

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

As a member of the Board, you will often hear abbreviations and terms that may be unfamiliar to you but are well known in the aging network and among the professionals who work with older adults. To help you become familiar with the language of this network, several terms and descriptions are listed below.

Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) – Activities usually performed for oneself in the course of a normal day including bathing, dressing, grooming, eating, walking, using the telephone, taking medications, and other personal care activities. Sometimes, the eligibility for certain in-home services is determined by a person's inability to perform a certain number of ADLs.

Administration on Aging (AOA) – AOA is an agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and is the official Federal agency dedicated to policy development, planning and the delivery of supportive home and community based services to older persons and their caregivers. To ensure the delivery of these services, AOA administers the Older Americans Act working through State Units on Aging, Area Agencies on Aging, Tribal and Native organizations, plus thousands of service providers, adult day care centers, caregivers and volunteers.

ADULT DAY CARE – Adult Day Care Centers offer social, recreational and health related services to individuals in a protective setting who cannot be left alone during the day because of health care and social need, confusion or disability.

AGING NETWORK – A highly complex and differentiated system of federal, state and local agencies, organizations and institutions that are responsible for serving and/or representing the needs of older people.

AGING SERVICE ACCESS POINTS (ASAPs) – Aging Service Access Points, known in the elder network as ASAPs, were established under Chapter 19A of Massachusetts General Laws. There are 27 ASAPs statewide in exclusive geographic areas. ASAPs are private, non-profit agencies with Governing Boards made up of at least 51% representation of persons 60 or older and appointed by the local Councils on Aging.

ASAPs provide the following direct services: Information and Referral (I&R); interdisciplinary case management: intake, assessment, development and implementation of service plans; monitoring of service plans; and reassessment of needs; Protective Services: investigation of abuse and neglect cases.

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF RETIRED PERSONS (AARP) –

AARP is a non-profit, non-partisan membership organization dedicated to making life better for people 50 and older.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) – The purpose of this act is to remove barriers keeping qualified individuals with disabilities from enjoying the same employment, public service, public service, public accommodations and services, and telecommunication issues.

AREA AGENCY ON AGING (AAA) – Under the Older Americans Act, the Administration on Aging distributes funds for various aging programs through state agencies on aging which in turn fund local area agencies on aging. Area Agencies on Aging address the concerns of older Americans at the local level. They play an important role in identifying community and social service needs of older adults and develop community based plans for services to meet these needs. AAA's administer federal, state local and private funds through contracts with service providers for the provision of these services.

CASE MANAGEMENT (also known as care management) – A client-service approach in which a single agency is responsible for initial assessment of a client's needs, arranging for services and providing follow-up.

CENTERS FOR MEDICARE AND MEDICAID (CMS) – Federal agency created in 1977 to provide quality assurance for the Medicare and Medicaid programs under the Social Security Act. Includes oversight of the Professional Standards Review Organization, End-Stage Renal Disease Program, long-term care program and other health and safety standards for health care providers.

CERTIFICATE OF NEED (CON) – A state regulatory mechanism for review and approval by health planning agencies of capital expenditures and service capacity expansions by hospitals, nursing homes and other health care facilities.

CHORE SERVICES – Chore service is available to persons who are physically unable to perform tasks such as heavy cleaning, minor repair or yard work, and are unable to secure assistance from family or friends and do not have the means to pay privately.

COMMODITY – Something useful or valuable such as an economic good or agricultural product. Under Title III of the Older Americans Act, the Secretary of Agriculture is required to "donate" is required to donate agriculture commodities and products for nutrition programs.

COMMUNITY BASED LONG-TERM CARE (CBLT) – Care that is available in the community.

COMMUNITY BASED SERVICES – A wide range of non-institutional services including supportive, health and personal care, which help older people who need assistance maintain maximum independent functioning in their own homes or a substitute environment of their choice.

COMMUNITY FOCAL POINT – A facility that encourages co-location and coordination of services for older individuals. Senior Centers are considered community focal points in the “Aging Network.”

CONGREGATE HOUSING – Multiple unit housing with shared services and common spaces, often with various types of living units. Primarily for those who need a supervised setting but who do not need institutionalized care.

