adam Frank

TRACK: Social Support & Inclusion

Mindfulness for Holistic Health and Well-Being

What is mindfulness, really? How can mindfulness help you to beat burnout? What is the role of mindfulness in aging well? This session addresses these questions and more.

Engage in didactic learning, mindfulness meditation, reflective activities, and group discussion. Gain an understandable definition of mindfulness and demonstrate its practical application for modern life. Clarify misconceptions and debunk myths about mindfulness to remove any potential barriers to getting started.

Be nourished by a simple meditation as taught in the world-renowned Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program. Explore evidenced-based benefits of developing a daily mindfulness meditation practice. Leave with a personal action plan to feel empowered to live the healthiest lifestyle possible.

Identify ways to implement mindfulness training for your team to stay focused and

energized. Evaluate mindfulness programs to promote healthy aging for community members. Access free mindfulness resources.

Presenter: Cheryl Jones

TRACK: Healthy Aging

Senior Speed Dating

Senior speed dating isn't for the faint of heart; it's for the young of heart. Join us as we describe the tips, tricks, and pitfalls to avoid when offering Senior Speed Dating in your own community. This session includes all handouts and publicity materials needed to host a senior speed dating event. It also provides a mini trial speed dating event so session participants can experience how the program is run.

Presenters: Abigail Butt & Carlee Castetter

TRACK: Social Support & Inclusion

Leadership in Action

A leadership session designed to give participants real life application of core leadership skills. A highly interactive session which addresses the three components of being a successful leader: Leading Yourself, Leading Others, and Leading the Organization. Each component has its own set of competencies as well as core skill sets.

Presenter: Jacquie Collins

TRACK: Professional Development

Supporting Dementia Caregivers

This workshop will provide the participant with an understanding of the crucial role of family caregivers in dementia care in both the home and residential care settings. The psychosocial impact of caregiving on the individual and the societal impact of caregiving will be discussed with special attention to signs of caregiver stress. A range of effective interventions including education, skill-building, care management, support, self-care, and community resources will be presented. The focus will be on identifying the best interventions to improve outcomes for the caregiver and the person living with dementia by using case examples.

CEU eligible

Presenters: Nicole McGurin & Stacie Amedio-Alpert

TRACK: Community Connections

Blue Cross Blue Shield Advocate Training Session: Empowering You to Assist Medicare Beneficiaries

Are you passionate about helping others navigate the complexities of Medicare? This training session is designed specifically for advocates who are dedicated to providing accurate information and guidance to Medicare beneficiaries. You'll gain the knowledge and tools needed to effectively support individuals in making informed decisions about their healthcare coverage.

What We'll Cover:

Understanding Medicare Basics: Gain a solid foundation in the structure of Medicare, including Parts A, B, C, and D.

Eligibility and Enrollment: Learn the critical details about who qualifies for Medicare, the enrollment process, and how to avoid common pitfalls.

Medicare Advantage vs. Original Medicare: Explore the differences between these two options, including coverage, costs, and when each might be appropriate.

Medicare Supplements (Medigap): Understand the role of Medigap policies, what they cover, and how they can benefit beneficiaries.

Prescription Drug Coverage (Part D): Delve into the specifics of Medicare Part D, including formulary requirements, costs, and how to assist beneficiaries in choosing the right plan.

Resources for Ongoing Support: Discover the tools and resources available to advocates, including where to find up-to-date information and how to connect with other professionals in the field.

Whether you're new to this role or looking to deepen your understanding, this session will equip you with the expertise to be a trusted resource for those you serve

Presenter: Susan Flanagan

TRACK: Healthy Aging

Transparency in Action: Enhancing Hiring and Performance Reviews

Discover how transparency in hiring and performance reviews enhances equity and organizational excellence in Councils on Aging. Learn practical strategies for crafting inclusive job descriptions, implementing fair hiring practices, and conducting effective performance reviews that foster growth and collaboration.

Presenter: Alyssa Lee

TRACK: Professional Development

Digital Discovery In Franklin County

Explore how the Bernardston Council on Aging revolutionized digital literacy for seniors in rural areas through the EOEA Enhancing Digital Literacy for Older Adults Grant. Join Jennifer Reynolds in uncovering the transformative impact of this program, connecting seniors with family, telehealth, and virtual programs, fostering a vibrant community.

