



UPDATE ON THE AGING ROADMAP

November 2, 2021

Launched at the direction of the San Diego County Board of Supervisors (Board) on September 24, 2019 (4), the Aging Roadmap is the County of San Diego's (County) plan to ensure that the region has communities and programs that support the needs and celebrate the contributions of the growing population of older adults in the San Diego region. The Aging Roadmap identifies goals and action steps in ten priority areas:

- Health and Community Support
- Housing
- Social Participation
- Transportation
- Dementia-Friendly
- Caregiver Support
- Safety
- Preparedness and Response
- The Silver Economy
- Medical and Social Services

The Aging Roadmap is the product of multiple phases of community input and collaboration. On March 1, 2016 (3), the Board directed the Chief Administrative Officer to apply to AARP® California to join the AARP® Network of Age-Friendly Communities. This initiated a two-year community input process which resulted in identification of the first five priority areas listed above. These five priority areas comprise Age Well San Diego, the County's AARP® age-friendly initiative. The Age Well Action Plan was approved by the Board on May 15, 2018 (6). Teams of community members, experts, and County staff were created to develop and implement goals in each of the five priority areas. In 2019, the Aging Roadmap was conceptualized as a broader framework to encompass all County programs for older adults and individuals with disabilities. Additional community input was garnered, and the remaining five priority areas were identified, completing the Aging Roadmap's ten priority areas.

In 2020, the Aging Roadmap was adopted as the organizational framework for the Health and Human Services Agency, Aging & Independence Services' (AIS) Area Plan 2020-2024, approved by the Board on July 7, 2020 (7), which identifies the priorities and direction for County activities on behalf of older adults. As part of the development of the Area Plan, County staff solicited community input through nine public feedback forums; this feedback was integrated into the Area Plan and now informs AIS programs and services. With the rise of COVID-19, another round of outreach was conducted in 2020, including a questionnaire with senior food service providers, interviews with disability service providers, and calls to over 20,000 older adults and residents with disabilities in the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) program. This outreach informed the development of new programs and the adaptation of current programs to address current and anticipated long-term impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on older adults.



In June 2021, The National Association of Counties granted the County of San Diego a 2021 Achievement Award for the Aging Roadmap in the category of Community and Economic Development. In July 2021, the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging awarded the County an Aging Innovation Award in the category of Community Planning & Livable Communities. These awards honor innovative, effective programs that strengthen services for residents, and recognize the Aging Roadmap as a model for other jurisdictions across the nation.

Equity in Aging

Recognizing the diversity of the county's population, including the strong cultural traditions and the need to address systemic inequities faced by communities of color, principles of equity are incorporated across all ten Aging Roadmap priority areas. The Aging Roadmap aligns and supports the Board's Framework for Our Future, including the recognition that racism is a public health crisis requiring bold actions to transform our policies, practices, and programs. AIS continually reviews its programs and services through an equity lens and takes steps to ensure services are equitable and accessible. For example, the Age Well San Diego teams began development of a Strategic Plan to Advance Equity in Aging. The Plan will include strategies for integrating equity into all aspects of Age Well San Diego, the County's AARP® age-friendly initiative, from team membership to program development and resource dissemination. In summer of 2021, each of the five Age Well San Diego community teams began discussions to obtain community feedback on how to apply principles of equity and inclusion into new and existing Age Well goals. Next steps include providing training opportunities for team members and developing tools to help teams apply an equity lens to programs and resources. The Aging Roadmap offers a guiding framework to help reimagine services and supports and ensure that older adults are acknowledged and equitably included as co-creators of safe and thriving communities.

PROGRESS IN PRIORITY AREAS

Health and Community Support

The Age Well Health and Community Support Team envisions communities that offer accessible health and community services, technology to support aging in place, and village-like support systems.

