



At the Center of it All.

**MCOA Annual Report to the Membership
Part III:**

Goals and Objectives for FY09
– work in progress –

MCOA: 2008-2010

Proposed Goals for MCOA and Objectives for our Standing Committees, Working Groups, Task Forces and Liaisons

MCOA Leadership: Major Initiatives Proposed for FY09:

MCOA through cooperative relationships and/or participation in coalitions with other advocates and state agencies has developed the following priorities:

- **Mental Health:** As a member of the MA Aging and Mental Health Coalition and in partnership with DMH and EOEA, MCOA will continue to advocate for the development of a comprehensive mental health plan for elders. Components of this plan shall include improved access to mental health services, in-home visits as a part of emergency services, geriatric mental health specialists on staff at Emergency Service Centers, and educational programs to reduce the “stigma” that has been associated with such services.
- **Wellness Centers:** MCOA will continue to encourage its membership to develop evidenced-based programs that promote wellness and healthy aging and work to ensure that “wellness” programming becomes a priority for senior centers.
- **Disaster Preparedness:** In conjunction and cooperation with EOEA, MEMA and DPH, MCOA will work to ensure that Disaster Preparedness Plans include older adults as well as to further educate this population on the necessity to be personally prepared for such disasters.
- **Review the Title III-C Nutrition Program** and its importance and relevance to COA meal programs. Examine the reasons for decline in participation and identify best practices for the provision of meal programs at Senior Centers.
- **Transportation:** Develop a Commonwealth Transportation Summit to address the unmet needs and funding sources to provide for adequate elder care transportation. Explore alternative transportation models that can be easily replicated throughout Massachusetts. Continue to participate in the Safe Roads Now Coalition for the purpose of advocating for road safety and driver retesting in a comprehensive and timely manner.
- **Support the Governor’s Initiatives on Workforce Development and Civic Engagement (NGA):** Older adults are a valuable resource. Through career/job retraining and education, older adults can greatly assist in maintaining a viable workforce within Massachusetts. The wisdom and talent of older adults is an untapped resource that can be utilized to address community challenges through civic engagement. Councils on Aging can play an important role in assisting with this initiative through serving as training centers, and coordinating civic engagement opportunities
- **Underserved Populations:** MCOA is committed to ensuring that the needs of “underserved and special needs” populations is a priority of local Councils on Aging. MCOA will provide education and training designed to assist with outreach and program development to meet these needs including identifying best practices.
- **Supportive Day:** Enhanced the existing Supportive Day network, a vital part of Massachusetts eldercare continuum, by spearheading a review of day reimbursement rates, development of an online technical assistance manual, and promoting new programs throughout the Commonwealth.

Develop a Legislative Agenda that includes the following priorities:

- **Line Item #9110-9002:** Advocate for funding to reach the goal of \$8/elder or the equivalent of one minimum wage hour/elder.
- **Aging in Place/ Property Tax Issues:** advocate for legislation and policies that enable elders to remain in their own homes despite the rise in property taxes.
- **Save Our Senior Centers:** Develop a tool kit that enables Councils on Aging to advocate for the seniors of their community when faced with budget reductions or elimination.
- **Advocacy 101:** Revise and update the Advocacy Tool Kit and provide education to Councils on Aging that will enable staff and boards to advocate for programs and services to meet the needs of seniors.
- **Summit- The Common Agenda:** MCOA is committed to fostering a cooperative relationship with all elder advocates by educating candidates in the upcoming election about the needs of elders and the effectiveness of community based programs; developing legislation that supports services for elders and their caregivers; and assembling a list of current concerns and potential solutions.
- **Senior Center Construction and Renovation:** Advocate for alternative state funding sources for the construction and renovation of senior centers to enable program development and service delivery to meet the needs and increased demand that is anticipated by the “baby boomers.”

