



## **Aging Texas Well Plan 2016-17**

As Required by  
Executive Order RP 42

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**Texas Department of Aging and Disability Services**

**September 2015**

## *Aging Texas Well Plan 2016-17: Mandates and Planned Actions*

The mandates within Executive Order RP 42 form the core elements of all Aging Texas Well (ATW) plans. In the ATW plan for 2016-17 below, the mandates are highlighted in bold, and the activities to carry them out are listed beneath each mandate. Department of Aging and Disability Services (DADS) staff developed these activities with input from the Aging Texas Well Advisory Committee (ATWAC). DADS staff in several divisions will carry out the objectives with assistance from ATW partners, including the ATWAC, other state agencies, educational institutions, non-governmental organizations, and private organizations.

### **Mandate 1: Advisory Committee**

**ATWAC will advise DADS and make recommendations to state leadership on the implementation of the ATW initiative.**

Key ATWAC actions during the 2016-17 biennium will include:

- Help develop the ATW 2016-17 plan.
- Annual review of ATW plan implementation.
- Participate in quarterly meetings where members will:
  - Identify and discuss aging policy issues, review and provide guidance for state government readiness to address issues facing older Texans, and promote increased local community preparedness for aging Texans;
  - Present on topics affecting the older adult population in Texas; and
  - Provide updates on their organizations' and agencies' activities related to the older adult population in Texas.
- Review, discuss and provide recommendations to DADS and state leadership on policy issues and priorities, community preparedness, and state agency readiness by sharing insights gained in the field, preparing white papers, and giving presentations as requested.
- Ensure a qualified and active ATWAC by:
  - Nominating knowledgeable candidates to the committee as vacancies occur and ensuring they have expertise in providing services to informal caregivers, geriatric healthcare, aging and individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), transportation services, behavioral health, and federal healthcare policy;
  - Encouraging member engagement and development through increased responsibilities, such as drafting white papers with policy recommendations, submitting recommendations for the DADS legislative appropriation requests, and reviewing and providing input to the ATW plan; and
  - Amending ATWAC bylaws as needed.

## **Mandate 2: Aging Texas Well Plan**

**With the advice of the ATWAC, DADS shall create and disseminate a comprehensive and effective working plan to identify and discuss aging policy issues, guide state government readiness, and promote increased community preparedness for an aging Texas. DADS will biennially update the plan and evaluate and report on its implementation.**

Key actions for DADS staff include:

- Gather input from DADS program areas and ATWAC members to develop the ATW plan; and
- Assess the progress of the ATW plan and prepare an annual review to be submitted the ATWAC in February 2016.

## **Mandate 3: Review of State Policy**

**With the advice of the ATWAC, DADS shall review and/or comment on state policies, concentrating on current critical trends, including but not limited to: improving services for informal caregivers; promoting evidence-based disability and disease prevention activities; increasing the recruitment and retention of health care providers trained in geriatrics; improving the provision of services and supports to individuals with IDD who are aging; reviewing options to expand the mobility of older adults through affordable, accessible and integrated transportation services; improving the provision of behavioral health services and supports to older persons; and reviewing federal changes in health care policy.**

Key actions for DADS staff include:

- Gather and analyze data to better understand the conditions and needs of older Texans, share reports and presentations to encourage a broader understanding of issues, and inform policy as needed to better serve aging Texans in the following areas:
  - Informal caregivers and existing caregiver support programs, including evidence-based programs, respite care, education, and decision-support services;
  - Older adult physical and behavioral health issues and available evidence-based physical and behavioral health promotion programs;
  - Services and supports available to older Texans with developmental and intellectual disabilities and providing recommendations for improvement of services and supports;
  - Transportation needs, trends in delivering transportation, and innovations in transportation systems and services;
  - End of life issues;
  - Services and supports available to assist aging Texans with access to needed medications; and
  - The need to increase the recruitment and retention of health care providers trained to work with individuals over the age 60.