- *Technology to Support Aging in Place:*
A key goal of the Age Well Health and Community Support Team is to increase access to technology that supports aging in place. In partnership with San Diego Oasis, a nonprofit focusing on continued learning, the Age Well Health and Community Support Team held a Virtual Get Connected Technology Fair in October 2020 aimed at increasing older adults' access to and understanding of technology. With over 2,500 participants, the Technology Fair was a success. The Age Well Health and Community Support Team will partner again with San Diego Oasis to hold a virtual Technology Fair in fall 2021.
- *Tech for Seniors Pilot Program:*
To address social isolation among older adults, the South County Action Network, a community group coordinated by County staff, received a grant from the Community Congregational Development Corporation for a pilot project to provide iPads and technology training to 60 older adults living in low-income senior housing communities in



Chula Vista. The Tech for Seniors Pilot provides participants with an iPad, which they can keep upon completion of the six-month program. The project is a bilingual effort, with older adults having the option to receive instruction and materials in either English or Spanish. The first cohort started in spring 2021 and will complete the program in October 2021. Program outcomes will be analyzed and evaluated for potential program expansion as resources allow.

- *Villages:*

There is increasing support at the State and national level to promote local villages that help meet the needs of community dwelling older adults. A “village” is a social support network aimed at helping older adults age in place by offering a range of practical support services such as rides to medical appointments, assisting with household chores, and coordinating social activities. Building off the momentum of two “Village Symposiums” held by the Health and Community Support Team in 2019, research was conducted in 2020 to better understand San Diego’s six existing villages, including their resources and challenges. Based on feedback from interviews with village leaders and village member survey responses, the Health and Community Support Team hosted a Village Summit in March 2021 to provide village leaders and members with an opportunity to network and share best practices. Over 60 participants attended. Next steps include creating a Village Advisory Council and a repository of village resources.

Housing

The Age Well Housing Team envisions communities that offer a variety of affordable housing options within walking distance to shops and services.

- *Affordable Housing Presentation:*

An age-friendly community is one where people of all ages have access to affordable and safe housing. The Age Well Housing Team engaged housing experts, community members, and local partners in designing a presentation to educate community members about the need for affordable housing and solutions to the housing supply and affordability crisis in San Diego County. The presentation uses value-based messages of equity and fairness and highlights how affordable housing benefits community stability. The presentation, along with other educational materials on affordable housing strategies, was presented at the American Society on Aging Conference in April 2021 and will be offered to community groups throughout the county. This work supports the County’s 2011 General Plan goal to promote the production and acceptance of affordable housing through educational outreach to developers, non-profit housing groups, the public, community groups, other jurisdictions, and County staff.

- *Home Safe Grant:*

The Home Safe grant provides \$500,000 in State funding over two years to support AIS’ Adult Protective Services (APS) efforts in identifying clients at risk of homelessness and connecting them with housing navigation services. Additionally, the Home Safe grant provides funding for rapid re-housing of older adults involved in APS. The program began



July 1, 2019 and as of November 30, 2020, Home Safe served 117 clients from the APS program who were at risk of homelessness.

Social Participation

The Age Well Social Participation Team envisions a livable community for all ages that values respect and social inclusion. Focus areas include intergenerational programs; leadership and civic engagement opportunities; and programs for people who are isolated, have dementia, or do not speak English. State and County Public Health Officer Orders that required social distancing and sheltering-in-place during the COVID-19 pandemic made social isolation a priority issue and the Age Well Social Participation Team responded with new resources and programs.

- *Reaching Isolated Seniors:*

The Age Well Social Participation Team developed a “Get Connected” toolkit with resources to engage and support isolated older adults. The toolkit, available in Spanish and English, provides older adults with information about recreational, educational, and volunteer opportunities that are safe and accessible during the COVID-19 pandemic. The toolkit was released in November 2020 and has been widely disseminated on County websites and to community partners, such as Meals on Wheels San Diego County.

- *Intergenerational Programs:*

To address social isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic, a virtual Intergenerational Book Discussion Group was launched in partnership with the San Diego County Library, Poway Branch. Community older adults were invited to participate, along with students from San Diego State University. The Book Group had nine participants and three virtual meetings were held in fall of 2020 to discuss racial justice issues raised in the book, *They Called Us Enemy*, by George Takei. Two other intergenerational pilot programs, launched in spring 2020, also continued. The Intergenerational Virtual Chat Groups connect elders with college and high school students through weekly chats over five weeks. Four cohorts with a total 65 participants engaged in the virtual chat program, with several participants opting to join more than one cohort. Another pilot program, The Letter Campaign Project, engages college and high school students to write letters to older adults living in low-income and memory care communities.

