

### Great Plains Senior Services Collaborative

Lutheran Services in America convenes the Great Plains Senior Services Collaborative to support underserved rural communities in Minnesota, North Dakota and Montana. The Collaborative connects vulnerable older adults to services and supports needed to maintain their independence, remain in their homes and communities, and live with purpose and meaning.

### About Us / Lutheran Services in America

With over \$21 billion in annual revenue, over 250,000 employees and over 300 member organizations nationwide, Lutheran Services in America is one of the largest and most broad-based nonprofit networks of health and social services providers in the United States. Collectively, we serve one in 50 Americans every year, providing services to seniors, children, youth and families, refugees, people with disabilities, veterans and those affected by disasters.

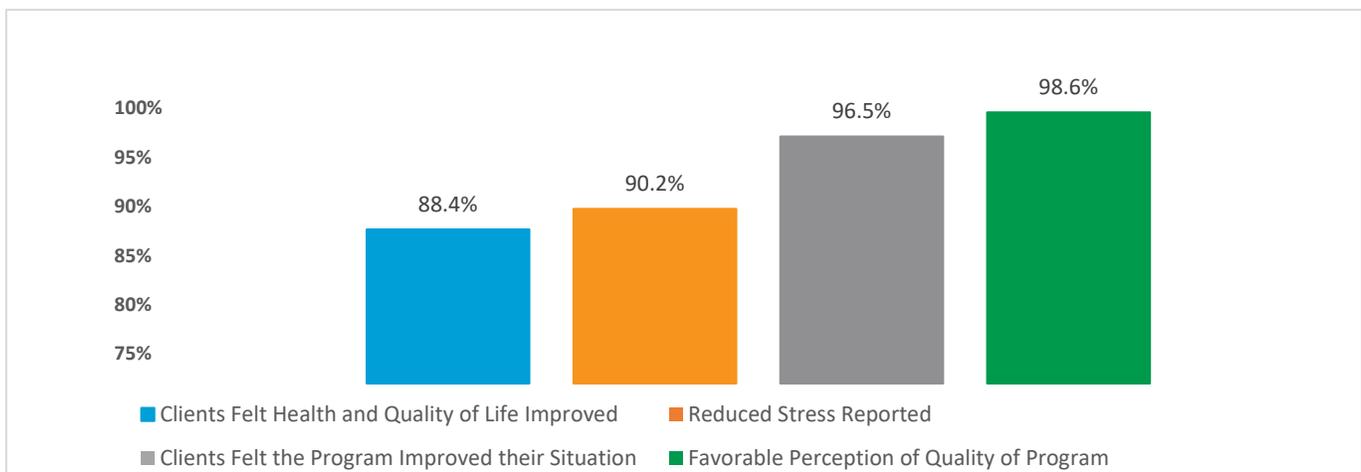
### Project Background

Older adults in rural communities experience poorer health, higher poverty rates and limited access to community-based services and supports. In rural areas, community-based organizations face a range of challenges to address the highly individualized needs of vulnerable seniors across a vast geography. Program sustainability is challenging - there are often resource gaps, limited infrastructure and fragmented funding. Community-based providers must demonstrate the positive impact program services have on older adults in ways that help public funding sources, health insurance providers and private payers recognize their value.

### The Collaborative

Lutheran Services in America guides the Great Plains Senior Services Collaborative, which provides services and supports to underserved rural older adults in Minnesota, North Dakota and Montana. We implement and evaluate innovative solutions that address the changing needs of older adults and their family members. While a certain level of specialization is required for each unique rural community, the Collaborative focuses on programs that have the potential to be efficiently replicated and quickly adapted in different settings. Specifically, this entails refining and strengthening the most scalable approaches that promote healthy aging, improve service coordination and enhance social engagement in rural communities.

### Phase 1 Independent Evaluation Findings: 2015-2018



## Great Plains Senior Services Collaborative - Phase 2 Programs

- 1) Aging Life Care Management:** The Aging Life Care Management program connects older adults with a trusted advisor to help navigate the complex issues of later life care. Clients' basic needs – such as housing, food, safety, and medical appointments – are addressed. Services provided include care coordination, patient advocacy, crisis management, and transitional care. The program's goals are to improve quality of life, reduce hospitalizations, and delay/prevent the need for assisted living or nursing home placement.
- 2) Remote Caregiver:** The Remote Caregiver program provides coaching, teaching, and encouragement using technologies such as iPad and other devices to strengthen and enrich the caregiver role. It links caregivers and older adults in rural settings with SMART technology that promotes social connection and independent living. The goals are to help caregivers provide quality care for their loved ones, while also remaining healthy and balanced themselves.
- 3) Volunteer Companions:** The Volunteer Companions program provides older adults with one-on-one companionship, social opportunities, and help with light tasks in the homes. The target audience is rural seniors over 60 years of age who are lonely, isolated, homebound or disabled, and living independently in the community. The program leverages volunteers who live in close proximity to older adults who are in need.
- 4) Friends in the Kitchen:** Friends in the Kitchen is a community program that addresses loneliness through social engagement. It brings together diverse and isolated rural older adults, offering them opportunities to socialize, bridge cultural boundaries and establish commonalities. Additionally, it focuses on the problem of food insecurity by providing cooking classes that teach healthy eating on a limited budget. Participants meet other people, enjoy learning in a group cooking class, and prepare and eat meals together.
- 5) At Home:** At Home is a program that offers a suite of supports and services to older adults to help them live independently in their own homes. It includes educational programs, social outings, fitness club access, summer concerts, home maintenance, housekeeping, grounds care, computer technical support, transportation, meal preparation, care coordination, and emergency response. At Home's member benefits enhance the lives of older adults, enabling healthy aging in their own communities.

## The Great Plains Collaborative's Work in Phase 1: 2015-2019