CONGREGATE MEALS(ALSO KNOWN AS TITLE IIIC) – A program authorized under Title IIIC of the Older Americans Act that provides one hot or other appropriate meal per day in a group setting.

CONTINUING CARE RETIREMENT COMMUNITY (CCRC) – A retirement community that provides a range of care options for residents.

CONTINUUM OF CARE – A range of services developed and organized to address the variety of needs individuals have as they age. This concept recognizes and considers the availability and extent of short-term and long-term care systems and services in the community and in institutional settings. Included in the continuum of care are residential alternatives, in-home care, community programs, and institutional services.

COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT (COLA) – A systemized adjustment of Social Security Benefits to keep up with inflation.

COUNCIL ON AGING (COA)- Through state legislation enacted in 1956, COA's are municipally appointed agencies in the Commonwealth that provide a variety of services to a community's 60 and older population. While each COA is unique to its community, most offer information and referral, transportation, outreach, meals, health screening, and fitness and education programs. In Hingham, the COA is known as the Department of Elder Services.

DIAGNOSIS RELATED GROUPS (DRG's) – Health benefit payments to hospitals under Medicare, Part A, based upon a prospective payment system that utilizes a predetermined rate per case or type of discharge. DRG's are based upon the patient's diagnosis, age and sex, treatment procedure, and discharge status.

DIVISION OF MEDICAL ASSISTANCE –Department within the Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services that is responsible for the administration of the Medicaid Program in Massachusetts.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ELDER AFFAIRS (EOEA) – The cabinet level department within EOHHS that is responsible for program development, oversight and funding of the state home care program, Older Americans Act programs, assisted living, advocacy, planning and policy development for the Commonwealth's older adults.

EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES (EOHHS) Massachusetts –The cabinet level department that is responsible for overseeing many programs that offer assistance to the state's most needy and vulnerable citizens. Some of the Departments that fall within this branch of government are the Executive Office of Elder Affairs, Division of Medical Assistance, Veterans' Services, Department of Mental Health, and Department of Public Health.

ELDER ABUSE – is a term referring to any knowing, intentional, or negligent act by a caregiver or any other person that causes harm or serious risk of harm to a vulnerable adult. Abuse may be physical, emotional, sexual, financial, neglect, abandonment, and self-inflicted.

ENERGY ASSISTANCE – These programs can provide low-income homeowners and renters, regardless of age, with funds to pay home utility and heating costs. There are income requirements to be eligible for the program.

FRIENDLY VISITORS AND TELEPHONE REASSURANCE – These programs provide regular personal or telephone contact for older persons who are homebound or live alone. Usually a volunteer provides the service. Besides developing friendships, perhaps a more important aspect of these programs is the volunteer's ability to identify needs of the individual as they occur and notifies those who can help.

GERIATRIC CARE MANAGERS- These individuals, specifically trained in geriatric care management, provide case management services on a fee-for-service basis to individual clients.

GUARDIAN – An individual appointed by a court of law to manage a person's financial and/or personal affairs because the court has found that the person is not competent to manage his or her own affairs. A conservator is similarly appointed, but only for financial affairs.

GUARDIANSHIP – The process in which an individual is appointed by a court of law to manage a person's financial and/or personal affairs because the person is not able to or is not competent to manager his/her own affairs.

HEALTH CARE FINANCING ADMINISTRATION (HCFA) – Created by Congress in 1977 to oversee the Medicare and Medicaid Programs.

HOME DELIVERED MEALS (ALSO KNOWN AS MEAL ON WHEELS/MOW) – A program authorized under Title IIIC-2 of the Older Americans Act which, five or more days a week, delivers at least one hot or other appropriate meal to older persons who are homebound or have no access to a congregate meal site.

HOME HEALTH CARE – Health services provided in the individual's home including nursing, physical, occupational or speech therapy, health-related homemaker or social services. The agencies that provide these services are known as Home Health Agencies.

HOMEMAKER SERVICES – Are those services that assist individuals with Day-to-day household duties such as light housekeeping, laundry, grocery shopping, and meal preparation.

HOSPICE – Usually a combination of at-home-and institutional care of the terminally ill that combines medical and social services and is designed to help both the patient and the family. Hospice care emphasizes pain control, symptom management, and emotional support rather than life-sustaining equipment.