Transportation

The Age Well Transportation Team envisions communities where older adults can get around even if they can no longer drive.

- *Increasing Transportation Access for Arabic Speakers in El Cajon:*

El Cajon is home to a large Iraqi refugee population. Many older adults in this community suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and social isolation, and fear leaving their communities due to cultural and language barriers. Despite living less than 20 miles from the coastline, some Iraqi older adults have never ventured outside El Cajon to see the beach or the City of San Diego. The Age Well Transportation Team collaborated with Circulate San Diego; San Ysidro Health, Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly; Union of Pan Asian Communities, Elder Multicultural Access and Support Services; Metropolitan Transit Services (MTS); and the City of El Cajon to develop an AARP® Community Challenge



Grant proposal to familiarize Iraqi older adults with the local public transit system and increase confidence to use the system independently. The grant funded the creation of an online resource library, launched in November 2020. The transit resources, all translated into Arabic, include a public transit “How-To” video, five flyers on topics such as trip planning and Compass Cards, and a transit map that highlights El Cajon amenities and services. The Age Well Transportation Team will continue to identify transportation-challenged communities and work to increase access.

- *Ride Well to Age Well Guide, COVID-19 Edition:*
In response to the need for up-to-date information about transportation services during the pandemic, the Age Well Transportation Team partnered with Facilitating Access to Coordinated Transportation (FACT), MTS, North County Transit District, and the Council on Access and Mobility to create a COVID-19 transportation guide for older adults. The Guide catalogues transportation options by region with information on costs, area of service, contact information, and changes in service due to COVID-19. The Guide also explains how to use popular ride share services and mobile phone applications like Uber and Lyft. The Guide was widely disseminated on County websites, FACT’s website, and by other community partners. The Age Well Transportation Team will continue to make and distribute regular updates to the Guide.
- *Video on Safe Use of Public Transportation:*
Many older adults and individuals with disabilities rely on public transit as their only source of transit but are fearful of using transit due to COVID-19-related concerns. To educate older adults on best practices for using public transit, the Age Well Transportation Team developed a video based on Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations for safe use of public transit. The Age Well Transportation Team partnered with the San Diego Center for the Blind to make the video inclusive of individuals with vision loss, who face additional challenges using public transit. The video was released in February 2021 and shared on County websites, telebriefings, and through community partners.

Dementia-Friendly

While there is currently no cure for Alzheimer’s Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD), communities can improve the quality of life for people living with dementia and their caregivers. The Age Well Dementia-Friendly Team envisions a community that is informed, safe, and inclusive of individuals living with dementia. To advance its dementia-friendly vision, the Age Well Dementia-Friendly Team includes representatives from dementia service organizations in the San Diego region such as Jewish Family Service, Alzheimer’s San Diego, and Alzheimer’s Association San Diego Imperial Chapter.

- *San Diego Healthy Brain Initiative:*
In January 2020, the Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) applied for and received a \$750,000 grant from the California Department of Public Health to work on local implementation of the national Healthy Brain Initiative goals. The grant objectives build upon The Alzheimer’s Project and support Aging Roadmap goals. Healthy Brain Initiative goals are to:



1. Develop an updated prevalence estimate for ADRD in the San Diego region;
2. Integrate ADRD into local public health planning;
3. Develop tools for clinicians to educate patients about brain health and cognitive impairment;
4. Raise awareness of the risk of abuse for individuals with dementia;
5. Educate caregivers on dementia resources;
6. Work with health systems to implement sustainable policies and procedures for best practices in clinical care.

The two-year grant term began July 2020. Progress on deliverables is led by Alzheimer's Project teams and initial accomplishments are outlined below.

- *Alzheimer's Project:*

On May 6, 2014 (5), the Board established the Alzheimer's Project, an initiative designed to advance research for a cure, support caregivers, improve clinical care, and increase public awareness about Alzheimer's throughout the San Diego region. Since the previous update to the Board on September 15, 2020 (8), some of the major accomplishments include:

- *Collaboration4Cure:*

Collaboration4Cure, the Alzheimer's Project committee focused on research, has selected, and supported 14 research projects aimed at identifying a potential cure since inception in 2015. The results of the most promising of these local research projects have been successfully leveraged to secure four larger research grant awards, totaling \$6.6 million, from the National Institutes of Health. Collaboration4Cure is currently assisting three active projects that are developing translational research grant proposals to be submitted to the National Institute of Health. Next steps include recruiting new team members and soliciting new projects and funding sources.

