



DHS News

Newsletter of the Allegheny County
Department of Human Services



June 2019

SeniorLine works to improve outcomes for local seniors

Engaging with more than 30,000 individuals each year, the Area Agency on Aging's (AAA) SeniorLine is the "front door" to aging services in Allegheny County and frequently the first contact for people seeking support for a senior. To best meet the needs of the clients it serves, SeniorLine has recently begun using a variety of new methods to help staff become better prepared.

SeniorLine assists individuals who may have a wide range of requests that can include assistance with basic needs, caregiver support, care for a grandchild and protective service. To help navigate this wide variety of questions and concerns with confidence, management has worked to ensure SeniorLine staff have become AIRS (Alliance of Information and Referral Systems) certified. AIRS is a nationally-recognized credentialing program for information and assistance personnel who work in human services, and is understood as a demonstration of a high level of knowledge and capacity in the field. Currently, all tenured staff members of the SeniorLine team are AIRS certified.

SeniorLine staff has also begun using person-centered counseling (PCC) to ensure that consumers can seamlessly connect with appropriate resources. PCC is a person-centered decision support process where consumers, family members and/or their significant others are supported as they determine appropriate support choices in the context of the consumer's needs, preferences, values and individual circumstances. With PCC, SeniorLine staff can now follow up with consumers at scheduled intervals to review the progress a consumer has made in obtaining assistance

To reach the broader community, SeniorLine has been increasing community education efforts. In 2018, SeniorLine staff participated in 24 information fairs and eight speaking engagements, and provided 24 training sessions to caregivers at various locations in the community. They also continue to provide program and resource training for staff of outside agencies that routinely work with older adults. Additionally, SeniorLine's website, social media posts and print media are tailored to more effectively address those needs and concerns of our county and its changing demographics. This work has served to aid staff in better understanding the needs and concerns of the community.

To learn more about SeniorLine, contact SeniorLine@AlleghenyCounty.US.