



**THE  
BUNCOMBE COUNTY  
AGING PLAN  
(2013-2017)**

**2014  
PROGRESS  
REPORT**

**PREPARED BY  
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**JANUARY 2015**

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**INTRODUCTION**

This update summarizes the progress and community engagement during calendar year 2014 resulting from the six categories and fourteen goals of the Buncombe County Aging Plan (2013-2017) presented by the Planning Committee of the Buncombe County Aging Coordinating Consortium (ACC). The ACC Planning Committee views the 2013-2017 Aging Plan as a starting point for their work over five years and the goals of the plan having been selected to help move the bar and not merely maintain the status quo in Buncombe County. The current plan builds on the goals and achievements of the 2008-2012 Aging Plan in multiple quantifiable ways.

The ACC Planning Committee remains committed to the vision of a livable, aging friendly Buncombe County and believes that the focused strategies of the 2013-2017 Aging Plan continue to move the group forward in meeting this goal. Below are the members of the 2014 ACC Planning Committee.

Leadership Team:

Linda Kendall-Fields.....Land of Sky Regional Council, Area Agency on Aging  
Emily Roberts..... Land of Sky Regional Council, Area Agency on Aging  
Bob Tomasulo.....Consumer, Elder Advocate, Chair of the ACC Planning Committee

ACC Planning Committee Members For 2014

Lyuba Zuyeva.....Mountain Mobility  
Rebecca Chaplin.....Health and Wellness, Land of Sky Regional Council  
Stephanie Stewart.....Health and Wellness, Land of Sky Regional Council  
Celeste Collins..... OnTrack Financial Education and Counseling  
Vicki Jennings.....Senior Companion Services, Land of Sky  
Alyson Johnson-Sawyer.....CarePartners Adult Day Health Care  
Linda Kendall-Fields.....LH Kendall Consulting, Aging and Disability Services  
Wendy H. Marsh.....Council on Aging of Buncombe County, Inc.  
Bob Wagner.....Western North Carolina Alliance  
Angie Pittman.....Buncombe County Department of Social Services  
Bob Tomasulo.....Consumer, Elder Advocate  
LeeAnne Tucker.....Land of Sky Aging and Volunteer Services

In 2014, through the leadership of Linda Kendall Fields as coordinator of the aging plan, and chair of the ACC and Bob Tomasulo, chair of the ACC Planning Committee, the ACC has focused on an alignment and integration of the Aging Plan with the work of the various committees represented by the ACC and broader community. This work is outlined through the following six areas: service and support coordination; safety and security; financial wellbeing; health and wellness; social engagement; and living environments; and is framed in the Aging Plan as follows:

1. **Service and Support Coordination:** A collaborative network of formal and informal services and supports is coordinated to meet the needs of older adults and caregivers.
2. **Safety and Security:** Home and community environments are safe and support self-sufficiency for older adults and caregivers.
3. **Financial Wellbeing:** Resources, services and opportunities support and enhance the financial wellbeing of older adults and caregivers.
4. **Health and Wellness:** Optimize physical and mental health and wellbeing of older adults in Buncombe County.
5. **Social Engagement:** Productive and fulfilling engagement that meets community needs.
6. **Living Environments:** Direct public policy and resources to improve the built environment so that Asheville/Buncombe County is a livable, aging-friendly community.

## **PROJECT UPDATE**

This report summarizes progress made from January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014. The plan's six sections include goals (14 total) and strategies that are currently being addressed by the Buncombe County ACC. As with 2013, the ACC Planning Committee narrowed the focus to six that were identified as having not been specifically addressed in the community. The six focus areas have been marked with asterisks (\*) throughout the remainder of this report.

## **SERVICE AND SUPPORT COORDINATION**

### **1. Advocate for increasing Home and Community Care Block Grant (HCCBG) and County Supplemental funding to adequately meet the needs of the growing population of older adults and caregivers.**

The Home and Community Care Block Grant, or HCCBG allows local groups to make decisions about what services are most needed by older adults in their county, how much money needs to be allocated to the services, and what agency will provide the service. The HCCBG Grant is administered through the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services and the Area Agencies on Aging and combines federal and state funds with a local match and gives counties discretion in budgeting and administering aging funds.