MCOA Leadership: Major Initiatives Proposed for FY09: continued

System Wide Upgrades:

- **Continue to encourage the professional development of Council on Aging staff and boards through a variety of educational forums.**
 - a. **Promote Staff Certification and NISC Accreditation** to further develop the professionalism of Council on Aging and Senior Center staff and to encourage minimal standards for service delivery;
 - b. **Explore funding to increase MCOA's Capacity Building with Circuit Riders** that will bring additional technical assistance;
 - c. **Actively promote membership in NISC/NCOA** to further assist with educational opportunities for MCOA members;
 - d. **Update MCOA's New Director Module & Training:** Fully 40% of COAs are currently being operated by Directors with less than 5 years experience. To ensure that new Directors are effectively able to fulfill their responsibilities, MCOA will provide training opportunities, a strong mentorship program, and an updated training manual;
 - e. **Develop tools that will explain and enhance the role of municipal COA Boards;** and
 - f. **Web Presence:** MCOA will expand our web page to include Virtual Work Groups/Bulletin Boards where members can share ideas and ask questions. Web page expansion will also include links to other sites relevant to COAs.
- **Computerization:** MCOA remains committed to developing and showcasing technology that assists with the efficient delivery of services and programs for the elderly. Examples of such technology include The Upper Cape Outreach Tool, Benefits Check Up and 'swipe card' systems for tracking participation.
- **Develop a 'Business Plan':** with the assistance of Jill Jackson from NCOA, establish a Business Plan for MCOA
- **COA Campaign:** MCOA will review WMACA's effort to coordinate a marketing campaign that for a specified period of time, and if successful, will expand this initiative statewide. A final Marketing toolkit will be distributed statewide and provide templates/resources that can be utilized and tailored within local media markets. In addition we will increase the circulation of *Focal Points*, our public newsletter.
- **Pursue the Action steps delineated by our Standing Committees, Working Groups, and Task Forces delineated on the following pages.**

Association Goals:

In addition to these initiatives, the **Advisory Council & the Board of Directors** of MCOA has established these ongoing goals for the association:

- Produce a variety of educational forums that provide training and support to directors, staff and boards of councils on aging and senior centers throughout the Commonwealth.
- Oversee and manage grants related to MCOA's Mission: currently these include Keep Moving, an arthritis grant, and the WMACA PR Campaign.
- Pursue a membership driven legislative agenda that generates enhanced services and additional funding for COAs and the seniors we assist.
- Develop a comprehensive campaign to increase the visibility of MCOA and the programs that COAs and senior centers administer.
- Implement strategies that emphasize that Massachusetts senior centers are a "welcoming place for all."
- Pursue alternative funding strategies to support agencies' initiatives.
- Refocus the network's energy and funding on the OAA concept of community focal points.

To achieve this agenda our bylaws allow for various components of our association to propose objectives. Currently there are 13 Standing Committees, 6 Working Groups and 14 Task Forces (current total 33) that meet regularly to achieve defined objectives. The following list of objectives should be regarded as a "work in progress" and may be added to or altered at any time by a vote of the membership. Currently these entities are working on:

Ongoing Objectives of the Standing Committees

Advisory Council and Board of Directors

- Further review the decision making process of the association and the role of Regional Representatives.
- Enhance the lines of communication with the membership.
- Schedule a day away for the leadership to chart the future course for the association.

Staff Certification Committee: As an initiative with a measurable outcome, Staff Certification will increase the professionalism of our network and improve services to the seniors of our Commonwealth.

- MCOA will encourage COA Staff to apply for certification to promote the 'professionalization' of our members.
- Provide opportunities for certified COA staff to obtain continuing education credits (CEC) at meetings and conferences.
- Conduct Certification for FY 09 including the third Certification level, Aging Services Administrator.

Legislative Committee

- Continue to advocate for increased funding for Line Item #9110-9002 and for other eldercare programs.
- To assist seniors who are trying to financially age in place, continue to work with the legislature and other municipal coalitions to provide property tax relief for seniors trying to age in place in our cities and towns.
- Monitor proposals directed at Social Security reform and advocate for such reform as directed by the membership.
- Continue to pursue funding for capital projects (i.e., senior centers, vans, updated technology).
- Pursue Title III funding for our statewide initiative.
- Continue participation in the Safe Roads Now Coalition to ensure that Massachusetts roads are safe for all drivers.
- Work with the elder care network to advocate for policies and programs that would ensure that all elders have the financial ability to meet daily living expenses.
- Develop a nationwide coalition to work on reversing the windfall elimination penalty against social security payments to municipal employees.
- Advocate for other eldercare legislation as directed by the membership

Fall Conference Committee

- Arrange for a three day fall conference.
- Conduct a survey of the attendees about their satisfaction of this event and incorporate suggestion into planning future events.

Education/Membership Committee

- Address membership needs by providing timely and informative programs at four meetings during the coming year.