- *Clinical Roundtable:*

Physicians representing the county's major health systems collaborated to develop the *Physician Guidelines for Screening, Evaluation, and Management of ADRD* in 2016 to assist primary care physicians in supporting those impacted by dementia. In the fall of 2020, the Clinical Roundtable developed subcommittees to address caregiver support, update the Physicians' Guidelines, and expand their mission to include promoting brain health throughout the lifespan. The group developed new tools for local clinicians including:

- a patient handout on healthy brain activities such as exercise, nutrition, and social engagement, to be given to patients with risk factors for cognitive impairment, such as hypertension;
- patient information on local Alzheimer's and caregiver resources, to be given to patients upon check-out;
- exam room poster to encourage patients to talk with their doctor about cognitive changes and get screened.



Developed with input from community members, the tools will be translated into threshold languages.

- *Care Roundtable:*

- Dementia-Friendly Activities Toolkit:*

- Families and caregivers play a critical role in helping people with dementia stay physically and mentally active. However, finding appropriate activities can be a challenge. To address this need, the Age Well Dementia-Friendly Team created a toolkit to provide caregivers with accessible ideas for engaging their person living with dementia. The guide introduces dementia-friendly practices to help caregivers with communication strategies and offers activity adaptations for different levels of dementia progression. Activities meet a variety of interests including art, music, physical activity, cooking, gardening, and more. The Toolkit has been translated into Spanish, and both the English and Spanish version are available online for download by service providers and the community at large.

- Dementia Communication Tip Card:*

- The Age Well Dementia-Friendly Team developed a dementia communication tip card, which was designed to help caregivers facilitate positive and compassionate interactions between the person with dementia and members of the community. This card, which is designed to fit in your wallet or pocket, has been translated into all the threshold languages including Arabic, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. This resource is available online for download by service providers and the community at large, in all threshold languages.

- *Public Awareness & Education:*

- Resources for the Alzheimer's Project can be found at www.sdalzheimersproject.org. The Alzheimer's Project website was updated with additional resources for caregivers (Dementia Friendly Activities Toolkit and Dementia Communication Tip Card in multiple languages) and the 2021 Alzheimer's Project Report. In April 2021, Outreach and Education staff coordinated a virtual presentation on dementia for community members. The Age Well Dementia-Friendly Team also continued to promote Dementia Friends, a global initiative developed by the Alzheimer's Society with the goal of helping community members understand dementia and how to have a positive impact on the lives of people living with the disease. County staff transitioned the Dementia Friends Session into a virtual workshop. The first virtual Dementia Friends Session was hosted for the Fall Prevention Task Force in spring 2021 and Dementia Friends Sessions are continuing to be promoted and held for groups across the county.

Caregiver Support

The COVID-19 pandemic created new and varied challenges for caregivers. Most adult day care centers closed, and home care companies had challenges with finding home care aides who were available and willing to provide hands-on care. Therefore, many family caregivers assumed additional responsibilities. Other family caregivers were unable to see loved ones in long-term care facilities. Activities within the Age Well Caregiver Support priority work toward providing



caregivers access to the support and resources necessary to provide responsive care to older adults, while also tending to their own well-being.

- *Ongoing Caregiver Support:*

AIS works with trusted community partners to deliver the federally funded Family Caregiver Support Program (FCSP). The FCSP offers services including counseling, skills training, respite care, minor home modification, legal services, and supports for grandparents raising grandchildren. Respite care services have been especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic due to the increased burden on family caregivers. Southern Caregiver Resource Center, the largest FCSP provider which provides approximately 15,000 hours of respite care to 320 families annually, found that demand for these services increased by nearly 80% during the first year of the pandemic. To respond to this increasing demand, on February 9, 2021 (6), the Board approved the use of CARES Act funding from the California Department of Aging to expand respite care hours for family caregivers. From July 2020 to April 2021, over 14,500 hours of respite care were provided to 710 families.