The Advocacy and Awareness committee has been active in 2014, with meetings with elected officials at state and local levels. Part of their role has been to spread awareness of cuts in HCCBG, particularly in this election year. Some key editorials have been written by Charles Dickens with arguments for stepped-up funding. Charles Dickens shared the Senior Tar Heel Legislation agenda with ACC on multiple occasions and funding HCCBG is systematically on that agenda. In a related note, at a reception at Land of Sky in October, 2104, Charles Dickens received the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, the state's highest civilian honor for his work as the Buncombe County Delegate to the North Carolina Senior Tar Heel Legislature for 10 years, beginning in 2005. Mr. Dickens was also honored at the October 2014 ACC meeting and presented with a gift of appreciation for his service by Linda Kendall Fields.

### **2. Improve understanding of the challenges faced by the county's rural older adult population. \***

Building on the initial 2013 report work, in 2014 the ACC made gains in understanding issues around rural aging in North Carolina. In order to specifically identify underserved rural areas of Buncombe County, plans were made to compile an initial sample of community program users in one zip code in late 2013. While this work became progressively more problematic in 2014, there has been continued work with NEMAC towards gaining a better understanding around the issues relating to rural aging locally.

The focus has been transitioning to figuring out the delivery aspect of services, rather than the need. This has been a difficult and sometimes frustrating task due to difficulties in creating useable measurements. Despite the problematic issues, there has been recognition of the challenges of providing rural communities with the services that are needed. Future endeavors may be to pilot a focus group study in one of the rural zip codes in 2016.

**3. Increase coordination of multiple systems (i.e. home & community-based services, facility-based care, self-directed care initiatives, medical, mental health, Community Resource Connections) to ensure the needs of older adults and family caregivers are more fully met.**

The Land of Sky Community Resource Connection (CRC) is part of a federal and state initiative to reduce the confusion that many have experienced in trying to find local and regional services. The CRC/LCA (Local Contact Agency) Leadership Team continually reviews and monitors nursing facility transition efforts with individuals living in Buncombe, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania County nursing facilities. 2014 saw a systematic increase in coordination of the Land of Sky CRC through the expansion of the three A's of the CRC core functions- Awareness, Assistance (through options counseling), and Access-to include Transitions Assistance from nursing facilities.

Land of Sky NC CRC 2014 state funds were used for Local Contact Agency (LCA) responses to MDS 3.0 Section Q, which requires that individuals be asked by nursing facility staff if they would prefer to live independently in their community. Upon receipt of such a referral, a LCA Options Counselors will visit with the resident if they have the desire to live independently and will work with the MDS Referral Response Team. If a transition does take place back to the community, this may result in an application to Money Follows the Person (MFP), a funding opportunity for Medicaid-eligible individuals who have been in a nursing facility for at least 3 months.

The Land of Sky NC CRC held their Regional Meeting in Henderson County in January of 2014 entitled *Safe Transitions to Community and Home*. The meeting was hosted by

Trina Vazquez, the Executive Director Council on Aging for Henderson County and took place at Carolina Village Retirement Community in Hendersonville. Multiple presentations for the event included *Hospital Discharges to Home: Setting the Stage For Transitions* presented by Carolyn Dorner-Quality Coordinator WNC Health Network; *Community Resource Connections (CRC) Local Contact Agencies (LCA) and Money Follows the Person (MFP)* presented by Linda Kendall Fields-Community Resources Connections Coordinator; and *Skilled Nursing Facility Discharges to Home: Success and Challenges* presented by Suzanne Sherrill-Certified Care Manager Council on Aging for Henderson County.