Presenter: Jennifer Reynolds

TRACK: Healthy Aging

Calling All New Directors

Did you start as a COA Director within the past two years? Do you still have lots of questions? Please join this session to learn more about the New Director Resource Guide and new additions to the MCOA website to answer some of those questions.

We'd also welcome your input as to the trainings that would be most beneficial to you! Let's use this time together to brainstorm your challenges and plan for ways that MCOA can best respond to your needs. Gather your questions and ideas about trainings so that we can share and learn from each other.

Presenters: Kelly Burke & Andrea Cordis

TRACK: Professional Development

Session II | 10:45am – 12:00pm

Strengthening COAs as Welcoming Places for All: Part 2

Recognizing the unique contexts in which COAs operate, EOEA partnered with UMass Boston Gerontology to document and assess the landscape of policies and practices, capacity, and activities to cultivate equitable, inclusive, and accessible environments at COAs. Between 2023 and 2024, two surveys were distributed to the entire network to capture current capacity and practice. Several interviews with members of the COA/senior center network in Massachusetts were conducted to gain insights and build context around successes and challenges to creating and sustaining inclusive environments. Results from these efforts were synthesized into a final report and organized around 8 domains of capacity. This project yielded a wealth of valuable information so much so that presenting it requires two parts! Part 1 of this presentation will share results and foster discussion around four domains: philosophical approach to equity and inclusion; municipal context; organizational structure and personnel; facilities.

Presenters: Ceara Somerville, Caitlin Coyle, Elise Tierney & Adam Frank

TRACK: Social Support & Inclusion

The Art of Self-Leadership

The Art of Self-Leadership: 5 Strategies for Personal and Professional Growth

Do you ever feel like you're on autopilot, going through the motions but not reaching your full potential? This dynamic workshop, "The Art of Self-Leadership," offers a powerful roadmap for personal and professional growth.

Presenter: Dr. Sheri-ann Mclean-Williams

TRACK: Professional Development

Happiness...At Any Age

In your leadership role of your COAs, perhaps you've never thought of yourself as being in the "happiness" business. This Seminar presents the latest research about what makes people happy. Attendees will have the opportunity to assess how well your COA is doing in creating happiness among your population. We will share insights and learn from each other. Everyone will be able to take a Happiness Survey to gauge their own levels of happiness.

Presenter: David Guydan

TRACK: Healthy Aging

Empowering Dementia Caregivers

Dementia caregivers are all around us. Often dementia caregivers do not recognize themselves as caregivers or understand how vital their own empowerment and self-care are. Aging service professionals work with family caregivers every day, in every setting. It is the responsibility of aging service professionals to educate, coach and empower caregivers to improve their caregiving experience, and in turn the quality of life of the person they care for. For many professionals, caregiver support and dementia care are not their area of specialty, or even an area they know much about. This session will empower attendees to recognize and support Dementia Caregivers with three simple, actionable practices easily applicable in everyday interactions with caregivers of people with dementia.

CEU eligible

Presenters: Brooke Mignogna & Saran Craig

TRACK: Healthy Aging

Intergenerational Panel Presentation

This session will describe three vibrant, intergenerational programs that are taking place at Senior Centers across Massachusetts. Each program focuses on bringing generations together, pairing older adults with high school or college age students. Opening Minds through Art (OMA) is an intergenerational art-making program, provided through the Swampscott Council on Aging, which pairs trained students (volunteers) from Swampscott High School, with adults living with memory loss (artists). In the Senior to Senior program, the Duxbury Senior Center brings older adults together with English classes at Duxbury High School to explore literature and life lessons. Sages and Seekers is a national program that brings older adults (Sages) and young adults (Seekers) together to share their knowledge and experiences. Waltham Connections for Healthy Aging, together with the Waltham COA and Bentley University partnered together over eight weeks to implement this one-on-one program.