- Facilitate ATWAC's review and/or comment on state policies by collecting and providing information as requested.
- Expand the availability of evidence-based programs in health promotion, disease prevention, and caregiving by:
  - Building alliances with various grant funders and evidence-based license holders to expand the availability of evidence-based program workshops and training opportunities for participants and volunteers;
  - Working with the Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and Aging and Disability Resource Centers (ADRCs) to increase their knowledge about, funding for, and ability to offer evidence-based programs; and
  - Expanding the ATW evidence-based clearinghouse for health promotion by adding information about emerging evidence-based practices, new research, and evidence-based workshop locations in Texas.
- Follow the efforts of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to track the number of medical residencies that are specific to the older adult population offered in the state and the number of both filled and open residency positions.
- Implement an initiative to measure and meet the needs of a stable and adequate direct support workforce. Efforts will include:
  - Results of a state-wide survey of direct support workers to inform and guide policymakers and serve as a baseline for assessing the progress of workforce interventions.
- Support the Texas Lifespan Respite Care Program efforts to expand information and services to informal caregivers throughout the state. Actions will include:
  - Continued collaboration with the Texas Respite Coalition;
  - Enhancement of the Take Time Texas website, including expansion of the Texas Inventory of Respite Providers database; and
  - Increased outreach to the public about the Take Time Texas website and the Texas Inventory of Respite Providers database.
- Continue to collaborate with DSHS and other partners on the Behavioral Health and Aging Workgroup on educational materials and events (such as issue briefs and conference presentations), offer evidence-based behavioral health training to AAA and ADRC staff throughout the state, and related activities to address the behavioral health needs of older Texans. DADS may participate in:
  - Developing a curriculum around older adult behavioral health issues for physicians;
  - Expanding the scope of the Behavioral Health and Aging Workgroup by developing a strategic five-year plan; and
  - Seeking grant opportunities to implement additional evidenced-based practice pilot programs.

#### **Mandate 4: State Agency Readiness**

**DADS shall lead a planning effort to ensure the readiness of all Texas state agencies to serve an aging population by identifying issues and current initiatives, future needs, action steps, and methods of performance evaluation. The effort shall advance an intergenerational approach to policies, programs, and services to address the needs of Texans across the lifespan.**

- ATWAC members who represent state agencies will provide updates on their agencies' services, issues, current initiatives, future needs, and methods of performance evaluation for the older adult population at ATWAC meetings and to DADS staff as requested for inclusion in the biennial ATW plan;
- DADS will support state agency preparedness for the expanding older adult population by developing and sharing resources, including web-based information briefs. DADS will continue to provide expertise and technical assistance to other agencies upon request and will:
  - Revise ATW website to enhance consumer and clearinghouse information;
  - Provide regular updates on the ATW website;
  - Provide information and presentations to the Texas Joint Legislative Committee on Aging as requested;
  - Participate in collaborative workgroups;
  - Develop a curriculum around older adult life issues for physicians;
  - Assess Texas' readiness to handle older adult life issues within the workforce;
  - Educate and address the older adult life issues in the event of a disaster; and
  - Make presentations with and to other agency staff as appropriate.

#### **Mandate 5: Texercise**

**DADS, the Department of State Health Services, Governor's Advisory Council on Physical Fitness, and other appropriate state and community organizations shall continue to promote and expand the internationally-recognized Texercise program as a means to ensure healthy lifestyles in older Texans.**

- Texercise is a statewide health promotion initiative developed by DADS to educate older Texans about nutrition and involve them in physical activity. During 2016-17, DADS will:
  - Continue to work with state and local organizations to promote and expand the Texercise program;
  - Evaluate the effectiveness of the Texercise program; and
  - Continue to implement and expand GetFitTexas, an online physical activity tracking database.

## **Mandate 6: Local Community Preparedness**

**DADS shall work with public and private community partners, including state and local governments, to build capacity to serve a growing aging population through partnership development and planning using formal community assessment processes.**

- DADS, in collaboration with the AAAs, ADRCs, and other public, private, and state agency partners, will:
  - Support the AAA role as a change agent to complete the pilot phase of the ATW Community Assessment Toolkit (CAT) currently in process in three communities (existing ATW CAT implementation grants have been made to the North Central, Tarrant County, and South East AAAs);
  - Develop partnerships with public and private organizations to build community capacity to serve older Texans;
  - Provide technical assistance as appropriate and as requested to any community engaged in age-friendly community assessment processes;
  - Update and disseminate public awareness materials to support ATW initiatives throughout the state;
  - Apply for, and implement, grants that develop and test new initiatives;
  - Develop and distribute ATW, Texercise, Age Well Live Well, and Volunteer and Community Engagement public awareness materials; and
  - Support local community efforts to provide educational opportunities such as Senior Expos, community health fairs, etc. as requested.