By the end of June 2014, reports to the NC Division of Aging and Adult Services showed that the Land of Sky LCA Options Counselors had provided the required visits to skilled nursing facilities in all four counties, and exceeded their goals at 101% of their in reach and outreach activity goals. The statewide program directors have acknowledged the 2014 successes in Region B and will be featuring the story of a woman who transitioned to Life House from a nursing facility through the Money Follows the Person (MFP) Project on the North Carolina Division of Medical Assistance website.

Other CRC work has been in coordination with the North Carolina Department of Insurance, Division of SHIIP (Seniors' Health Insurance Information Program). This program has been developed in order to refer individuals who are likely eligible for Low Income Subsidy (LIS) and the Medicare Savings Program (MSP) through the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act (MIPPA). This program assisted qualified Medicare recipients with limited income and assets to pay for their Medicare prescription drug program costs, such as premiums, deductibles and coinsurance. Eligibility guidelines for LIS are based on income and assets and change from year to year. The Medicare Savings Program (MSP) assists individuals with limited income and resources pay some or all of their Medicare premiums and may pay Medicare deductibles and coinsurance for those who qualify.

As part of its contract with SHIIP, Land of Sky oversaw a total of eight LIS/MSP outreach efforts in the four counties that comprise Region B by from January - September

2014. Outreach goals for this program included coordination with local SHIIP sites to refer individuals who are likely eligible for LIS and MSP, with events targeting areas with the greatest number of potential LIS/MSP enrollees. A minimum of two outreach activities took place in each participating county, with a minimum of one outreach activity in collaboration with a community partner(s) who serve individuals with mental illness, and a minimum of one outreach activity focusing on people who are aging and/or have disabilities other than mental illness. Activities were coordinated through partnerships between Land of Sky AAA; local SHIIP offices; Disability Partners; Smoky Mountain MCO; and, the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI).

## **SAFETY AND SECURITY**

### **4. Improve safety and security for community-dwelling older adults.**

In 2014, Buncombe and Transylvania County TRIAD partners have continued with the goal of reducing unwarranted fear of crime, while improving the safety and quality of life for seniors. The fifth annual Elder Financial Exploitation Summit took place at Asheville-Buncombe Technical College in March of 2014. The event was attended by bankers, financial advisors and retail managers with wire capability and long term care providers who are in the first line of defense against elder fraud. Attendees learned how to recognize elder exploitation and acquire the available tools to protect them. In addition, in a later event on the same day, senior were invited to Frauds Gone Wild, an event to educate older adults about how scams may be identified, who may be after their money, advice on safely securing personal information both on and off of the internet.

### **5. Improve safety and security for older adult residents of adult care homes (ACH).**

An adult care home (ACH) provides room and board and 24-hour supervision and services for people needing assistance with activities of daily living and some health care needs due to normal aging or a disability. Adult care homes bridge the gap between independent living and nursing facility care. The adult care home is a level of care appropriate for those who cannot live by themselves and need assistance with supervision, bathing, dressing, ambulation, eating, toileting, and/or medication



administration. Currently, in Buncombe County, there 85 licensed adult care homes that are monitored by Buncombe Health and Human Services, as agents of the Division of Health Service Regulation. During 2014, one 99-bed facility closed and a public hearing was held to determine if those beds could be sold to a new company. A certificate of need has to be granted to open any new facility in the county that houses over 6 residents. Due to the high number of homes in the county, a certificate of need is not available in Buncombe, but, beds may be sold after a hearing and with approval by the State. The company that was granted the 99 beds has not yet begun construction of the facility.

Challenges continue in providing enough community resources to assist families and adults to be maintained safely in their own homes. When the natural and community supports are not adequate, assisted living is an option. Special Assistance for Medicaid-eligible residents helps pay board rates. A gap in service is when adults are just over the Medicaid eligibility criteria in terms of income, but, do not have enough income to pay private rates for board in an adult care home.

