

NVAN

the Northern Virginia Aging Network

A Guide for Participants

On behalf of the Northern Virginia Aging Network (NVAN), **WELCOME!** Your expertise and perspective are valuable, and the participants appreciate your willingness to be involved in our network. It is a pleasure to provide this guide to you; it is meant to help new participants gain quick information about the network.

Who are we?

NVAN is a coalition of advocates, planning agencies, and service providers for Virginia's older population and their family caregivers. It was created in 1976 when the Northern Virginia Area Agency on Aging (AAA) divided into the current five AAAs. Our participants include the five Commissions on Aging and Area Agencies on Aging from the City of Alexandria, and the Counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, and Prince William, the Falls Church Senior Citizens Office and Council as well as a number of regional human service and advocacy organizations, such as AARP, the Alzheimer's Association, the National Association of Active and Retired Federal Employees, and the Northern Virginia Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program. Participants meet to discuss issues of mutual concern, to craft a legislative platform for presentation to the Virginia General Assembly, and to discuss regional responses to critical issues affecting Northern Virginia's older adults.

How do we operate?

Participants commit time, talent, and energy to identifying and resolving problems faced by Northern Virginia's older population and its caregiving community, as well as providing essential staff support for NVAN activities. Dues are not required, and we do not have a budget.

NVAN meets on the third Tuesday of every other month at the office of the Northern Virginia Regional Commission (NVRC)¹ which is located at 3060

¹ The (NVRC) is a regional council of local governments in Northern Virginia. NVRC serves as a neutral forum where representatives of the member local governments can discuss and decide how to approach problems that cross county, city and town boundaries.

Williams Drive, Suite 510 Fairfax, Virginia 22031, 703-642-0700. Each meeting generally includes local, state and federal updates on relevant legislation and current topical concerns. Participants have the opportunity to share information and ask questions related to NVAN's interests. Occasionally, we have special meetings, such as a meeting of the legislative committee.

The Commissions on Aging rotate the responsibility for chairing the meetings. (See Appendix for a list of these responsibilities).

What is our major project?

NVAN has developed a state legislative platform every year since 1982, and has sponsored and hosted a legislative breakfast forum each fall since 2000 to call attention to our legislative platform and encourage positive action in the General Assembly. This gives Northern Virginians concerned and/or involved with issues affecting older adults the opportunity to talk directly with their own legislators.

In 2006, NVAN was nominated for and won a national award for the Annual Legislative Breakfast Forums, highlighting this innovative program in partnering for advocacy. This award, given by the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging, received press as a model program.

NVAN ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITIES

Through the development of a state legislative platform, meeting with individual members of Northern Virginia's legislation, and hosting a legislative breakfast forum, we educate, inform, and provide a better understanding of the needs and issues of Northern Virginia's older population.

Legislative Platform

Every year since 1982, NVAN has developed a state legislative platform. Participants volunteer to work on the legislative platform committee which entails determining platform priorities. These same participants then volunteer to work on a specific platform priority. This includes researching the specifics of the issue, drafting language to describe the issue, etc. The "draft" platform items are then presented at a full NVAN meeting so they can be considered. Finally, these volunteers adjust the language based on the comments received.

Meeting with Northern Virginia's Legislators

Participants volunteer to meet with a specific member(s) of the Northern Virginia's legislation to present and discuss NVAN's platform and garner support.

Annual Legislative Breakfast Forum

Beginning in 2000, an annual legislative breakfast forum has been held with staff support from the Northern Virginia Regional Commission (NVRC). Due to budget constraints, this support is no longer available. Each year the forum has picked up steam, and now there is need for funding support.

In the beginning, a handful of legislators attended the fall meeting and a small group of NVAN representatives presented the legislative platform. There were limitations on where the forum could be held: central and accessible to busy legislators. The annual NVAN legislative forum has "arrived." More Northern Virginia representatives to the General Assembly expect to learn NVAN's issues at this annual fall event and community providers and constituents attend the forum in growing numbers to speak with their legislators about important issues.

