



Age-Friendly

Broome County

A Community for Everyone

ACTION PLAN

2023 - 2026

Domain #1: Information and Communication

GOAL 1: Promote age-friendly practices throughout Broome County and the use of age-friendly communication.

Objective 1: Promote age-friendly practices and approaches to serving the community in Broome County.

Action Steps:

- Continue to distribute age-friendly promotional materials (bags, pens) at OFA events and promote approaching programs and services with an age-friendly focus through work with community partners.
- Continue to promote the concept of an age-friendly “lens” that can guide and impact community planning.
<https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/network-age-friendly-communities/info-2014/an-introduction.html>

Objective 2: Promote age-friendly communication practices.

Action Steps:

- Continue to distribute the “Age-Friendly Communication Fact Sheet” to businesses, nonprofits, community organizations, Broome County government departments, and municipalities to encourage age-friendly communication practices in print, traditional media, digital and verbal communication.

GOAL 2: Enhance education about existing community programs, services, and events among professionals and the public.

Objective 1: Create a series of short educational videos on a variety of topics such as housing, transportation options, volunteerism, socialization opportunities, and more.

Action Steps:

- OFA interns and/or volunteers will work with OFA program managers to develop interview-style videos about OFA program/services. Share videos on OFA's YouTube channel, on Facebook, and on OFA's website.

Objective 2: Continue to publicize programs/services and local events through the monthly "Mark Your Calendar" column in the *Senior News*.

Action Steps:

- OFA will research and compile a variety of local events when information is publicly available prior to the deadline for the next month's *Senior News* issue.
- OFA will publish *Senior News* articles about community programs/services that benefit older adults and their caregivers.

GOAL 3: Improve access to affordable home internet.

Objective 1: Publicize opportunities to learn about technology and to obtain tech support.

Action Steps:

- Distribute the "Technology Resources" flyer to community members.
- Publicize available technology assistance through the *Senior News*, Facebook, Senior Centers, etc.

Domain #2: Community Supports and Health Services

GOAL 1: Demonstrate the value of integrating traditional community-based aging services with medical systems of care for a more person-centered approach to care through community collaboration.

Objective 1: Work with local hospital systems and primary care offices on establishing contracts with OFA to connect their clients to services that address their non-medical needs.

Action Steps:

- Identify local hospital systems and/or primary care providers who are interested in these contracts.
- Develop a collaborative whole-person care model and closed loop of communication between Broome County Office for Aging (OFA) and identified Medical Primary Care Office that will result in better health outcomes and quality of life for older adults and their caregivers.
- Demonstrate the value of integrating traditional community-based aging services with medical systems of care for a more person-centered approach to care through community collaboration.
- Improve patients' access to needed community services while addressing their medical need to positively impact social drivers of health that can be time consuming for physicians and other medical staff.
- Position Broome County OFA to be ready for implementation of a newly approved CMS sustainable payment model effective January 1, 2024 for community-based organizations to be reimbursed for services provided to Medicare Beneficiaries.

Objective 2: Advocate for increased local delivery of primary and urgent care in rural areas, including mobile health services.

Action Steps:

- Identify current local primary and urgent care options in rural areas to learn about specific gaps in geographic coverage.
- Advocate for expanded rural healthcare options with local healthcare providers.
- Explore utilizing community locations as settings for the delivery of periodic wellness services such as blood pressure and diabetes checks, flu shot clinics, etc.
- Work to expand the coverage of mobile healthcare vans working in underserved areas.

Objective 3: Increase access to transportation for medical care for older adults.

Action Steps:

- Promote current transportation options including the Getthere mobility management program, Senior Helpers and BC Country.
- Continue to serve on the Getthere Advisory Council to advocate for the needs of older adults.

Objective 4: Encourage use of tele-health services among older adults.

Action Steps:

- Use OFA Interns to train older adults on use of tele-health and provide technology training.
- Connect older adults to affordable internet options.
- If available provide loaner equipment to access tele-health services.

GOAL 2: Improve access to affordable, timely, and convenient mental health and substance use disorder services and activities that promote mental wellness.

Objective 1: Educate the public about available mental health and substance use disorder services.

Action Steps:

- Promote awareness of mental health care options which can be accessed immediately or that provide emergency services through OFA's Senior News, social media, and printed publications.
- Publish Senior News articles that encourage older adults to consider their mental health and strategies that can improve it.
- Promote awareness of available phone support programs such crisis lines (MHAAT, CPEP) and friendly callers for older adults (RSVP).
- Identify geriatric mental health counselors and other mental health counselors who can do home visits or are available for phone tele health.

Objective 2: Continue to address social isolation issues by providing access to preventative programs and activities.

Action Steps:

- OFA will continue to operate the Social Isolation Program that plans activities to address social isolation among the older population. These programs and activities will include but not be limited to: distribution of Animatronic pets, tablets, ElliQ robots, the Friendly Visiting program, Discover Live World Tours, Virtual Lyceum classes and the Enliveo Virtual Senior Center program.

GOAL 3: Connect older adults to long-term services in Broome County.

Objective 1: Promote NY Connects as a source for up-to-date information about community programs and services.

Action Steps:

- Continue to publicize NY Connects through articles in the *Senior News* and through speaking engagements by Office for Aging staff.
- Ensure that agencies and healthcare providers are informed about how NY Connects can assist their clients in obtaining clear and accessible information about services.
- Continue to provide brochures about NY Connects to agencies, healthcare providers and at a variety of community locations.
- Feature NY Connects on digital platforms such as Facebook.

Objective 2: Work on innovative ways to help older adults age in place.

Action Steps:

- OFA will monitor unmet needs as reported by older adults to assist with service planning and funding allocations.
- OFA will advocate to address unmet needs at the local, state and federal level.