CEU eligible

Presenters: Sabrina Clopton, Christine Coakley, & Kathy Kuhn

TRACK: Community Connections

Mobility Management in Massachusetts

Hear about MassDOT's statewide mobility management pilot and share your input. Figuring out how to get from Point A to Point B can be a confusing and daunting task. Mobility management means helping older adults and others learn about and learn to use the transportation options available to them, and/or helping organizations come together to collaborate to fill gaps in the transportation system. In 2023, MassDOT did a study to explore whether a system of Regional Mobility Managers – such as some other states have – would benefit Massachusetts. Researchers conducted 60 interviews with aging and disability service organizations, transit providers, and regional planners, along with 3 focus groups, and the response from practitioners was positive. In 2024, MassDOT received a federal grant to hire a Statewide Mobility Manager to pursue the next steps recommended in the study. MassDOT will present on this new statewide mobility management initiative. Bring your questions, your suggestions, and your stories of how you have helped older adults in your community with transportation questions and challenges.

Presenter: Rachel Fitchenbaum

TRACK: Livability, Mobility, & Accessibility

Creating a New Framework to Fill Gaps in Senior Services

Martha's Vineyard faces challenges similar to other rural communities throughout Massachusetts where gaps in services exist while the opportunities to fill them are limited. Through a unique partnership between the non-profit, Healthy Aging Martha's Vineyard (HAMV), and the island's four Councils on Aging, service gaps were identified, solutions proposed and mitigating programs put in place.

Presenters: Victoria Haeselbarth, Cindy Trish, & Susan Merrill

TRACK: Community Connections

Issues of aging and technology use among rural older adults

Although many older adults do use technology, other people, for various reasons, do not use or have access to computers, the internet, and other technology. This reality has specific causes and unique characteristics affecting rural older adults. This presentation

shares the report on a survey of over 3,500 rural older adults about their experiences with technology. Results examined over 1,200 older adults reported current uses of technology, sources of help, issues encountered, internet safety, interests in learning and respondent demographics. Results include frequency of technology use, devices owned, current uses and purposes. Specific interests in ways of learning, desired ways of receiving help, and topics of interest. Special attention to older adults that are low frequency and non-users of technology or are not using telehealth or accessing medical portals. Internet related scams and the learning interests for self-reported skill levels also are explored. Finally, the presenter discusses how results are being used.

Presenters: **Peg Whalen & Polly Ryan**

TRACK: Professional Development

Unlock the Power of AI: Work Smarter, Not Harder!

Discover AI's power! Streamline tasks, boost efficiency, focus on serving older adults.

Presenter: **Paula Hersey**

TRACK: Professional Development

Session III | 3:00pm – 4:15pm

Developing a Communication Strategy for the Modern Senior Center

How do you communicate your mission? This presentation will share ideas on how, what, and when to communicate your services to a community that wants to be served! We will talk not only about how to create vibrant print newsletters that increase engagement, but how to use technology to share that same news with a population that is growing quickly in their understanding of things like social media, e-mail, and the Internet. Join us for a lively discussion on how you can bring more people to your center and share the news of what you have to offer to the many who need to hear!

Presenter: **Tim Potrikus & Tracy Welliver**

TRACK: Social Support & Inclusion

What Matters Most? Tough & Tender Conversations . . .

What Matters Most? Through stories and examples of living with the end in mind we will explore how we can learn to help others by having these important tough and tender conversations.

Presenter: Cheryl Botieri

TRACK: Healthy Aging

Kids and Aging - Using Legos to Demonstrate Diversity

This program is aimed at using LEGO bricks as an educational tool to explain and celebrate diversity within communities served by the Massachusetts Council on Aging. This workshop will show attendees how to use the universal appeal of LEGO bricks to create an interactive program that discusses agism, and our differences.

Presenter: Kendra Faldetta

TRACK: Community Connections

Women on the Move: Implementing a Purposeful Women's Group

Come and learn how to start a women's circle at your senior center with a purposeful agenda. We will share our creative and fun ideas on topics of interest to women as they age and continue on this journey called life!