- *Respite Voucher Programs for Caregivers of People Living with Dementia:*

On April 24, 2018 (2), the Board directed the Chief Administrative Officer to explore expanding the County's efforts with respite care for caregivers of people living with ADRD. In 2019, AIS launched a \$1.0 million Respite Care Voucher program to provide relief to family caregivers of persons with ADRD. Through this program, the family pays for 50% of the cost of care and the County covers the remaining cost. To date, more than 3,000 clients have been served.

- *Caregiver Coalition:*

The Caregiver Coalition is facilitated by County staff and aims to make caregiving less stressful through support and education. To respond to new challenges faced by caregivers during COVID-19, the Caregiver Coalition hosted virtual webinars on topics such as scams, mental health, and nutrition. In September 2020, the Caregiver Coalition hosted a two-day conference on self-care during the pandemic; 85 participants attended. In December 2020, the Caregiver Coalition, in partnership with the National Alliance on Mental Illness San Diego, hosted a virtual conference, "Improving Mental Health During COVID-19 and the Holidays." Participants learned about resilience and mental health resources. In April 2021, a two-day conference on "Caregiving for a Person with Alzheimer's Disease or Related Dementia" was held in partnership with Alzheimer's Association San Diego Imperial Chapter, Alzheimer's San Diego, Parkinson's Association of San Diego, and Southern Caregiver Resource Center.

- *Grandparents Raising Grandchildren:*

The Aging Roadmap recognizes and aims to support a wide spectrum of caregivers, including the critical caregiving role filled by grandparents raising grandchildren. Quarterly virtual meetings of the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Workgroup, a task force comprised of County and community partners, continue to be held to discuss the unique challenges facing kinship families during the pandemic and resources to support



these families. In fall 2020, HHSA partnered with the County's Department of Parks and Recreation to host a drive-by event to distribute school supplies and provide other helpful items to support kinship families. Approximately 70 caregivers attended.

Safety

The vision for this priority area is that older adults and persons with disabilities are safe in their own homes and community.

- *Ombudsman:*
Long-Term Care Ombudsman volunteers advocate to improve the safety and quality of life for seniors and individuals with disabilities who reside in nursing homes and residential care facilities in San Diego County. The program is mandated by the federal government under the Older Americans Act and serves the residents living in the 1,300 facilities across San Diego County. A team of 64 certified volunteers and 10 staff identify, investigate, and resolve complaints made by, or on behalf of, the residents. Volunteers engage in tasks such as visiting facilities to monitor and address issues; meeting with residents to offer assistance; investigating issues of poor care, neglect, or abuse; advocating for resolution of complaints; and providing education on resident rights. Despite the restrictions on in-person visits during the COVID-19 pandemic, from July 2020 to July 2021, the Ombudsman program completed 1,464 facility visits and Ombudsman volunteers donated 1,365 hours.
- *Alzheimer's Response Team (ART):*
ART is the result of a public-private partnership between the County, local health systems, local law enforcement, and community-based organizations. When people with AD/DR are experiencing crisis, ART provides assistance through education, care coordination, and securing ongoing support for persons with dementia and their families, with the goal of preventing unnecessary admissions to jail or hospital emergency departments. In an effort to reach more people in San Diego, the ART Program has expanded through partnerships with La Mesa and Escondido Police Departments and the continued support of the County Sheriff's Department, including areas served by the Rancho San Diego station, such as Imperial Beach and Lemon Grove. All three law enforcement agencies and fire department personnel have been trained on ART procedures. Since 2015, the ART program has served 86 families and has proven to be an important and necessary safety net for people living with dementia and their loved ones.

Preparedness and Response

This priority area works to ensure older adults and their caregivers are prepared to be safe during disasters.

- *Personal Disaster Plan for People Who May Need Assistance:*
The County Office of Emergency Services (OES) understands that older adults, people with disabilities, and people with other access and functional needs are disproportionately affected during times of disaster. AIS partnered with OES to develop the Personal Disaster Plan for People Who May Need Assistance. The Personal Disaster Plan was released in November 2020 and is now available in 12 languages and an audio version on the



ReadySanDiego.org website. It addresses best practices to prepare for emergencies including fires, pandemics/influenza, earthquakes, flooding, power outages, and extreme heat advisories. A press event was held in July 2021 to promote the Personal Disaster Plan.

