

**WESTERN RESERVE AREA AGENCY ON AGING (PSA10A)
OVERVIEW OF APPLICATION PROCESS**

AGING AND DISABILITY RESOURCE NETWORK SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE:

AGING AND DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTERS

BENEFIT ENROLLMENT CENTERS

INFORMATION AND REFERRAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDERS

Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging
Aging and Disability Resource Network
APPLICATION OVERVIEW

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PROCESS OVERVIEW

The Western Reserve Area Agency on Agency (WRAAA) solicited *Letters of Intent* for two (2) areas of regional service system development on July 23, 2010. The area of service system development addressed in this application process is described below:

Aging and Disability Resource Network (Access System)

This initiative provides a structure for the development of a system of access to information and services in a five county region of Cuyahoga, Geauga, Lake, Lorain and Medina counties. The system will include three (3) components *Aging and Disability Resource Centers*, *Benefits Enrollment Centers* and *Information and Referral Assistance providers*.

WRAAA received *Letters of Intent* on August 6, 2010. Agencies with successful *Letters of Intent* were notified August 13, 2010. Agencies selected to complete a full application demonstrated experience and capacity to provide the services specified in their *Letter of Intent*.

Agencies that complete the application and submit it to the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging, following the instructions described herein, will be considered for a funding award. Each agency will complete only one application specific to the program area specified in the *Letter of Intent*. Therefore, a specific set of application questions will be asked for Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRC), Benefits Enrollment Centers (BEC) and Information and Referral Assistance providers (I&RA).

Because the nature and scope of the projects will vary from application to application, it is anticipated that the size of each award will also vary. A funding determination will be based on the availability of funds; the size and scope of the proposed implementation project; and the size of the targeted population that will be served.

APPLICATION FRAMEWORK

The *Application Document* will provide baseline information for the purpose of setting program goals and determining applicant willingness to work cooperatively with the WRAAA and other Aging and Disability Resource Network partners in the development and execution of the project. The questions that are contained within the *Application Document* are designed to address the following issues.

1. Current Community Access System Strengths and Weaknesses

- Applicant describes how the current *community access system* limits or facilitates individual choice and access in the applicant's target population.
- Applicant analyzes operational challenges of its current system as it relates to visibility, efficiency, and effectiveness.

2. Preliminary Goal Setting

- Applicant formulates preliminary strategies for addressing problems consumers face in learning about long term support options and accessing services.

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- Applicant adequately describes program inputs that will be needed to support program activities and achieve outputs. These inputs include current funding sources that will support ADRN activities.

3. Program Capacity

- Applicant provides evidence that key project staff will possess the professional experience and skills needed to design, implement, and evaluate the program within the available time frames with assistance from WRAAA.
- Applicant describes its ability to form and sustain collaborative partnerships that will be needed to coordinate and support a fully functioning community access program.
- Applicant addresses any circumstances that would affect its ability to recruit and hire staff for the project or to realign current staff to meet program needs. The applicant identifies methods by which such obstacles will be overcome.

4. Organizational Commitment

- Applicant commits to designating a program coordinator by January 1, 2011.
- Applicant commits to having a program representative participate in three (3) pre-2011 program planning sessions with the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging staff and monthly meetings thereafter.

5. Sustainability Planning

- Applicant describes effective methods to integrate current processes into ADRN activities.

WRAAA RESPONSIBILITIES

Following the acceptance of the application the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging (WRAAA) agrees to work cooperatively in the development and execution of the activities of the ADRN project as follows:

1. WRAAA staff will work cooperatively with each ADRN partner to define program goals and budgetary issues to be addressed in implementing the project. A detailed work plan will be developed outlining major activities for each program year. The work plan will include timelines and evaluation outcomes.
2. WRAAA will work with ADRN partners to develop implementation protocols for the key operational components of the ADRN which include but are limited to the following: Marketing and Outreach; Options Counseling and Benefits Assistance; Streamlined Access; Targeting; Critical Pathway Partnerships; Quality Assurance and Evaluation Activities.
3. WRAAA will conduct periodic technical assistance briefings and trainings for ADRN staff related to carrying out the key operational components of the ADRN program including.
4. WRAAA will convene monthly meetings for the purposes of coordination and ongoing program development.
5. WRAAA will work with community partners in developing a comprehensive resource database which includes information about the range of long term support resources in the ADRN service area.

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6. WRAAA will assist ADRN partners with developing relationships with resource organizations and key stakeholders.
7. WRAAA will work to develop a management information system that can support the ADRN program functions.