Presenters: Amy Cowen & Michelle Lachapelle

TRACK: Healthy Aging

From Prevention to Management: Behavior Modification Strategies

From Prevention to Management: Behavior Modification Strategies for Healthy Aging and Dementia" will explore evidence-based approaches to maintaining brain health from early cognitive concerns to advanced dementia. The first speaker will discuss the My Healthy Brain program, focusing on early-stage strategies for dementia prevention through behavior modification. The second speaker will delve into the ABC model of behavior analysis, providing insights into techniques for managing challenging behaviors in later stages of cognitive decline. Attendees will gain practical tools for promoting health behaviors, cognitive wellness, and supporting dementia care across the illness continuum.

Presenters: Ryan Mace, Evan Plys, & Makenna Law

TRACK: Healthy Aging

Your Data at Work: EOEA's COA Statistical Report

EOEA's Director of Data Insights and Program Evaluation will present findings from the FY23 COA Statistical Report, review changes and trends documented since FY22 and answer questions and address concerns of COA staff.

Presenters: Joshua Fergeson & Elizabeth Gallagher

TRACK: Professional Development

Aging Like Fine Wi-Fi: Strategies for Sustainable Digital Equity

Join the Executive Office of Elder Affairs, Mass Healthy Aging Collaborative, and Mass Broadband Institute for an engaging session tailored for digital inclusion practitioners. Come learn about resources to kickstart or fortify your digital equity initiatives, ranging from digital literacy and navigation to device distribution and internet access. Hear about innovative partnerships that Councils on Aging can cultivate within community as well as potential funding streams to empower and sustain your work. Don't miss out on this opportunity to network with fellow practitioners, further your sustainability planning, and amplify your impact in the realm of digital inclusion for older adults. This session will include a combination of panel discussion with the opportunity for smaller breakouts and networking.

Presenters: Kathryn Downes, Molly Evans, & James Fuccione

TRACK: Livability, Mobility, & Accessibility

Mental Health 911 A Co-Response Model

This break out session will explore identifying mental health crises, when to call 911, what to expect, and how the new Co Response Model in Public Safety is affecting change within our communities in regard to the aging population.

CEU eligible

Presenters: Christina LaRose & Stephanie Cantave

TRACK: Healthy Aging

Cannabis Medicine for the Aging - Today and under Schedule 3

With the legalization and regulation of cannabis in over 37 States despite federal prohibition, both patients and healthcare professionals have experienced a tremendous learning curve, particularly over the last decade. What was once only grown and consumed behind closed doors has now become a multi-billion dollar industry. More importantly, many individuals that previously were opposed to the cannabis plant have come to appreciate its value for a number of therapeutic benefits. For example, sleep is a critical need that becomes increasingly elusive as we age, and few pharmaceutical solutions compare to the efficacy and/or nontoxicity of cannabis. As another example, both research and anecdotal evidences suggest a reduction in opioid use and alcohol consumption is common with frequent cannabis users. With cannabis being rescheduled to class 3, our communities have a duty to understand the plant, its characteristics, risks and benefits. Learn how patients obtain & use cannabis today, and will under future regulations.

Presenters: **Tim McNamara & Ashley Correll**

TRACK: Professional Development

Friday, October 25

Session I | 9:00am – 10:15am

MySeniorCenter Training

Learn how to get the most out of MySeniorCenter. In this 75-minute training session, we'll review how to create and send broadcasts, explore the new events system, learn how to create and schedule appointments, and master online registration with MyActiveCenter. Along the way, we'll cover tips and tricks to maximize your efficiency. Even if you've been using MySeniorCenter for 20 years, we guarantee you'll learn something new.

Presenters: **Chris Hamilton & Eric Andersen**

TRACK: Professional Development

Estate Planning for LGBTQIA+ Seniors

This presentation explores the unique estate planning needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and intersex (LGBTQIA+) elders. We will discuss the legal and social

landscape impacting this population and provide practical guidance for COAs to better serve and empower LGBTQIA+ individuals as they plan for their future.

