



NEWS RELEASE – Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.

Release Date: Tuesday, May 24, 2022

Contact: Jenni Lewis, Community Outreach

PO Box 154

Rio Grande, OH 45674

Phone: 1.800.582.7277, ext. 22224

E-Mail: jlewis@aaa7.org

Area Agency on Aging District 7 Celebrates 50 Years of Service

2022 marks 50 years of home and community-based services that the Area Agency on Aging District 7 has provided to the community. The Agency, which covers ten counties in southern Ohio, is taking this time to recognize the special occasion with an anniversary logo to commemorate the milestone.

The AAA7 was founded in 1972 when Rio Grande College in Rio Grande, Ohio, was selected to sponsor one of only four model projects in Ohio that were funded by the US Administration on Aging to focus on the ways and means to assist older adults living within the district. The Area-Wide Model Project developed social services, such as transportation, and information and referral, for older Americans in four counties, including Gallia, Jackson, Meigs and Vinton. Grants from the federally-legislated Older Americans Act (OAA) of 1965 and related amendments provided the funding for services, and agency operations were later expanded to ten counties including Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto and Vinton. Meigs County was later transferred from the AAA7 to the Area Agency on Aging District 8, based in Marietta. Today, the AAA7 is one of twelve Area Agencies on Aging throughout the state of Ohio and has four office sites through its district with Administrative Offices in Gallia County (Rio Grande) and satellite offices in Adams County (West Union), Pike County (Waverly) and Scioto County (Wheelersburg).

Program growth in the Agency has occurred over the last 50 years, with many programs and services being added over time. Services the AAA7 provides are available for seniors and those with disabilities who meet a nursing-home level of care, yet wish to remain in their own homes. The AAA7 provides assistance with developing a care plan for each consumer that meets their needs with services that allow them to remain safe and independent at home. Services are available for seniors age 60 and older and for those of any age living with a disability and are determined based on eligibility. Services an individual could receive include personal care, home-delivered meals, emergency response systems and transportation just to name a few.

Other services provided through the AAA7 include service coordination for selected apartment complexes in the district, emergency home repair assistance, caregiver support, wellness programs, nutrition services through home-delivered meals and congregate settings, help with Medicare questions and determining eligibility for assistance programs, and advocacy for those receiving long-term care services in a facility or in the community through the Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program. The Agency's Resource Center is available to help answer questions and determine some of the eligibility with a simple phone call to the Agency. Those

who feel they might benefit from the types of services mentioned here, or who know of someone who might be able to benefit, are encouraged to give the Agency a call. Trained staff at the Agency are ready to assist callers with determining what resources are available either within the Agency or in the community in order to make long-term care options easier to understand and determine.

Recently, the AAA7 has been engaged in a number of activities and initiatives designed to support the rapidly increasing older adult population. Over the last ten years, a number of projects have been a part of the AAA7's work, including:

- Working with three local hospitals on post-discharge assistance to reduce re-admissions and assist individuals upon the return home after a hospital stay.
- Enhancing the Agency's Aging and Disability Resource Center to serve as a resource for the community with assistance involving in-home and long-term care options.
- Adding care management services for the Ohio Home Care Waiver program for those under the age of 60 and the Specialized Recovery Services program for those with severe and persistent mental illness or those living with a chronic condition. Through these two programs, the AAA7 expanded their counties served to include: Athens, Clermont, Hamilton, Hocking and Meigs.
- Started a partnership with the Chillicothe Veterans Affairs Medical Center on the Veteran Self-Directed Program that allows Veterans of any age to self-direct the care they receive in their home. This program covers eleven counties including Adams, Fayette, Highland, Hocking, Jackson, Meigs, Pickaway, Ross, Scioto and Vinton. Through this particular program, the AAA7 added two more counties served (Fayette and Pickaway).
- The Hospital2Home program was added as a voucher program for those eligible who are being discharged from hospital to home. Services provided can include personal care, home-delivered meals, and telephonic assistance to help individuals returning to their homes after a brief hospital stay to reduce the chance of readmissions.
- The COVID-19 pandemic saw a number of initiatives developed through the AAA7 to help local communities stay engaged throughout the adjustments. The AAA7 was deemed essential employees throughout the pandemic and continued providing needed services. One of these programs developed included "Porch Talk", a telephone reassurance program that is still available as a service to the community.

"As we stand and look back over the last 50 years, it is amazing to see how the agency has grown and expanded in services to meet the needs of older adults and other vulnerable populations," stated Nina R. Keller, Executive Director of the Area Agency on Aging District 7. "During this time of reflection, we also extend our gratitude to our service provider network throughout the region that has consistently worked with us to provide essential direct services throughout our Agency's existence. Looking ahead with our mission to guide us, we will move into the next 50 years with the continued commitment to serve and support individuals as they chose to stay in the place they call Home."

The Agency is planning an Anniversary celebration at its annual Appreciation Brunch, which is planned for August.

Your local Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. provides services on a non-discriminatory basis, helping older adults and those with disabilities live safely and independently in their own homes through services paid for by Medicare, Medicaid, other federal and state resources, as well as private pay. The AAA7's Resource Center is the connection to the community, providing information and assistance with long-term care options. Available Monday through Friday from 8:00 am until 4:30 pm, the Resource Center is a valuable contact for learning more about options and what programs and services are available for assistance.

Those interested in learning more can call toll-free at 1-800-582-7277 (TTY: 711). Here, individuals can speak directly with a specially-trained Resource Specialist who will assist them with information surrounding the programs and services that are available to best serve their needs. The Agency also offers an assessment at no cost for those who are interested in learning more. Information is also available on www.aaa7.org, or the Agency can be contacted through e-mail at info@aaa7.org. The Agency also has a Facebook page located at www.facebook.com/AreaAgencyOnAgingDistrict7.

###