Domain #3: Respect, Social Inclusion, Civic Participation, and Employment

GOAL 1: Collaborate with partners to educate the community about the benefits of inclusiveness and how to engage with individuals with diverse lives and needs.

Objective 1: Arrange, advocate for and educate the community about programming that encourages integration and inclusiveness of people of all abilities and ages.

Action Steps:

- Collaborate with local organizations on creating inclusive community events and programs.
- Work with local organizations to create programming that is sensitive to the needs of all participants.

GOAL 2: Enhance education about existing community resources, social and cultural opportunities, and events.

Objective 1: Promote existing sources of community information through digital, TV/radio, social media, print, and public speaking.

Action Steps:

- Publicize the “Broome Directory for Older Adults, Caregivers and Individuals with Disabilities” through traditional media such as the *Senior News*, press releases as well as through digital outlets and social media.
- Promote Broome County Office for Aging’s NY Connects service for individualized information and referrals through networking meetings and public outreach events.

Objective 2: Utilize digital Blooming Health platform to send alerts to subscribed individuals about upcoming events and activities at the local senior centers and/or community.

Action Steps:

- OFA will maintain the Blooming Health platform by signing up individuals who wish to receive alerts.
- OFA will promote Blooming Health to increase number of individuals who are subscribed.

GOAL 3: Increase intergenerational opportunities.

Objective 1: Continue offering intergenerational programs such as a “Senior to Senior” dance and intergenerational games events.

Action Steps:

- Identify possible community partners interested in and capable of facilitating intergenerational programming.
- Conduct meetings to identify feasible programming ideas.
- Plan, implement, and evaluate the success of programs.

GOAL 4: Improve awareness within Broome County of retirement opportunities related to lifelong education, physical activity, volunteering, employment, and civic engagement.

Objective 1: Publicize information and assistance services that address social inclusion, lifelong education, physical activity, volunteering, employment, and civic engagement.

Action Steps:

- Run a series of monthly articles in the “Ask the Office” section of the *Senior News* about the ways that OFA’s information and assistance service can assist by topic.
- Include information about social inclusion, civic participation, volunteering, and employment in a monthly series called “Ask the Office” published in the *Senior News*.

Domain #4: Transportation

GOAL: Older adults will have access to transportation options.

Objective 1: Promote and advocate for rural transportation options for older adults in Broome County.

Action Steps:

- Work with Rural Health Network’s Getthere Mobility Management and Broome County Department of Public Transportation to identify and define the current rural-to-urban transportation needs in the community.
- Engage in planning to address identified needs.
- Rural Health Network’s Northern Broome Cares NORC (Naturally Occurring Retirement Community) project will continue to provide rural-to-rural transportation in the towns of Barker, Nanticoke, Lisle, and Triangle, including the village of Whitney Point.

- Rural Health Network will grow the volunteer driver program that includes providing driver mileage reimbursement.

Objective 2: Educate the public about available transportation and transportation coordination services.

Action Steps:

- Continue to promote transportation services, trip planning assistance, and travel training through the Getthere mobility management program.
- Promote how BC Country assists residents in scheduling their appointments around bus availability to avoid long wait times.
- Publicize the OFA Mini-Bus, BC Lift, BC Country, fixed route bus system, Senior Helpers and Getthere as a transportation option for older adults.
- Publicize how new technology can assist with route planning and identifying transportation options: the Getthere Trip Planner and Broome County Public Transportation Department.

Domain #5: Housing

GOAL: Broome County older adults will have access to safe and affordable housing.

Objective 1: Advocate for the need for additional housing and a variety of housing options for low, middle-income, and rural older adults in Broome County.

Action Steps:

- Office for Aging will continue to educate the public about existing and new low, middle-income, and rural housing options in Broome County.
- Periodically update the Office for Aging publications about housing available on OFA's website: www.gobroomecounty.com/senior.
- Office for Aging will support housing developers through providing OFA data and Age-Friendly Housing Workgroup recommendations.
- Work with community partners to implement innovative housing options.

Objective 2: Advocate for home repair and modification options for Broome County older adults.

Action Steps:

- Support and advocate for community agencies to obtain more funding to help seniors repair and modify their homes.
- Work closely with community partners who provide home repair/modification to explore existing challenges and potential solutions.

- Continuously advocate with local and state entities to communicate the need for home repair and modification funding to improve existing housing stock which supports seniors who wish to remain in their homes and communities.
- Research efforts to educate homeowners about home maintenance, modifications, and hiring contractors. Possible resources include AARP’s “Here to Stay: Home Upkeep for All” program, “The AARP Home Fit Guide,” and the Southern Tier Home Builders and Remodelers Association. Provide these resources to Office for Aging clients and publicize through the *Senior News*, if appropriate.
- Office for Aging will continue to educate the public about contractor scams through articles in the *Senior News*.

Domain #6: Outdoor Spaces and Public Buildings

GOAL: People of all ages and abilities will have access to safe and inclusive facilities, outdoor spaces, and programs across all of Broome County.

Objective 1: Integrate age-friendly features into County facilities and outdoor spaces.

Action Steps:

- As capital upgrades are made to County facilities, encourage Facilities and Department of Public Works to utilize Universal Design Best Practices.
- Work with BroomeIncludes on inclusivity and safety features of OFA program locations such as senior centers.

GOAL: People of all ages and abilities will be aware of Broome County facilities and programs.

Objective 1: Publicize information about facilities, activities, and discount programs throughout Broome County.

Action Steps:

- Explore utilizing community volunteers as guest speakers at the senior centers and to community organizations to educate the public and encourage use of County assets.
- Identify ways to cross-promote County facilities between departments.
- Publicize activities and event discount programs available to older adults in the *Senior News* and encourage other local publications and agencies to spread the word.