Presenter: Rebecca Spinner

TRACK: Social Support & Inclusion

Mastering Excellence: The New MCOA Certification Program

Discover the enhanced MCOA Certification Program, transitioning to a dynamic digital platform from traditional paper-based processes. Originally established in 2000, this program sets a statewide standard for professionalism among COA Directors, Assistant Directors, and Program Managers. Administered by the Massachusetts Association of Councils on Aging (MCOA), certification aims to elevate credibility, visibility, and professional development within the field. Join us as we unveil the innovative updates designed to foster continuous growth and excellence in senior services.

Presenter: Andrea Cordis

TRACK: Professional Development

Funding Transportation: Grant Opportunities & Other Strategies

Hear about transportation grants offered by MassDOT Rail & Transit and by MCOA. Bring your questions, suggestions, and your own strategies to share.

Presenters: Rachel Fichtenbaum & Kelly Burke

TRACK: Livability, Mobility, & Accessibility

Mystic Valley Elder Services & Innovative COA Partnerships

Mystic Valley Elder Services (MVES) is the Aging Services Access Point (ASAP) and Area Agency on Aging (AAA) serving eleven cities and towns north of Boston. This presentation will highlight how MVES partners with Councils on Aging to offer innovative programming to benefit older adults and caregivers. The programs are designed to expand technology access, support family caregivers, increase access to information and services, and improve wellness. MVES launched its first iPad Basic course at the Chelsea and Revere COAs. In partnership with Reading, Stoneham, and Wakefield, MVES offers innovative respite services to support family caregivers. Lastly, MVES has worked on increasing its

presence at all the COAs in our region to share information about the programming and services MVES can offer through regular office hours.

Presenter: [Lesley Nolan](#)

TRACK: Community Connections

SESSION II | 10:30am – 11:45am

New stuff in MySeniorCenter

Between an updated touchscreen application, the new events management section, and the new rides system, there have been a lot of changes since we last met. This session will get into the nitty-gritty of those parts of MySeniorCenter, plus we're going to give you a sneak peek at our new Volunteer App coming out in early 2025. It puts the power to communicate with volunteers in your hands and the power to contribute in theirs.

Presenters: [Chris Hamilton & Eric Andersen](#)

TRACK: Professional Development

Technology Use for Older Adults with Low Vision

This course will provide an overview of common vision conditions impacting older adults including macular degeneration and glaucoma. We will discuss the role of vision rehabilitation in assessing people experiencing vision loss from age-related eye diseases. This course will discuss how these conditions impact a person's visual function both for daily living as well as for the use of technology. We will explore the accessibility features of smartphones and apps that can be used to enhance visual function. Finally, the course will discuss barriers that older adults often face when accessing new technology as well as evidence-based strategies to overcome these barriers.

Presenter: [Dr. Alexis Malkin](#)

TRACK: Livability, Mobility, & Accessibility

Menus, Food Cost, & Meeting Older Adults' Nutrient Needs

With rising food costs and limited state-funded commodity foods available, many self-cook COAs have expressed frustration with menu planning on a limited budget. Registered Dietitians and menu-planning experts Katie Defoe-Raymond and Mary DiGioia will help you

learn to design an appealing menu that meets not only your budget, but also the nutrient needs of your community and the state-defined nutrition standards.

Presenters: Katie Defoe-Raymond & Mary DiGioia

TRACK: Healthy Aging

Aging Alone: A Sexual Wellness Perspective

Loneliness and isolation, as described by Surgeon General Vivek Murthy, are in need of the same investments we have made in addressing fitness and other public health crises. But why has this not been the case to date? Addressing the loneliness and social isolation of the older adults aging can be a daunting and complex topic.

Presenter: Jane Fleishman

TRACK: Social Support & Inclusion

Addressing the Behavioral Health Needs of Older Adults through Collaborative Partnerships

As the COA and AAA for the City of Boston, the Age Strong Commission has prioritized understanding the behavioral health needs of Boston's older adults and strengthening the necessary supports to better meet those needs. Their focus over the last two and a half years has been on growing their Behavioral Health Unit, completing an environmental scan and needs assessment across the city, implementing a new Hoarding Response Pilot Program, and partnering with local agencies to fund new initiatives and projects addressing Behavioral Health needs.

Presenters: Becca Mayfield, Libby Arsenault, & Ali Freeman

TRACK: Healthy Aging

**** subject to change 9/27/2024**