IN-HOME SERVICES – Refers to such services as home health aide, family respite services, visiting and telephone reassurance, chore, homemaker and other such services that enable older persons to remain in their homes for as long as possible.

INFORMATION AND REFERRAL (I&R) – A system by which an organization maintains current information on available services and provides assistance and linkage to these services.

LONG TERM CARE – A general term that describes a range of medical, nursing, custodial, social and community services designed to help people with chronic health impairments or forms of dementia.

LONG TERM CARE INSURANCE – Insurance that is designed to cover long term care expenses in a facility or at home.

LONG TERM CARE OMBUDSMAN – Long term care ombudsman, state and local, work cooperatively with nursing homes and board and care facilities to improve the quality of life for residents. They serve as patient's rights advocates, investigating and negotiating resolutions to concerns voiced by residents in matters of resident services and care.

MASSACHUSETTS ASSOCIATION OF COUNCILS ON AGING AND SENIOR CENTER DIRECTORS (MCOA)

– Established in 1979, MCOA was formed to improve the quality of services provided to seniors citizens of the Commonwealth by Councils on Aging, Senior Centers and other social service providers; educate and improve the skills of the staff of Councils on Aging and Senior Centers within Massachusetts; encourage and promote the development of new Senior Centers and the expansion of existing centers. Membership is comprised of municipal Councils on Aging, private non-profit senior centers, and partnering agencies/organizations.

MEANS TEST- The determination of eligibility for a program or for services based upon an individual/family's income and/or assets. Examples of such programs include Medicaid and Supplemental Security Income.

MEDICAID –Medicaid is a health benefit program administered by States for people with low income who meet other eligibility requirements. The health insurance program is financed by the federal and state governments. Medicaid may also pay for nursing home care if the individual's income and assets are within certain limits.

MEDICARE – The national health insurance program for eligible people 65 and older and some disabled individuals. Part A covers hospital costs. Part B covers doctor's bills and other medical costs.

MEDIGAP INSURANCE – Medigap is designed specifically to supplement and complement Medicare's benefits by filling in some of the gaps of Medicare coverage. Medigap insurance policies are non-group policies that may pay for Medicare deductibles, prescription drugs, or other services not covered by Medicare.

MULTI-PURPOSE SENIOR CENTER – A community facility providing services and activities for older persons.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF AREA AGENCIES ON AGING(N4A)

The primary objective of N4A is to promote cooperation and communication within and among the aging network, the federal government, and other organizations and to provide technical assistance to its members and other interested individuals and groups promoting service development and delivery on behalf of the elderly. Membership includes Area Agencies on Aging, service providers, and private sector representatives.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE UNITS ON AGING

(NASUS): - The coordinating organization of the State Units on Aging, the District of Columbia, and the United States territories. It collects and analyzes information for use by State Units on Aging and develops training programs for use by the states and other organizations.

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON AGING (NCOA) – Founded in 1950, NCOA is a national network of organizations and individuals dedicated to improving the health and independence of older persons; increasing their continuing contributions to communities, society and future generations; and building caring communities. Its 3,800 members include senior centers, adult day service centers, are agencies on aging, faith congregations, senior housing facilities, employment services and other consumer organizations.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON AGING (NIA) – A federal agency within the National Institutes of Health. It was established through the Research on Aging Act of 1974. NIA conducts and supports biomedical and behavioral research to increase knowledge of the aging process and associated factors resulting from old age. NIA does laboratory and clinical research and funds research on aging at universities, hospitals and other organizations.

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF SENIOR CENTERS (NISC) – NISC is a network of professionals who represent the senior center field. NISC serves as a vehicle for coordination, communication, action, and guidance to the Senior Center field on a national level. Promoting the growth, development, and expansion of Senior Centers; developing Senior Center leadership; working to improve the quality of activities and services in Senior Centers; and enhancing the Senior Center image are among the many purposes of NISC.

OLDER AMERICANS ACT (OAA) – Legislation designed to ensure full participation for older Americans in all aspects of society. Defines ten objectives, or rights for older persons, creates AOA, authorizes a variety of social and nutrition programs, provides for the development and implementation of training, research and multidisciplinary gerontology centers, promotes community service employment opportunities for older Americans, and authorizes grants to tribal organizations for social and nutritional services. Amended every three years.

