



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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COUNTY COMMISSIONERS INVEST MORE THAN \$2.35 MILLION TO PROVIDE VITAL HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES TO AGING POPULATION

With the latest Central Ohio census figures showing that the age group between 50 and 69 years old grew by nearly a third over the last decade, Franklin County Commissioners are investing more than \$2.35 million in 41 different programs designed to meet the varied needs of senior citizens.

Earlier today, Commissioners approved the 2012 renewal of contracts with nearly 30 local agencies and non-profit service providers who work with the area's senior citizens.

The programs include specialized services for caregiver support, outreach to specialized populations, supportive services, small group transportation, health promotion/wellness, intergenerational programming and volunteer programming.

For the first time, the contracts include a unique nutrition-based partnership with LifeCare Alliance to provide a Farmers Market Program that will give low-income seniors an opportunity to purchase nutrient-rich fresh fruits and vegetables. LifeCare Alliance will also provide transportation to congregate meal sites, giving senior nutritional meals and services that are critical to health and quality of life.

Other funded program areas include:

- Caregiver support programs to target the needs of those caring for a loved one. Specifically, these programs give caregivers the tools they need to cope with the stress and other special needs associated with caring for an older adult.
- Small group transportation to enable older adults to continue to live an active, involved lifestyle, by providing basic transportation services. While medical appointments take priority, personal shopping, and group outings provide valuable social interaction with peers and a world outside the client's own home.
- Outreach to specialized populations to improve the social connectedness of older adults who live in targeted areas to ensure their basic needs are being met and that they have knowledge of and/or access to available community programs and resources.
- Supportive services programs to help maintain self-sufficiency and wellness among older adults. Supportive services activities are designed to locate, advise, and assist seniors in accessing available community resources.
- Health promotion/wellness programs to target underserved populations and provide services which improve the quality of mental and physical health.

- Intergenerational programming to provide opportunities for mutual learning and relationship building between older adults and children. Such programs provide a better understanding for both generational populations.
- Volunteer programming to seek volunteers to assist older adults who are seeking employment and to provide a guardian to indigent older adults who are assessed as mentally incapacitated and have no family. Through the Senior Companion Program older adults provide free companionship and other friendly visiting activities to other older adults.

Public support of Franklin County's Senior Services Levy has provided the bulk of the funding for these vital health and human services to the county's aging population. This year marks the 20th year of funding through the voter-approved levy.

Commissioners also approved the Franklin County Older Refugee Program, funded through the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, as a way to assist refugee seniors integrating into their new community. With this \$69,000 grant, the Office on Aging partners with the Community Refugee and Immigration Services (CRIS) to implement this successful outreach program.

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