APPLICATION PROCESS TIMELINE

Request for Letters of Intent	July 23, 2010	
Letters of Intent Due	August 6, 2010	4:00 pm
<i>Notice to Successful Letters</i>	August 13, 2010	
Application Questions Due	September 3, 2010	4:00 pm
<i>Notice of Awards Announced</i>	September 23, 2010	
Program Planning Meetings (3)	Begin October, 2010	
Cooperative Agreements Complete	November 30, 2010	
First Day of Service	January 1, 2011	

APPLICATION DEADLINE REQUIREMENTS

One (1) complete application with original signatures, plus one copy of the application, must be received by the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging (WRAAA) at 925 Euclid Avenue, Suite 600, Cleveland, Ohio 44115 by 4:00 p.m. on September 3, 2010.

WRAAA reserves the right to reject any application proposals received; to request additional materials from any or all applicants; and to conditionally select applications for funding.

FORMAT OF FINAL DOCUMENT FOR SUBMISSION

The format for each application submission is outlined in the *Application Document*.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

All questions about the application process or documents must be directed to **Julie Jarvis**, Director of Program Development and Planning, Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging at jjarvis@psa10a.org or 216-621-8010, ext. 1109.

APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

1. All applications will be reviewed by WRAAA staff. Funding recommendations are presented to the WRAAA *Community Services and Support Board Subcommittee*.
2. The WRAAA *Community Services and Supports Board Subcommittee* makes recommendations to the full WRAAA Board of Trustees regarding funding awards.
3. The WRAAA Chief Executive Officer will provide final input on the evaluations of each of the above groups to the WRAAA Board of Trustees for the final funding decision.

NOTIFICATION OF AWARDS

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The WRAAA will notify all successful applicants of the funding award by **September 23, 2010**. Final approval will take the official form of a *Cooperative Contract Agreement* with the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging. The agreement must be completed by November 30, 2010 for services to begin January 1, 2011.

PLANNING MEETINGS

The ADRN program coordinator will be required to participate in three (3) planning meetings at the Western Reserve Area Agency on Aging offices. The schedule will be announced with the Notification of Awards.

CONTRACTING

Awards will be issued as *Cooperative Contract Agreements* because the WRAAA anticipates having substantial involvement with the recipients during the performance of funded activities. Agencies will be expected to share all significant outcomes and activities with WRAAA and ADRN partners in the development of this service system initiative.

Each agreement will include a line item cost reimbursement budget, performance goals and measures, a work plan and timeline. The WRAAA will provide the format for completing the budget. The partner agency must demonstrate that funded activities achieve performance goals as outlined in the agreement.

Each *Cooperative Contract Agreement* will require 15% in-kind or cash match. Cash match is cash outlays for program costs financed with cash contributed or donated to the agency by other non-federal public agencies and institutions and/or private organizations or individuals. In-kind match is non-cash contributions provided by the agency and nonfederal parties that directly benefit and are specifically identifiable to the delivery of program services. Ineligible resources include any other federal dollars unless allowed by federal statute; resources used to match other federal dollars; program income from Older Americans Act funded programs.

REPORTING

Contracted providers shall be required to report in the SAMS database according to the *Ohio Department of Aging Reporting Requirements*. WRAAA will provide successful applicants with a subscription and license to access the Social Assistance Management System (SAMS) on AgingNetwork.com and staff training in the use of the database system. Access and licenses to SAMS on Aging Network.com are limited to the contract period.

WRAAA will provide training for all applicable monthly reporting requirements.

MONITORING

Each Area Agency on Aging is responsible to the Ohio Department of Aging (ODA) for ensuring that all state and federal funds received from ODA are used in the manner that complies with state and federal laws. The WRAAA monitors all contracted providers for compliance with applicable service specifications and conditions of participation. This includes an annual on site visit to review service records and verify activities reported for reimbursement.

Each contractor is required to provide documentation of reimbursed activities as outlined in the cooperative agreement.

AWARD APPEAL PROCESS

An applicant may appeal an award decision made by WRAAA. O.A.C Rule 173-3-09. Awards or award decisions will be sent by WRAAA by fax, ordinary mail, certified mail or other method of delivery.

The specified process for an appeal is as follows:

1. An appealing applicant must submit a letter, signed by the official authorized to sign the appeal, to the Chief Executive Officer of the WRAAA with a copy sent to the President of the Board of Trustees of the WRAAA, within two (2) working days of receipt of written notice of an adverse action taken by WRAAA. The ground for appeal must be specified in the appeal letter and must be based on one or more of the following:

- a. **Mathematical Miscalculation**

- The agency is appealing on the basis of mathematical miscalculation on the part of the WRAAA, which was reflected in the grant award to the agency.

- b. **Inconsistent Policy Application**

- The agency is appealing on the basis that the Area Agency did not follow its own established review requirements and criteria in considering the agency's application for funding and recommending a grant award.

