

Section A-3 PLANNING AND REVIEW PROCESS

Scope of Need:

ALTC Program Service Area (PSA) includes eight counties in southeast Washington.



Agriculture is the primary source of stability in the economy of all the counties except Benton and Franklin. The nature of agriculture, coupled with rurality, provides income and wealth in widely disparate ways. In the population of the elderly and the disabled, these disparities surface in key areas relevant to the Area Plan: Nutrition and hunger, transportation to nutrition and health care appointments, access to information (especially with access to internet connectivity), health care access, and housing options available to age in place.

The primary minority population in our service area are people of Hispanic/Latino origins. Many elderly of Hispanic/Latino origins have experienced health issues related to early years of strenuous physical labor, and health disparities. Many in this marginalized group do not have or never have had access to any consistent health care, especially during the years of most intense physical work. Access to other services has been hampered by language barriers, inequity to access, and fear of governmental bureaucracies.

Elders of marginalized communities tend have higher percentages of challenging health conditions due to barriers encountered such as limited access to health and other social determinants of health. In rural areas, regardless of economic need, seniors and adults with disabilities have long distances to travel, often without benefit of public transportation. Senior Centers with limited resources have struggled to keep up with the need for services in the rural areas.

Services to people with a disability tend to be more robust if the person's disability and income qualify them through the Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA), or

through the home and community based services through the Aging and Long Term Support Administration (AL TSA). Access to a good support system among family members, friends, or church helps. Even then, the central issues here are isolation, advocacy, and a lack of sufficient knowledge concerning chronic disease.

Persons Consulted:

ALTC is especially challenged when trying to obtain local input in the planning process in eight different counties. In order to obtain input from the public, ALTC held four remote, on-line forums in 2023: Kittitas/Yakima counties; Benton/Franklin counties; Walla Walla/Columbia, and Garfield/Asotin counties. Contractors, partners, Advisory Council Members, and the service delivery network were sent flyers and email reminders. We advertised on the ALTC website, social media platforms, and public notices in the local newspapers. All forums were well attended by Advisory Council Members from Kittitas/Yakima, Benton/Franklin, Walla Walla/Columbia, and Asotin/Garfield counties. The COG members went over the area plan and approved it during a COG meeting in October 2023. ALTC also has a public hearing upon the completion of the draft Area Plan for public comment.

Tools Employed:

Forums as described above, data searches, and consultation with key stakeholders comprised the variety of methods used to gather data. Information was also obtained through participation in the Dementia Action Collaborative and other statewide committees in which ALTC staff attend, input from contractors and through reputable literature review and research.

Resources:

ALTC refers to the Census/American Community Survey data, AL TSA service data, regional demographic reports from Office of Financial Management (OFM), and county planning data (where available). Also utilized were data from national sources such as the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (N4A), AARP, Administration for Community Living (ACL), National Council on Aging (NCOA), United Way, the Kadlec Neurological Resource Center and the Alzheimer's Association.

See the Appendices for documentation of forums, Advisory Council membership and public hearings.