- *Neighborhood Evacuation Team (NET) Program:*
On October 29, 2019 (2), the Board authorized OES to launch the NET program in partnership with Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) to address the need to help older adults, people with disabilities, and people with other access and functional needs to prepare for safe and quick evacuation in emergencies. People who seek assistance will be guided by a CERT volunteer to make their own personalized plan using the Personal Disaster Plan for People Who May Need Assistance. AIS will continue to partner with OES to provide information and resources on the needs of this vulnerable population and assist in outreach and education to bring community members into the NET Program.

Silver Economy

This priority area envisions a skilled and diverse workforce and ample opportunities for older adults to work and volunteer.

- *Volunteer Opportunities for Older Adults:*
In order to help older adults, connect virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic, adaptations were made to existing volunteer engagement programs, such as Senior Volunteers in Action (SVA) and the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP). Some volunteers met virtually with families to provide support, while others made welfare check telephone calls to isolated seniors in partnership with local law enforcement sites. County staff reached out to volunteer sites to offer support and provide suggested adaptations due to COVID-19. To honor our extraordinary senior volunteers, three drive-thru volunteer recognition events were held in September 2020. Over 230 volunteers from SVA and RSVP attended and received a catered lunch and goody bag. Each event was followed by a virtual ceremony to recognize the volunteers' contributions to the community.

Medical and Social Services System

The vision for this priority area is care coordination among medical and social services providing proactive, seamless, prevention-focused, and responsive support.

- *COVID-19 Support and Resources:*
As part of the County's COVID-19 Response – Education and Outreach Branch, AIS staff served as the lead for the Older Adult and Disability Provider Sector. This Sector provides timely public health guidance and resources to older adults and individuals with disabilities, and their family members, caregivers, and service providers regarding COVID-19 prevention, testing, treatment, vaccines, and caregiving. Telebriefings were conducted bi-weekly for the first three months of the pandemic (March-June 2020), and monthly thereafter. Specially crafted emails with resources relevant to older adults are disseminated weekly to over 6,000 community stakeholders. The Older Adult and Disability Service Provider Sector page on coronavirus-sd.com and the AIS website (aging.sandiegocounty.gov) are updated regularly with relevant COVID-19 resources. To facilitate vaccinations for individuals who are disabled



or homebound, AIS staff identified needs and coordinated with community partners to host vaccine clinics. AIS staff received and processed over 2,000 referrals for homebound vaccines from 2-1-1 San Diego and the California Department of Public Health's My Turn program, connecting the referred individuals with vaccination providers.

- *In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS):*
There are approximately 30,000 IHSS recipients, including disabled children and adults of all ages, who receive personal care assistance to help them remain in their homes. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, IHSS staff completed 20,449 welfare check calls in spring 2020, starting with the most at-risk clients. Clients in need were referred to resources for food and medications. On March 2, 2021 (13), the Board approved an education campaign to share via County communications, including an accessible County website, to highlight the IHSS program and clearly outline for the public the eligibility requirements and how to obtain services. Public Authority, which oversees the caregiver aspects of IHSS including recruitment, training, and payment, has increased recruitment efforts for caregivers in communities where they are most needed.
- *Food Resources:*
To meet increasing food needs, AIS increased meal recipients via contracts with Jewish Family Service and other providers, from approximately 4,000 clients pre-COVID to approximately 7,000 clients and tripled the number of meals served from approximately 100,000 per month pre-COVID, to over 300,000. AIS staff implemented and coordinates the Great Plates Delivered: Home Meals for Seniors program, which serves over 5,300 seniors, three meals a day, in collaboration with 41 contracted local restaurants. On August 4, 2020 (3), this Board approved allocation of CARES Act funding to establish the Great Plates Delivered 2.0: Dinner Delivered program. This program, in effect from August 2020-January 2021, provided one home delivered meal each day for 1,248 residents with disabilities and older adults who did not qualify for the original Great Plates Delivered program. In addition, to meet needs for home delivered food boxes among residents with disabilities and older adults, AIS partnered with 2-1-1 San Diego, FACT, American Red Cross, The Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank, and Feeding San Diego to create Operation FACT Food. Through Operation FACT Food, partners provided in-kind support to deliver food boxes to more than 2,600 households since April 10, 2020. This program is now coordinated by the Rock Church.
- *Seniors Come First at Geriatric Emergency Departments:*
Going to the emergency department (ED) can be a stressful experience for older adults who are frail or living with dementia. The San Diego Senior Emergency Care Initiative (Initiative) aims to improve older adults' experience and outcomes in EDs by supporting Geriatric Emergency Department Accreditation for EDs across the San Diego region. These EDs will provide care that is tailored to the unique needs of the over-60 population by modifying the physical environment, adding senior-specific protocols, and providing staff with special training. The Initiative is a public-private partnership involving the County, the West Health Institute, and the region's major health systems. The Initiative, funded with grants and support from the County and the West Health Institute, makes San Diego County poised to be the first county in the