During the past year, requirements for medication administration training for staff in adult care homes have increased and drug screens are also mandatory for newly employed staff. Yet, for many facilities, low staff wages, long hours and poor staff training continue to be issues related to quality care provision and best practice. Buncombe County Health and Human Services continues to participate in a Continuing Education Committee which provides monthly local training for staff and administrators on topics regarding such issues as infection control and medication administration. In addition, a partnership with Mission Memorial Hospital, Community Care of Western North Carolina, BC HHS, and administrators from local facilities, resulted in the development of protocols to improve transitions to and from Hospitals and Assisted Living Facilities. This initiative afforded more effective communication between facilities and area hospitals that led to better resident care.

The State of North Carolina entered into a settlement agreement with the United States

Department of Justice in 2012. The purpose of this agreement was to make sure that persons with mental illness are able to live in their communities in the least restrictive settings of their choice. During 2014, the NC Department of Health and Human Services continued implementing the agreement through the Transition to Community Living Initiative, which provides In-Reach services to targeted adults living in adult care homes, with behavioral health needs who might be able to live independently with community-based supportive housing, and Diversion, which means diverting targeted individuals from being admitted to adult care homes from psychiatric hospitals.

## **FINANCIAL WELLBEING**

### **6. Increase financial planning & management among older adults. \***

The goal of OnTrack in 2014 has been to increase the number of older adults who participate in financial counseling and education opportunities by increasing awareness of services and connecting with other nonprofits that serve older adults.

*Building Awareness:* Media and social networking are part of OnTrack's strategy to increase awareness and reach older adults and their caregivers. In October and November OnTrack's weekly radio show, Money Matters, featured programs specifically targeted to educate older adults: Medicare Open Enrollment, Council on Aging Caregiver support services, Reverse Mortgages, and Long-term Care Insurance. Conversations are underway to update the 2009 DVD in a possible YouTube video format.

*Services:* In Celeste Collins' presentation to the ACC Planning Committee she indicated that the Buncombe County Tax Department is looking for proactive ways to assist seniors who are facing foreclosures due to past-due property taxes. Additionally, she noted that while OnTrack's initial research into the availability of payee services identified four local payee service companies and seemed to indicate there was no need for additional providers, discussion by the ACC Planning Committee will lead OnTrack to do further research in 2015 and evaluate its own capacity to provide these services. Financial Security Solutions had been the primary company that the County Department of Health & Human Service had been using; Ms. Collins pointed out that for those individuals who

do not qualify for DSS assistance, there are fewer options, higher cost, and vulnerability to fraud and scams. Reverse mortgages are gaining in popularity; to meet the need for older adults and caregivers to get unbiased information about this sometimes-helpful, sometimes-dangerous financial product, OnTrack plans to offer free educational workshops beginning in 2015.

### **7. Establish Basic Needs Case Conferencing process. \***

In 2014, a specific case was outlined at a monthly meeting for the members of the ACC to mixed reviews. The particular case had already been worked through, and it may be that using an existing problem set would work better so members could make an actual impact on the outcomes with their suggestions. These may take place approximately two times a year at ACC meetings, taking an objective view and using person-centered thinking approaches.

## **HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

### **8. Identify and address depression among older adults**

Depression screenings have been ongoing at the Vanderbilt and Battery Park senior apartments in Asheville, NC through Healthy IDEAS (Identifying Depression, Empowering Activities for Seniors) with the goal of determining the rates of depression among older adults in Buncombe County. The Council on Aging of Buncombe County (COABC) has administered this 75-question common health and wellness survey and in 2014, Andrea McPeters and Allison Canon presented some of the results in their Healthy Ideas presentation to the ACC in early summer. Assisting care recipients and family caregivers cope with depression among older adults living at home, Healthy IDEAS coaches have been able to help identify depression in the home where families had not previously been identifying this as a problem.

### **9. Identify and address depression among family caregivers. \***

Several groups in Region B have been focusing on the identification of family caregivers at risk of depression, in order to increase mental health and support services use by these

individuals. In 2014, presentations were made to the ACC Planning Committee by Andrea McPeeters, a care manager from the COABC who is working with long distance caregivers in Project Continuum CARE as well as CAPES, a support group. In addition members of several organizations including Jewish Family Services, Care Partners, Land of Sky and HHS shared current caregiver initiatives within their organizations in order to help identify areas of need and opportunities for coalition building.

