Delivering Life-Changing Senior Services

America is Aging:

Our vision at Lutheran Services in America is for all people in the United States to reach their full potential. As one of the largest and most broad-based nonprofit networks of health and social services providers in the U.S., Lutheran Services in America is a lead voice in calling for strong, healthy, sustainable families and communities. We operate with over $22 billion in annual revenue, and work to improve the health and well-being of one in 50 Americans each year. We educate, we advocate, and we activate our powerful national network of 300 member organizations in priority areas so important to America’s most vulnerable – including Senior Services.

By 2020, one in five U.S. adults will be a senior, representing an “unprecedented” growth in the number and proportion of older adults, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. With our nation’s shifting demographics come attendant challenges, ranging from funding vital programs for seniors, to devising solutions to best help them age in place and stay healthy. Here is where Lutheran Services in America and our national network come in.

What We Do:

We have long focused on supporting the healthy, independent aging of America’s seniors – particularly people struggling with limited resources, isolated settings, or challenging social determinants like lack of transportation or food insecurity. We do this in a variety of inventive ways, and see the future as one in which all seniors can maintain their independence in the home and community of their choice, living full and abundant lives.

Over 200 of our member organizations work with seniors, providing home- and community-based services from home health care, senior centers and care coordination, to transportation, behavioral health and respite care. Our members also work with seniors via residential care, whether through affordable housing or independent living efforts, or assisted living, nursing homes or memory centers. We understand the power of partnerships both expected and less-than-traditional, and partner with all levels of government, non-profits, academia, philanthropy, atypical community organizations and more.

Whether seniors are urban or rural, we and our member organizations are there working in the home and community, partnering locally and nationally to deliver solutions that address key gaps in care today.
Our Innovative Programs:

We have several bold initiatives actively underway, delivering concrete results that help improve seniors’ lives:

**The Great Plains Senior Services Collaborative:** Through a three-year grant of $2.5 million from a national foundation, we established the collaborative to expand community-based services and supports to improve the health and quality of life for low-income seniors in rural North Dakota and Minnesota, and make these services sustainable beyond the grant. This grant was completed in December 2018, and successfully improved the health and quality of life of over 1,550 low-income vulnerable seniors in over 70 communities throughout rural Minnesota and North Dakota. As part of the grant, we engaged North Dakota State University as the program evaluation partner. A second three-year grant of $3.4 million recently was awarded to scale successful programs under the first grant in rural Minnesota and North Dakota and expand services to rural Montana.

**Connect-Home** Connect-Home is an example of an innovative partnership created by Lutheran Services and supported by a generous grant. Developed by The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Connect-Home initially was implemented at four member organizations and now has doubled in size. This groundbreaking model is proven to improve transitional care for low-income seniors to successfully return home after post-acute care stays. Our success rate is an impressive 86 percent, and we have a continuation grant to expand implementation to an additional four communities with the long-term goal of making Connect-Home the gold standard of care transitions.

**LSA Senior Connect** Through a $500,000 seed investment from 11 member organizations and a grant from The Lutheran Services Elderly Endowment, we are implementing a community-based solution for high-need seniors focusing on addressing unmet social determinants. Our pilot model is enabling us to successfully engage older adults in chronic disease management, and reduce unnecessary hospitalization and emergency room visits.

**Lutheran Services in America-Disability Network (LSA-DN):** LSA-DN is a nationwide network of Lutheran social ministry organizations, faith-based organizations and Lutheran professionals supporting people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We actively work for improvements to and protections of long-term services and supports for seniors with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

**Advocacy & Public Policy:**

Lutheran Services in America is a nonpartisan organization that acts as a voice for our national network, and we ensure that our members’ faith-based advocacy carries the weight it deserves. We believe that successful public policies protect the most vulnerable people and give all Americans equal opportunity to thrive. We are committed to ensuring all Americans have access to affordable, quality health care which supports healthy lifestyles, addresses acute and chronic health conditions, and treats people with dignity and respect. We call for public policies that create opportunities for flexibility, improvement and modernization.

Our federal advocacy team keeps an ear to the ground on Capitol Hill, utilizing relationships with U.S. Senate and House lawmakers and staff, as well as ties to federal agency representatives. Through our regular Capitol Hill meetings and related coalition efforts, we ensure federal stakeholders clearly know our positions and those of our member organizations. Our national network benefits from the timely, related educational resources we provide. And we keep our member organizations well-apprised of priority legislation underway, activating our network via rapid response initiatives.

To illustrate, we were successful in our aggressive efforts to prevent an $880 billion cut to Medicaid in 2017, which would have dramatically impacted countless low-income seniors, children, youth and families, and people with disabilities. Our #SaveMedicaid campaign mobilized our national network and earned a $100,000 grant from The Annie E. Casey Foundation to build additional capacity among member organizations.

[www.lutheranservices.org](http://www.lutheranservices.org)