2. If the Appeals Committee approves the appeal request and determines that the appeal is within the above-established criteria, a meeting of the Appeals Committee will be scheduled within five (5) working days, with an appearance by the appealing applicant, to review the allocation decision and recommend the final action by the Board of Trustees. An appealing applicant will be notified that the Appeals Committee has concluded that the appeal is not within the above-established criteria or of the date and time of the meeting. The Appeals Committee will render a final recommendation, in writing, within five (5) working days after the meeting, which shall become the final decision of the WRAAA unless appealed to the Board of Trustees.

3. An appealing applicant may by letter appeal the notice that the appeal is not within the above-established criteria or final recommendation of the Appeals Committee to the Board of Trustees, with a copy to the Chief Executive Officer of the WRAAA, within two (2) working days of receipt of notice that the appeal is not within the above established criteria or written notice of the final recommendation of the Appeals Committee. The ground for appeal must be specified in the appeal letter.

4. The Board of Trustees, or in its absence the Executive Committee, will review the notice that the appeal is not within the above-established criteria or final recommendation of the Appeals Committee at its next meeting, adopt a final course of action and notify the appealing applicant about its final decision in writing within five (5) working days. The decision of the Board, or its Executive Committee, shall be the final decision of the WRAAA, which may be appealed by the Contractor to ODA.

5. An agency may request a hearing by the Ohio Department of Aging. ODA shall only honor a request for an appeal hearing before ODA if the provider has fully complied with the written process for appealing an adverse action by WRAAA and WRAAA has rendered its final decision on the appeal.

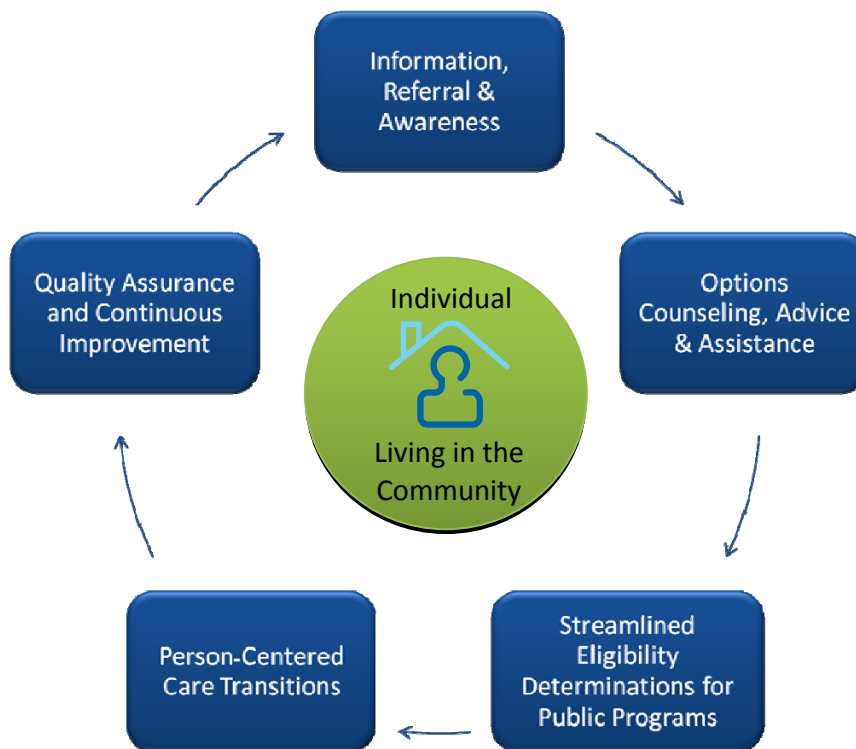
To request a hearing before ODA, the provider shall submit a written request to ODA's director via certified mail no later than fifteen (15) business days after the date that WRAAA renders its final decision.

ODA shall hold a hearing and render its final decision on the appeal no later than thirty (30) business days after the date of the hearing. The appeal process will comply with Rule 173-3-09.

AoA/CMS VISION OF AGING AND DISABILITY RESOURCE NETWORK (ADRN)¹

The Administration on Aging (AoA) and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) have awarded over \$70 million in grants to 54 States and Territories to date to implement Aging and Disability Resource Network Programs using a variety of models. AoA and CMS's long range vision is to have ADRN programs fully operational and available to individuals in every community across the country serving as highly visible and trusted sources of information on the full range of long-term services and support options along with one-on-one help in understanding and accessing the services and supports they need.

Person-Centered System of Information, Counseling and Access



Aging and Disability Resource Network Functions

ADRN are community-wide “programs” or “systems” of information, counseling and access; they are not necessarily located in a single physical place, nor are their operational functions necessarily carried out by a single agency or organization. ADRNs can be “networks of community organizations” that work together in a coordinated manner to provide consumers

¹ Adapted from the 2010 AoA program announcement, *Implementing the Affordable Care Act: Making it Easier for Individuals to Navigate Their Health and Long Term Care through Person Centered Systems of Information, Counseling and Access.*

with a “point of entry” to all long-term services and supports, as well as a streamlined process for determining eligibility for all public programs that provide services and supports, either in the community or in an institutional setting. Even though multiple partner organizations will likely be involved in the operation of an ADRN – from the perspective of the consumer, their access to long-term services and supports should be seamless, regardless of what program(s) they may end up using. ADRNs should also help individuals in understanding and accessing their Medicare benefits as well as other public and private programs that promote independence in the community.