NVAN is very low-cost for the return on investment. There are dozens of volunteers who work on the legislative forum with dozens of in-kind and

out-of-pocket contributions. In recent consecutive years, Peggy Fox from Channel 7 has moderated the forums gratis. Keynoters and speakers are compelling and NVAN has moved into a multimedia environment for providing the legislative forum in a central, accessible, appropriate location offering a pleasant dining experience. Greenspring Village in Springfield, VA, the location of the forum since 2002, has contributed the rental cost of the dining/conference facility and transportation shuttle service from parking lots.

A Chronological Snapshot of the NVAN Annual Legislative Breakfast Forum:

2000 - Lincolnia Senior Housing multipurpose room, Alexandria (Fairfax County). 7 legislators/aides; 30 attendees* including 6 presenters from NVAN. NVAN planning group of 4 purchased and set up bagels & cream cheese, fruit juice, & paper goods, and Lincolnia provided the coffee.

2001 - Culpepper Garden Senior Housing dining/multipurpose room, Arlington. 8 legislators/aides; 40 attendees.* Culpepper Garden provided continental breakfast, covered by the charge of \$5 per person.

2002 - Greenspring Village, Springfield. Small dining facility across from auditorium. 17 legislators & aides; 125 attendees*. Charged \$10 which included a country breakfast buffet.

2003 - Greenspring Village, Springfield. Larger conference center/dining room. First time co-sponsored with AARP & NARFE (National Association of Active and Retired Federal Employees). This was a Candidate's Forum (election year). 15 candidates and 125 attendees*. *This was the year of Isabel locally and a tornado in Richmond.* Charged \$15 which included a country breakfast buffet.

2004 - Greenspring Village, Springfield. Cosponsors: AARP, NARFE, and NCPSSM (National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare). 19 legislators & aides; 164 attendees*. Charged \$15 which included plated breakfast of yogurt, fruit, & danish.

2005 – Greenspring Community, Springfield. Cosponsors: AARP, NARFE, NCPSSM, TLC4LTC (Tender Loving Care for Long Term Care), ProAging Network /Guide to Retirement Living (first cosponsor from the business community). This was a Candidate's forum (election year). 27 candidates

(19 elected and 8 hopefuls) + 127 attendees*. Charge \$15 which included a country breakfast.

2006 - Greenspring Community, Springfield. Cosponsors: AARP Virginia, Greenspring Community, VA Federation of NARFE, NCPSSM, ProAging Network, VAPCA (VA Assn. of Personal Care Assistants). 13 state legislators and 164 attendees*. Charged \$20 which included a country breakfast.

2007 - Greenspring Community, Springfield. Cosponsors: AARP Virginia, Greenspring, NCPSSM, ProAging Network/Guide to Retirement Living, VAPCA, VA Federation of NARFE, TLC4LTC. 21 legislators, aides, and candidates and 180 attendees*. Featured speaker: Betty Booker, Long-time Reporter on Aging Issues for the Richmond Times Dispatch, "Where are we now? What do we do next?" Remarks from Gail Jaspen, Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Resources. Charged \$20 which included a country breakfast.

2008 – Greenspring Community, Springfield. Cosponsors: AARP Virginia, Greenspring, NCPSSM, ProAging Network/Guide to Retirement Living, VAPCA, VA Federation of NARFE, TLC4LTC. 20 legislators and aides and 140 attendees*. Featured speaker: James Firman, President and CEO of the National Council on Aging, "Getting Ready for Baby Boomers: Needed Changes in Aging Services and Public Policy". Remarks from Linda Nablo, Commissioner of the Department for Aging. Charged \$20 which included a country breakfast with pancake bar.

*attendees – all forum participants as registrants or guests, exclusive of elected officials or official candidates for state office.

QUICK REFERENCE OF ACRONYMS

AAA **Area Agency on Aging**

The local organization (in Northern Virginia a part of local governments) charged with planning and providing services, either directly or through subcontracts, and educating the community about aging issues.

AARP National member organization for people 50+. (No longer “American Association of Retired Persons”; now just AARP)

AAHSA **American Association of Homes and Services**

National association of not-for-profit organizations who provide services for older adults.

ADRC **Aging and Disability Resource Centers**

Service centers that provide a place for the public to get accurate, unbiased information on all aspects of life related to aging or living with a disability.

