

**SPWG Report to
Oversight and Advisory Committee
February 27, 2023**

The Department of Disability and Aging (DAS) presented a draft of the Service Allocation Plan to the Service Provider Working Group on Wednesday, February 22, 2023, during the Dignity Fund Coalition monthly meeting. The Service Provider Working Group wishes to extend their appreciation of DAS for their transparent work throughout the SAP process. Key Findings, Key Priorities, and Service Areas have been consistently identified and discussed throughout the process.

Key findings were identified in the community needs assessment performed by RDA that shaped the key priorities, which were then grouped into three main service areas to advance the key priorities for the FY24 to FY27 funding cycle.

Key Findings –

1. Consumers experience **barriers to service connection**, contributing to feelings of being excluded and unsupported
2. **Adults with disabilities experience heightened barriers** and have **greater unmet needs** than older adults
3. While many of consumers' basic needs are generally met, **social connectivity and mental health needs** (amplified by the pandemic) are not as well met
4. Consumers increasingly rely on technology and **would benefit from expanded technology resources and virtual service offerings** that promote inclusivity
5. Consumer concerns and needs relating to **safety, mobility, and transportation** have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and racialized violence
6. **BIPOC and LGBTQ+ consumers need culturally responsive services** that affirm their identities and make them feel included, accepted, and safe
7. **Caregivers need more information about available resources** for themselves and their care recipients, as well as help navigating these services
8. Service providers need support to identify and successfully **connect clients with available resources**
9. **Consumers have unmet needs in areas outside of DAS services** (e.g., housing) where the Department can play a role through **access support and system coordination**

Key Priorities -

- Improve service awareness, navigation, and connection
- Promote inclusion of seniors and adults with disabilities in the broader city community
- Empower consumers citywide to access in-person, hybrid, and fully remote services
- Boost service engagement for adults with disabilities
- Provide culturally inclusive and affirming services for BIPOC and LGBTQ+ people
- Use data to support service planning, delivery, and continuous quality improvement
- Enhance system coordination across city and community partners
- Strengthen community-based provider infrastructure

Service Areas –

- Group A – FY24
 - Case Management and Care Navigation
 - Community Connection and Engagement
- Group B – FY25
 - Access and Empowerment
 - Caregiver Support
 - Housing Support
- Group C – FY26
 - Nutrition and Wellness
 - Self-Care and Safety

SPWG Comments

- **CODB** – almost 65% of new allocations is allocated to the CODB so there is less funding available for new services. The SPWG would like to see a plan from DAS in the event when none of the new allocation is available for new programs/services.
- **There is a need for behavioral/mental health supports** beyond clinical mental health services provided by DPH. Is there a way to incorporate social/emotional supports into services? Perhaps this could be a potential deep dive, as well to better understand the emotional health needs of the population, and how that population would like to receive supports.
- **Evaluation process** – Can the evaluation process be strengthened to provide more clarity on what outcomes are being measured that determine impacts of the identified services, especially since the needs assessment highlighted many of the same issues as the previous needs assessment.

- **The length of time it takes to get funding out the door** becomes challenging to plan for services and it is unclear if the funds remain in the same service category from one year to next when there isn't time for full funds to be expended in the initial fiscal year.
- No real mention of those with memory loss and needed supports. Is this a potential need for deep dive?
- Given the workforce shortage in home care, how does that affect some of the service categories such as **caregiver support and safety & security**? Is there a plan to accommodate this shortage?
- Is training available to providers to understand **funding mechanisms** (Dignity Fund vs other funding sources, matching funds, etc.)
- SPWG (DFC and CASE) want to work with DAS to continue **expanding Dignity Fund**, whether through CODB policy changes or increasing funds.
- There has been a decrease in RCFE beds available. Is there a way to include this in **housing or safety and security to allow people to still age in community**? If the creation of new beds were outside the scope of the Dignity Fund, would subsidies help?
- SPGW would like more clarity on distinction of **creative aging programs**.