OUTREACH – Programs designed to seek out older individuals in need of services and to refer them to the appropriate agencies. These programs often rely upon the reports of family, neighbors, and community workers who identify isolated or needy elderly.

PLANNING AND SERVICE AREA (PSA) – A geographical area in a state or state jurisdiction that is designated for purposes of planning, development, delivery and overall administration of services under an area plan that is administered by an Area Agency on Aging.

POWER OF ATTORNEY (POA) – A legal document which authorizes another person to make financial decisions for an individual.

QUALIFIED MEDCIARE BENEFICIARIES (QUIMBY) – A program that pays out-of-pocket Medicare cost-sharing expenses for very low-income or disabled persons.

RESPITE CARE – The provision of short-term relief (respite) to families caring for their frail elders offers tremendous potential for maintaining dependent persons in the least restrictive environment. Respite services encompass traditional home based care, as well as adult day health, skilled nursing, home health aide and short-term institutional care. Respite can vary from part of a day to several weeks.

SENIOR AIDE –The Senior Community Service Employment Program, funded under Title V of the Older Americans Act through the U.S. Department of Labor, enables non-profit agencies to help employ low income individuals, age 55 and older. Enrollees are placed in temporary training assignments where they gain valuable on-the-job work experience and training needed to gain employment in the private sector.

SENIOR CARE OPTIONS (SCO) – A Medicare-Medicaid Partnership for Eligible Senior – Mass Health (Medicaid) members aged 65 and older have the option of enrolling in a comprehensive health plan that covers all of the services reimbursable under Medicare and Mass Health. Enrollment is voluntary. Those who join have a primary care physician who is affiliated with a SCO and the primary care physician and a team of nurses, specialists and a geriatric services coordinator work with the member to develop a plan of care to address the members needs.

SERVING HEALTH INFORMATION NEEDS OF ELDERS (SHINE)
A state and federal funded program whereby trained counselors provide free assistance to seniors with questions and difficulties that they may have with medical bills, changes in programs such as Medicare, HMS's and other medigap insurance.

SKILLED NURSING FACILITY (SNF) – Skilled nursing and/or skilled rehabilitative services furnished under the direction of a physician and requiring the skills of technical or professional personnel, such as and RN, LPN, licensed physical therapist or speech therapist. Commonly referred to as a nursing home.

SLMBY – A program that pays the Medicare premium for very low income or disabled individuals.

SOCIAL SERVICES – Programs providing services and activities to promote independent living and individual welfare, enhance social relationships and life satisfaction, reduce isolation and to manage problem areas.

SPENDDOWN: A method whereby individuals and/or families seek to establish Medicaid eligibility by reducing gross income and assets through medical expenses or by transferring assets to meet program requirements.

STATE UNITS ON AGING – Mandated by the Older Americans Act, each state has designated a single agency to plan, coordinate, secure funding for and evaluate programs for older persons as authorized by both federal and state government. In Massachusetts, our state agency is known by the name Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA)/Department of Elder Affairs.

SUPPLEMENTAL SECURITY INCOME (SSI) – National means tested income support program created by Title XVI of the Social Security Act for low-income aged, blind and disabled persons.

TELECOMMUNICATION DEVICE FOR THE DEAF

(TDD)/TELETYPE (TTY) – A device that connects with most standard telephones which enables people who are deaf, hard-of-hearing or speech impaired to communicate with others who also have TTY/TDD.

TRANSPORTATION – Programs that provide door-to-door transportation for people who may be elderly or disabled, who do not have private transportation and who are unable to utilize public transportation to meet their needs.

VETERANS ADMINISTRATION (VA) – Administers benefits for former Armed Services members and their dependents. Coverage and benefits include disability and death, pensions, medical treatment and hospitalization, nursing home and domiciliary care, and burial.

WHITE HOUSE CONFERENCE ON AGING (WHCOA) – A national conference called for the purpose of reviewing existing policies which affect the elderly and making recommendations on how those policies can be strengthened and improved. The first conference was held in 195 and subsequent conferences have been held in 1961, 1971, 1981, and 1995.