Public Relations- COA Campaign Committee

- Develop strategies to increase the visibility of MCOA and local COAs.
- Distribute the comprehensive package by public relations materials that local COAs can adapt.
- Develop features that further enhance our web site- mcoaonline.com
- Resurrect circulation of *Focal Points*.
- Review WMACA's Coordinated Campaign and explore statewide implementation.

Personnel Committee

- Review the Personnel Policies.
- Conduct a Performance Review of Executive Director.

Finance/ Resource Development Committee

- Oversee the Annual Audit/ financial review.
- Review current budget and investigate additional sources of income.
- Insure that adequate equipment and space is provided to staff.

Nominating Committee

- Nominate a roster of officers and regional representatives for 2008-2010.
- Fill vacancies as they arise.

Small and Rural COA Committee

- Develop strategies that meet the needs of small and rural councils on aging on our Commonwealth.
- Conduct a one day spring conference focusing on the needs of small and rural COAs.

Governance Committee

- Review Corporate Bylaws- as necessary

New Director Orientation Committee

- Distribute the new director's orientation manual and post it online.
- Develop a new director's curriculum.
- Schedule; and promote Mentoring.
- Coordinate activities with the Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

Ongoing Objectives of the Working Groups

Supportive Day Working Group

- **Will develop a best practices manual for Marketing your Supportive Day Program**
- Advocate for a stronger referral base from within the network of medical, mental health and elder care providers.
- Collaborate with each other to create a statewide marketing program for New Supportive Day Programs.
- Promote professional networking to exchange ideas, share resources and best practices among Supportive Day Programs.
- Conduct meetings to address needs of membership.
- Review relationship and coordinate resources with Adult Day programs
- Review Supportive Day Standards & assist the membership with its understanding of the document. Advocate for changes as necessary.

Outreach Summit Working Group

- Conduct bi-annual full day trainings to address the education needs of and provide support for outreach staff. (with continuing education credits for certification)
- Continue to encourage MCOA certification of outreach staff to promote professional growth.
- Provide support and training on how best to handle the increase of outreach needs with the baby boomer population.
- Continue to provide the opportunity for outreach staff to share best practices at our respective centers.

Wellness Center Working Group

- Continue to provide assistance to communities developing Wellness Centers.
- Pursue funding where appropriate for demonstration projects.
- Provide presenters and workshop ideas for Fall Conference (2008).
- Develop a web based resource of health promotion material to assist local COAs.
- Assist with the grant implementation, if awarded by AoA, the state wellness program.
- Promote evidence-based programming at senior centers.
- Begin to repackage existing senior center programming to highlight 'wellness' activities.

Activities/Programming Working Group

- Promote professional networking to exchange ideas and best practices.
- Develop information sharing network online and quarterly self directed activities.
- Develop a mentorship program to assist new Center Activities Directors.
- Develop a curriculum for training including time management, programming for diverse population, and preparing for the future senior.
- Promote MCOA's certification process and the national activity directors program.
- Promote travel and tourism within the Commonwealth.
- Develop an activity manual of best practices and "how to's".

Volunteer Coordinator's Working Group

- Continue to build a statewide network of volunteer coordinators.
- Encourage use of model volunteer manual.
- Develop best practices for Boomer recruiting and retention.
- Continue to use of mentoring to assist new volunteer coordinators.
- Promote professionalizing volunteers.
- Continue to address innovative volunteer recruiting, retention and recognition strategies.

Board Development Working Group

- In conjunction with the Executive Office of Elder Affairs, develop a curriculum and schedule to train new and existing board members about their roles and responsibilities; as well as new directions in senior center planning.

Ongoing Objectives of the Task Forces

Minority Outreach & Programming Task Force

- Reinvigorate this work group.
- Develop best practices, programming and outreach techniques that will assist
- All communities to plan and provide services to the various minority populations.

Transportation Task Force

- Monitor the development of the state sponsored regional transit initiative to ensure that COA escort services remain intact and that members are aware of any sub-contracting opportunities.

Protective Service Task Force

- Pursue additional funding to meet the documented needs.
- Monitor the implementation of the new law that specifies that COAs are mandated reporters.
- Assist with the training of our members.

Elder at Risk Task Force

- Continue to develop a collaborative model of in-home mental health assessments for Elders at Risk.
- Support legislation that provides this mandated service adequate funding.
- Distribute a software program statewide that will assist field staff in assessing the needs of clients, and specifically flags elders at potential risk.