nation to offer accredited senior-friendly emergency care for older adults across the region. A contract was executed with the Hospital Association of San Diego and Imperial Counties to coordinate the project. To date, 16 of the 18 participating San Diego Emergency Departments have applied for accreditation, with the other two (Navy Medical Center San Diego and Navy Hospital Camp Pendleton) on hold due to the pandemic. Fourteen Emergency Departments have received accreditation and the remainder are pending review. The review process involves an online application, evaluation by a team of physician reviewers, and a site visit.

Additional Accomplishments

- *Age-Friendly Regional Collaborations:*
The County was the first jurisdiction in the San Diego region to launch an age-friendly action plan and has since collaborated with local municipalities to provide technical support and promote age-friendly efforts across the region, including the cities of Chula Vista, La Mesa, and San Diego. Age Well San Diego leaders have presented at local, State, and national conferences to share Age Well San Diego practices and successes.
- *Emerging Filmmaker Fellowship:*
The sustainability and success of regional age-friendly efforts depends on continued community member engagement and support from community leaders. In January 2021, Age Well San Diego team leaders applied for and received a \$50,000 grant from the San Diego Foundation to develop and implement the Emerging Filmmaker Fellowship to raise awareness about local age-friendly projects. The mission of the Fellowship is to promote age-friendly initiatives across the region by engaging college student filmmakers to create short films highlighting the importance of age-friendly community work, including positive impacts for low-income and underserved older adults. Ten students were selected to receive a stipend of \$2,000, training on age-friendly initiatives, filmmaking mentorship, and access to equipment. The students' films will be debuted at an Age Friendly Film Festival in November 2021. The Fellowship is led by Media Arts Center San Diego, in partnership with AIS, The San Diego Foundation, AARP®.
- *Partnership with San Diego State University:*
Aging & Independence Services partnered with San Diego State University to enhance collaborations between academic and community stakeholders to address older adults' needs. In July 2021, San Diego State University committed to being an Age-Friendly University, joining the Age-Friendly University Global Network and Academy for Gerontology in Higher Education. As an Age-Friendly University, San Diego State University committed to enhancing older adults' access to intergenerational learning, wellness and cultural programs, and training for older workers who want to stay in the workforce or pursue a second career. Next steps involve creating an aging research network as part of San Diego State University's Center for Excellence in Aging & Longevity with the goal of connecting researchers with community stakeholders to share best practices and facilitate community-based participatory research and evaluation.

**Partners**

The accomplishments of the Aging Roadmap are the product of valued partnerships, including collaborations across multiple County departments: AIS, Planning & Development Services, Public Health Services, Housing and Community Development Services, Public Works, the Sheriff's Department, the District Attorney, County Libraries, and the Office of Emergency Services. In addition, some of the many community partners who have joined Aging Roadmap efforts include 2-1-1 San Diego, AARP®, Aging 2.0, Alliant University, Alvarado Hospital, Alzheimer's Association San Diego Imperial Chapter, Alzheimer's San Diego, Circulate San Diego, City of San Diego Public Library, Dementia Friends California, ElderHelp of San Diego, Facilitating Access to Coordinated Transportation, George G. Glenner Alzheimer's Family Centers, Inc., Jewish Family Service, Meals on Wheels San Diego County, Metropolitan Transit System, North County Transit District, San Diego Oasis, San Diego Seniors Community Foundation, Retired Employees of San Diego County, San Diego Association of Governments, San Diego Housing Federation, San Diego State University, Southern Caregiver Resource Center, University of California San Diego, Union of Pan Asian Communities, Village Core, Village Movement California, and the West Health Institute.