ALF **Assisted Living Facility**

Non-medical residential settings that provide or coordinate personal and health care services, 24-hour supervision, and assistance for the care of four or more adults who are aged, infirm or disabled.

ADA **Americans with Disabilities Act**

Federal civil rights act re: access for people with disabilities.

ADHC **Adult Day Health Care Centers**

Centers designed to provide a safe, fun and therapeutic environment for frail seniors or adults who need supervision during the day due to changes in their cognitive and or functional abilities.

ADL **Activities of Daily Living**

Activities of daily living include bathing, dressing, toileting, eating/feeding, continence, and transferring.

AoA **Administration on Aging**

Federal agency within the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services that administers the Older Americans Act.

APS Adult Protective Services

Social workers who investigate abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation of elderly persons and incapacitated adults.

AT Assistive Technology

Low tech to high tech products that allow a person with a disability to perform regular tasks and activities.

CCA Commonwealth Council on Aging

The state-level aging council appointed by the Governor, one from each of Virginia's congressional districts, plus appointments by the Speaker of the House of Delegates and Senate Committee on Privileges and Elections.

CCRC Continuing Care Retirement Community

A residence complex that includes independent living, assisted-living and nursing facility care so that residents can remain living within the complex as their needs change.

CNA Certified Nursing Assistants

Individuals trained to provide direct care under the supervision of a nurse.

CMP Congregate Meal Program

Older Americans Act, state and County funded meals to help ensure adequate nutrition at locations where attendees eat together. Donations are requested.

COA Commission on Aging

The COA advocates for the needs of older adults. Older Americans Act requires their involvement with the Area Agency on Aging. Members are appointed by local governing boards.

DME Durable Medical Equipment

Examples include wheel chairs, hospital beds, etc.

DRG's Diagnostic Related Groups

Medicare's system of grouping patient needs and the services that will be funded to address those needs.

HBC Home Based Care

Assistance provided in the home for clients with needs so that they can remain in their own homes.

HDM Home Delivered Meals

See MOW – (Meals on Wheels)

IAC Interagency Aging Committee

Public and private professionals in the field of Aging that meet to hear speakers and share information, coordinated by the Area Agency on Aging (Fairfax county-specific).

IADL Instrumental Activities of Daily Living

Instrumental activities of daily living are meal preparation, housekeeping, laundry, money management, transportation, shopping, using phone, and home maintenance.

IDT Interdisciplinary Team

Team of professionals meeting to develop service options for a client – could include health, mental health, social services, and others.

LSNV Legal Services of Northern Virginia

Non-profit organization that provides free civil legal services to low-income and elderly residents of northern Virginia. Major program areas include family, housing, consumer, public benefits, and elder law.

LTC Long-Term Care

The sum of policies and programs that provide social, health, rehabilitative, and supportive services over an extended period of time to those individuals who are limited in performing major life activities.

LTCCC Long Term Care Coordinating Councils/Committees

Appointed citizen group formed to address issues in long-term care.

MFP Money Follows the Person

Federal funding awarded to Virginia to help design services and programs to transition at least 1,000 seniors and people with disabilities from institutions, such as nursing and mental health facilities, into appropriate community-based housing. The federal grant will extend from May 2008 through September 2011.

MOW Meals on Wheels

Older Americans Act/state and County funded meals delivered by volunteers to homebound seniors who cannot prepare their own meals and have no one to cook for them. Sliding fee.

n4a National Association of Area Agencies on Aging

Umbrella organization advocating for needed resources and support services are available for older Americans. Through advocacy, training and technical assistance, it supports the national network of 650 AAAs and 240 Title VI (Native Americans') aging programs.

NARFE National Association of Active and Retired Federal Employees

Organization dedicated to protecting and improving the retirement benefits of US federal retirees, employees and their families.

NASUA National Association of State Units on Aging

A non-profit association representing the nation's 56 officially designated state and territorial Agencies on Aging.

NCOA/ASA National Council on the Aging / American Society on Aging

Two membership organizations that hold joint training and learning opportunities.

NWD No Wrong Door

Virginia's approach to one-stop shopping for adult health and human services. The vision: have Resource Centers in every community serving as highly visible and trusted places where individuals can turn for information on the full range of long-term support options and entry to public long-term support programs and benefits.