EOEA Contract/Grant Requirements Task Force

- Pursue the membership sanctioned changes in the Formula and Incentive Programs including a multi-year funding application process; restricting the use of incentive grant funding to new and innovative projects, regional associations/consortia; and demonstrated hardships; and a revamping of the annual report tool.

Property Tax Relief Task Force

- Provide educational awareness programs.
- Conduct a joint summit with the Assessors Association to review existing relief for seniors.
- Work on legislation that will enable seniors to take advantage of property tax exemptions and programs.

Accreditation Task Force

- Continue to support the efforts of NISC to establish a national accreditation standard.
- Encourage Massachusetts Senior Centers to apply.

Mental Health Task Force

- Continue working through the Massachusetts Aging and Mental Health Coalition (MAMHC) for legislative funding, recognizing the importance of community based behavioral health solutions.
- Continue to educate MCOA membership on behavioral health issues-utilizing opportunities at the quarterly membership meetings and the fall and spring conferences.
- Be an active co-sponsor of MAMHC Annual meeting and other events.
- Encourage and promote best practices models with the goal of improving access to elder mental health services.

Newsletter Task Force

- Review local COA newsletters and highlight existing services and programs for the MCOA NEWS.

Computer Online Task Force

- Continue to examine technology that could assist in the operation of senior centers and benefit elders directly.
- Pursue funding for statewide initiatives.

Emergency Preparedness Task Force

- Review current strategies that towns have implemented for their effectiveness when dealing with the elder population during disasters such as flu pandemic, terrorism, and weather emergencies.
- Develop best practice model for assisting elders during these emergencies.
- Work with EOEA, MEMA and DPH to make sure the best systems are in place.
- Pursue additional funding as necessary.

Ongoing Objectives of the Task Forces (continued)

Title IIIC Task Force

- Re-establish Statewide Title IIIC Task Force to examine IIIC meals and use of the food commodity program with all interested parties.
- Examine the existing model to see if it does meet and will meet the needs of older adults.
- Improve communication between existing nutrition programs and host sites.
- Inventory programs that are currently not part of the IIIC program.
- Standardize forms, procedures and reimbursement rates statewide.

Senior Center Models Task Force

- Examine ways to make sure our senior centers are a 'welcoming place for all' including the new cohort-baby boomers.

Awards Task Force

- Review the new timeline for presenting MCOA Awards and recognizing Staff Certification designees
- Develop methodology to publicize this event and attract a wider audience.

Save our Senior Center & Senior Center Directors Project

- Provide assistance to communities fighting to keep their senior centers open or a COA Director on staff.
- Document, as historical record, emergency situations in our network.
- Provide directors a toolkit of statistics, strategies and successful measures that have helped others during their crisis situations.
- Offer support, brainstorming, and personal assistance to any community or individual in need.

Additional Objectives:

NISC

- **Promote membership in NISC and NCOA**
- **Develop a coalition to correct the windfall elimination penalty**
- **Work in Coalition to safeguard Social Security and Medicare and provide additional finding for the Older Americans Act.**

Community Liaisons

- Maintain the strong relationships with designated eldercare agencies (Partners) by coordinating cross training opportunities and shared legislative strategies.
- Work in Partnership with the Tax Aid Program to ensure the best system of service delivery for residents of the Commonwealth who need assistance to file both Federal and State Income Taxes. Pursue new funding from the Commonwealth to assist with this objective.
- Work in Partnership with WGBH with their efforts to open their program archives to municipal COAs and libraries; and with their initiative to get 'digital converter boxes' into the homes of seniors who will need them.
- Review strategic alliances.

Internal Operations

- Develop with the regional associations four conferences to be held in the spring of 2008.
- Continue to focus on cost cutting initiatives and alternative funding sources to augment our budget.
- Provide technical assistance, facilitation, and support to the membership.
- Be responsive to meeting the needs of the membership by collecting and disseminating information pertinent to Councils on Aging, Senior Centers, and other elder care providers.
- Update the conference planning manual.
- Pursue alternate funding sources for the MPLC License.

Notes:

- ◆ This document is fluid and may be changed or augmented at any time with a vote from the Membership or the Board or the Advisory Council.
- ◆ Individuals interested in participating on any of the above should contact MCOA and request a Call for Participation application that provides further details. This form was included in the July 1st MCOA Dues Mailing and will also be in the 2008 Sea Crest Resort fall conference packet.
- ◆ MCOA's President makes all appointments to the Standing Committees, Work Groups and Task Forces, and all Liaison positions as authorized by the Bylaws.