Several WNC organizations are addressing depression among family caregivers including Land of Sky, the Council on Aging of Buncombe County, Memory Care and CarePartners. In 2014 there was an attempt to bring the program leaders together to create a dialogue and share resources around this important issue. The ACC held a meeting at the new CarePartners Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE) building, where discussions included use of the online state Lifespan Respite training program which Linda Kendall Fields has helped develop.

In November of 2014, in order to thank family caregivers for their strength, courage and commitment in providing long-term service and support the LOS Family Caregiver Support Program hosted a Caregiver Appreciation Day. 48 attendees were honored and provided with lunch, exercise and aromatherapy programs, music and mini-makeovers during a day of relaxation.

#### **10. Improve healthy weight among community dwelling older adults\***

The ACC is now aligning this goal, reframed to be broader in scope (i.e., “improve healthy behaviors” instead of “healthy weight”) with Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) developed through the Buncombe County Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The core value of the program is the use of community approaches to promote physical activity, healthy eating, and healthy weight in order to support all residents of Buncombe County, across the lifespan and of all abilities, with an emphasis on engaging and supporting those with the greatest needs. As mentioned earlier, this goal is centered on Healthy Behaviors, focusing not just about weight, but also about diet and exercise. ABIPA (Asheville Buncombe Institute of Parity Achievement) had originally

had intended to gather data from 500 surveys, though only a 100 are in for baseline statistics as of December 2014. Starting in 2015, these health and wellness goals will be integrated with a similar CHIP focus. Health Dept. using data collected and disseminated by Nelle Gregory and Terri March.

### **11. Increase health equity among Buncombe County's older adult populations\***

Rebecca Chaplin finished up her programming for Living Healthy with a Chronic Conditions with LOS in May of 2014 and LOS welcomed Stephanie Stewart as the new Aging Programs Specialist with a focus on Health Promotion/Disease Prevention and Senior Centers. Stephanie's professional affiliations include the WNC Fall Prevention Coalition, LGBT Elder Advocates, and Buncombe County Triad. Her role as an Aging Program Specialist is to facilitate evidence-based program expansion in rural and underserved areas, collaborate with community stakeholders, committees and coalitions to advance health promotion opportunities for older adults in the region and provide technical assistance to local senior centers. An ongoing dialogue with ABIPA and Director, Jewana Grier-McEachin on the topic of health equity culminated in a presentation to the full ACC in May 2014 entitled, "Optimizing Health Outcomes for Older Adults."

## **SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT**

### **12. Increase social engagement and employment among older adults.**

Through volunteerism, employment and transportation, older adults are allowed access to social engagement, resulting in empowerment and enrichment. Volunteer Services is a program of the Corporation for National and Community Service, and the Volunteer Services Department of Land of Sky Regional Council (LOSRC) administers three volunteer programs for older adults in Region B through Senior Corps including: RSVP (Retired & Senior Volunteer Program), the Senior Companion Program and the Foster Grandparent Program. LOS connects adults 55 years and older with the people and organizations that need them most. The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) also

continued its Call to Action Program in 2014 in which OLLI members were given opportunities for meaningful volunteer services in Region B.

The Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) is a job training program that works with unemployed adults aged 55+ to gain job skills that lead to regular employment. The primary means of providing this training is through placement in non-profit Host Agencies. The SCSEP participant receives job skill training and the Host Agency receives the benefit of the person's time and abilities. The program emphasizes working with Veterans, those over age 65, individuals with disabilities and those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness as participants. At any given time, up to 13 Buncombe County residents may be in job training through Land of Sky's SCSEP. John Connell, who joined RSVP in 2014, will utilize his skills from his current role as Senior Community Service Employment Coordinator to develop a 50+ Job Club in partnership with LOS Work Force development Boards. The club will be supported, lead and coordinated by RSVP volunteers and should be up and running by March 2015.