NORC Naturally Occurring Retirement Community

A neighborhood, condo building, or apartment building in which residents, who moved in when younger, have grown older and may need assistance.

NVLT COP Northern Virginia Long Term Care Ombudsman Program

Regional program housed in Fairfax County's Area Agency on Aging. Staff receives, investigates and resolves complaints of residents in nursing and assisted living facilities as well as educates and advocates for resident rights.

NVRC Northern Virginia Resource Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing

Non-profit agency with county and private funding provides information and resources for deaf and hard of hearing people and their families, friends, co-workers, employers.

OAA Older Americans Act

Signed into law on July 14, 1965, it created a nationwide Aging network – federal AoA, state Aging departments, and local Area Agencies on Aging. The OAA defines services that could be provided directly or by contract through AAAs – home delivered meals (MOW), congregate meals, legal services, information and assistance, and more. Annually, Congress passes funding for Older Americans Act services that is passed from AoA to local AAAs through the state agencies.

OLLI Osher Lifetime Learning Institute

A non-profit agency, member-run organization providing continuing education opportunities to older adults.

PACE Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly

A special program to enable frail, nursing home eligible older adults who are dually eligible for Medicare and Medicaid remain living in the community. There are efforts underway for Northern Virginia to join more than 2 dozen sites in the program nationwide.

POW Pets on Wheels

An all-volunteer organization housed within some Area Agencies on Aging. Volunteers bring pets to nursing homes and assisted living facilities to visit residents.

SSA Social Security Administration

An independent government agency responsible for the Social Security system including federal old-age pensions and disability insurance. It was established by the Social Security Act of 1935.

SSDI Social Security Disability Insurance

A payroll tax-funded, federal insurance program which is managed by the Social Security Administration. It is designed to provide income to people who are unable to work because of a disability.

SSI Supplemental Security Income

A federal income supplement program funded by general tax revenue. It is designed to help aged, blind, and disabled people who have little or no income by providing financial support to meet basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter.

UAI Uniform Assessment Instrument

An assessment tool developed by the state and used by workers in multiple programs and departments to assess function and need. By using the UAI, clients can enter more than one program without beginning the process all over. Workers also benefit from shared client information (with consent).

UD Universal Design

Barrier free accessible design of products, homes and communities to allow use by all, young and old, with and without disabilities.

VAPCA Virginia Association of Personal Care Assistants

An organization of Personal Care Assistants (PCAs) to improve working conditions, reduce turnover, acquire benefits, training, and career ladders in order to build a stable workforce.

VANHA Virginia Association of Nonprofit Homes for the Aging

State organization of not-for-profit retirement housing facilities, adult care residences, nursing homes, and continuing care retirement communities.

VDA **Virginia Department for the Aging**

A state-level agency designated by the federal government as the agency to oversee state programs for persons age 60+ and in some cases those 55+ using funds provided by the federal Older Americans Act and the Virginia General Assembly. Area Agencies on Aging contract with the Department to provide services for older Virginians and their families in communities throughout Virginia.

VERC **Virginia Elder Rights Coalition**

The Virginia Elder Rights Coalition (VERC) is a network of organizations, agencies, and individuals promoting the rights and autonomy of older Virginians.

V4A **Virginia Association of Area Agencies on Aging**

Members are the 25 Area Agencies on Aging that serve all communities in the Commonwealth.

VGA **Virginia Guardianship Association**

Members provide assistance to those residents of Virginia who provide guardianship services or alternative protective services to vulnerable persons.

VICAP **Virginia Insurance Counseling and Assistance Project**

The Virginia Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program (VICAP) offers confidential help and advice about health insurance and long-term care insurance to older adults. VICAP is Virginia's version of the national SHIP (State Health Insurance Program) and is administered at the local level by the Area Agency on Aging.

APPENDIX

RESPONSIBILITIES OF AGENCY CHAIRING THE NVAN MEETING

- Develop agenda (with input from others).
- E-mail agenda to designee for distribution 2 weeks before meeting.
- Bring sufficient number of copies of agenda to meeting.
- Circulate Attendee Sign-up sheet.
- Chair the meeting.
- Arrange for someone to take the minutes of the meeting.
- E-mail minutes to the designee.