The key operational functions of a fully developed ADRN Program include:

- **Information, Referral and Awareness**
- **Options Counseling and Assistance**
- **Streamlined Eligibility Determinations for Public Programs**
- **Person-Centered Care Transitions/ Care Coordination**
- **Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement**

ADRN are now eight years removed from the original inception of the AoA/CMS grant program to States. There are currently over 290 ADRN pilot sites operating - at varying stages of development - across the country covering roughly 45% percent of the U.S. population.

INFORMATION, REFERRAL AND AWARENESS

The *Information, Referral and Awareness* function of an ADRN is defined by the ADRNs ability to serve as a highly visible and trusted place where people of all ages, disabilities and income levels know they can turn to for objective information on the full range of long-term service and support options. It is also defined by its ability to promote awareness of the various options that are available in the community, especially among underserved, hard-to-reach and private paying populations, as well as options individuals can use to “plan ahead” for their long-term care. ADRNs should also have the capacity to help individuals be aware of their Medicare benefits and other state and federal programs by partnering with State Health Insurance Assistance Programs and Benefit Outreach and Enrollment Centers where they exist. Finally, ADRNs should have the capacity to link consumers with needed services and supports – both public and private - through appropriate referrals to other agencies and organizations.

OPTIONS COUNSELING AND ASSISTANCE

The *Options Counseling and Assistance* function is defined by the ADRN’s ability to provide counseling and decision support, including one-on-one assistance, to consumers and their family members and/or caregivers. The main purpose of *Options Counseling and Assistance* is to help consumers assess and understand their needs, and to assist them in making informed decisions about appropriate long-term service and support choices – as well as their Medicare options - in the context of their personal needs, preferences, values and individual circumstances. Individuals and families who receive options counseling should be in better position to make service and support choices that optimally meet their needs and preferences, and be able to make better use their own personal and financial resources in the short term and over time.

STREAMLINED ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATIONS FOR PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Long-term services and supports are funded by a variety of different government programs administered by a wide array of federal, state and local agencies, each with its own eligibility

rules, procedures and paperwork requirements. The *Streamlined Eligibility Determinations for Public Programs* component of an ADRN is defined by its ability to serve as a point of entry to all publicly funded long-term supports, including those funded by Medicaid, the Older Americans Act (OAA), and other state and federal programs and services. This requires ADRNs to have the necessary protocols and procedures in place to facilitate an integrated and/or fully coordinated approach to performing the following administrative functions for all public programs (including both home and community-based services programs and institutional-based programs): consumer intake, screening, assessing an individual's needs, developing service/care plans, determining programmatic and financial eligibility, and ensuring that people receive the services for which they are eligible. The goal is to create a process that is both administratively efficient and seamless for consumers regardless of which program they end of being eligible for or the types of services they receive.

PERSON-CENTERED CARE TRANSITIONS/CARE COORDINATION

The Person-Centered Care Transitions component is defined by a ADRNs ability to create formal linkages between and among the major pathways that people travel while transitioning from one setting of care to another or from one public program payor to another. These pathways include preadmission screening programs for nursing home services and hospital discharge planning programs, and they represent critical junctures where decisions are made – usually in a time of crisis - that often determine whether a person ends up in a nursing home or is transitioned back to their own home. The ADRN can play a pivotal role in these transitions to ensure that people end up in the settings that best meet their individual needs and preferences, which is often in their own homes. ADRN staff can be present at these critical points to provide individuals and their families with the information they need to make informed decisions about their service and support options, and to help them to quickly arrange for the care and services they choose. These critical activities can help individuals avoid being placed unnecessarily in a nursing home. They can also break the cycle of readmission to the hospital that often occurs when a chronically impaired individual is discharged to the community without the social services and supports they need.

QUALITY ASSURANCE AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement is a part of every ADRC system to ensure adherence to the highest standard of service, as well as to ensure public and private investments in ADRNs are producing measurable results. ADRNs should be using electronic information systems to track their customers, services, performance and costs, and to continuously evaluate and improve on the results of the ADRN services that are provided to individual consumers and their families, as well as to other organizations in the community. This can include linkages with other data systems, such as Medicaid information systems and electronic health records. The Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement component of an ADRN should also involve formal processes for getting input and feedback from consumers and their families on the ADRN's operations and on-going development. Every ADRN should have measurable performance goals and indicators related to its visibility, trust, ease of access, consumer responsiveness, efficiency and effectiveness.