## **LIVING ENVIRONMENTS**

### **13. Expand housing and community living options for older adults**

The Culture Change in Aging Network of Buncombe County (CCAN) was formed to explore alternatives in community living for older adults and in 2014 continued to be vigilant about educating the community about fundamental changes in values and practices to create a culture of aging that is life-affirming, satisfying, humane and meaningful. In early 2014, a survey was sent to attendees of the three *Exploring Community and Interdependence* workshops, which took place in late 2013, with questions on multiple topics about the impact and takeaways for the workshops attendees. The survey results served to help inform the network of the special interests of the attendees and on how best to serve the future needs of older adults interested in local community living alternatives.

February 2014 saw the first of the new CCAN monthly blogs, which share personal and local stories and articles relating to successful aging, options for living in community,

and national concepts and components of culture change. The initial posting celebrated the life of Cathie St. John Ritzen, a network colleague and friend to the community at large who passed away in late 2013. Linda Kendall Fields wrote about the impact that this extraordinary woman had on so many of us who were lucky enough to have known her through her elder law practice and community activism.

In July 2014, members of the CCAN made a site visit to Conover, NC to visit an organization called the Neighbors Network. This group brings participants in the Newton-Conover area together to support one another, gain independence and make every day responsibilities easier and more enjoyable and is rooted in the national Village-to-Village model brought to national attention through the Beacon Hill Village model in Boston. Connections were made at this event with a local organization from Weaverville called the *Mountain Neighbors Network* and in August of 2014, the CCAN members invited members to a CCAN meeting for a discussion about common interests and goals in creating age-friendly communities for the older adults in our region. A principle goal for the *Mountain Neighbors* group will be to help people in the middle income ranges stay in their home with appropriate services. In conjunction with this collaboration with the *Mountain Neighbors*, CCAN members have mapped out their 2015 Calendar of Events, marking 2015 the Year of the NORC. Plans have begun to collaborate with the *Mountain Neighbors* in a number of community education events in 2015, with the hopes of ultimately developing a workshop series around the progress of the NORC model in Western North Carolina in late 2015.

#### **14. Improve mobility by expanding transportation options.**

Our senior community is growing in Western North Carolina, and people are looking for options to age in place and retain their independence. At the same time, working families with young children are also looking for affordable and accessible ways to get to school, work and other important destinations. Transportation options accessible for people “from 8 to 80”, from safer sidewalks to bus service to para-transit can be part of the solutions. Under the new leadership of Lyuba Zuyeva as Transit Program Manager, in September, 2014, Land of Sky partnered with the transportation departments from

Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison and Transylvania counties for a workshop entitled Community Connections-Transportation Options for All Ages. The attendees which included community leaders, interested citizens, transportation and social services stakeholders, local government staff and elected officials were provided breakfast and multiple presentations around demographics issues in the region provided by a panel of transportation experts.

In 2014, LOS continued its management of administrative duties for the Mountain Mobility program in 2014, in order to increase use of transportation options to a wide population of older adults trying to get organizations assigned to certain activities (e.g. adult day care). In FY 2014, Buncombe County signed up 4894 new senior passengers 60+ for Mountain Mobility services, this is not counting the RIDE Voucher Program. As of June, 2014, 106 older adults 65+ were utilizing the Mountain Mobility monthly Senior Bus Pass program (which provides a free pass to Asheville Transit), and as of January 2014, 65 older adults 65+ were signed up for the annual Senior Buss Pass program.

In addition in FY 2014, the RIDE Voucher program for people with disabilities, including some older adults, had over \$24,000 redeemed RIDE Vouchers (i.e. around 2400 trips funded through this program). This compared to approximately \$17,000 in redeemed RIDE Vouchers during FY 2014.

**2014 ACC MEETING TOPICS**

The following topics, generally following the focus of the ACC Planning Committee, were presented to the entire 68-member Buncombe County Aging Coordinating Consortium during 2014.

January 2014	"Elder Law: Perspectives and Practices" – presented by Carole Spainhour, ElderLaw Carolina and Faith Foote, Pisgah Legal Services
February 2014	"Community Resource Connections – United Way’s 2-1-1” - presented by Marla Browne, 2-1-1 Director with brief CRC update provided by Linda Kendall Fields



March 2014	"Increasing Mobility through Home Modifications and Assistive Devices" – presented by Lori Massey, NC Division of Vocational Rehabilitation, Independent Living and David Dorn, 101 Mobility
April 2014	"Community Collaboration to Solve Challenging Client Situations" - presented by Donna Case, Council on Aging of Buncombe County, with introduction to topic referenced in BC Aging Plan from Linda KF
May 2014	"Buncombe County Aging Plan Update: Optimizing Health Outcomes for Older Adults" - presented by Rebecca Chaplin, Phil Gale, Jewana Grier-McEachin, and Terri March
June 2014	"Healthy Ideas: Strategies for Identifying and Addressing Depression" - presented by Andrea McPeters and Allison McCarty
August 2014	"Aging in Community: An Update on the Culture Change in Aging Network (CCAN)" – presented by Alex Mawhinney and introducing members of the Weaverville-based "Mountain Neighbors."
September 2014	"Identifying and Supporting Family Caregivers" – introduced by Linda KF and Emily Roberts followed by a panel of providers from our community
October 2014	"Housing Resources for Seniors and People with Disabilities" - Brian Smith, Housing Specialist for Aging and Disabilities, Housing Authority of the City of Asheville
November/December 2014	"Depression, Aging & Family Caregiving" – Debra Bell, LCSW

### **Summary and Looking Ahead to 2015**

The Buncombe County Aging Coordinating Consortium is pleased with the ongoing progress that is being made towards the goals of the 2013 – 17 Buncombe County Aging Plan and is looking forward to another year of community engagement and activity. In late 2014, the ACC Planning Committee decided to narrow the 2015 focus to four areas

instead of six in order to maximize the energy and effectiveness of individuals and organizations working towards these goals. The table below outlines the direction of the aging plan in the upcoming year.

**Buncombe County Aging Plan  
2015 Focus**

<b>Goal</b>	<b>Current Status</b>	<b>2015 Focus</b>
<b>Goal 6:</b> Increase financial planning & management among older adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion with OnTrack re: Payee concept</li> <li>• Still using financial education brochure (DVD too but becoming outdated)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear plan for increasing payee options</li> <li>• Hold Financial Exploitation Summit</li> <li>• Identify resources for updating financial video</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 9:</b> Identify and address depression among family caregivers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ACC awareness</li> <li>• Healthy IDEAS Orientation</li> <li>• Separate groups working on caregiver issues: COABC, LOS, CarePartners, CAPES, etc.</li> <li>• Lifespan Respite On-line Training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinated / consolidated effort – caregiver coalition?</li> <li>• Specific awareness strategies developed</li> <li>• Specific depression identification / prevention / treatment strategies developed</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 10:</b> Improve healthy behaviors among community dwelling older adults.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change language of goal to reflect improved healthy habits vs. improved healthy weight</li> <li>• Over 110 responses submitted (more to enter)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review survey findings and assess accuracy of sample</li> <li>• Determine intervention(s) if necessary or connect with current strategies</li> </ul>
<b>Goal 11:</b> Increase health equity among Buncombe County's older adult populations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Separate groups are meeting (ABIPA, LGBT, Latino, Slavic)</li> <li>• Minority Health Equity project has created some mutual goals, but does not include all groups (Slavic, LGBT, etc)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand what each group is doing</li> <li>• Know what organizations are in place for identified populations</li> <li>• Select specific metrics for this goal</li> <li>• Gather baseline info</li> <li>• Offer opportunities for sharing between groups</li> </ul>