

DIRECTOR'S REPORT | Catherine Blonigen

GROWING SENIOR COMPANION HEALTH CARE PARTNERSHIPS

In 2017, our Senior Companion service continued its innovative work with health care providers.

We strengthened our successful partnerships with UCare for Seniors, North Memorial Clinics and Olmsted Medical Center (OMC) in Southeastern Minnesota. By connecting the clients of these partners to our companions, we help to provide more consistent care while improving health outcomes and reducing costs.

In 2017, we expanded our study of the impacts of isolation and loneliness on the health of older adults. With our partners, we implemented surveys to study how the ability to feel connected and do simple things — like shop for groceries, take part in community activities, and keep appointments — changes real health outcomes.

Our health care partners are assisting with data collection by tracking emergency room visits and the hospital re-admissions of clients who are matched with senior companions.

LSS is committed to improving the day-to-day living experience of older adults, and look forward to expanding and growing our partnerships in 2018.



CONTACT US TODAY

1605 Eustis Street, # 406
Saint Paul, MN 55108

651.310.9440 | 888.205.3770

email us at: seniorcorps@lssmn.org
neighbortoneighbor@lssmn.org



A healthier community through active, engaged older adults is what our services are all about!

In 2017, LSS Senior Companions, Neighbor to Neighbor Companions and Foster Grandparents served more than 5,500 older adults and children throughout Minnesota.

Both Senior Companions and its partner, Neighbor to Neighbor Companions (a private-pay companion option), provide one-on-one support to older adults. These services allow older adults to live independently with the help of non-medical support from visiting companions. Companions quickly become friends, and help with transportation to shopping, medical appointments, activities and more. Last year Senior Companions provided more than 222,000 hours of service to older adult clients.

Foster Grandparents are volunteers ages 55+ who offer tutoring and mentoring to children in Head Start programs, pre-schools, elementary to high schools, and residential facilities. The program offers older adults a significant and meaningful volunteer opportunity. Their work makes a real impact on the lives of students, through academic assistance and the encouragement youth need to succeed in school.

There were exciting new opportunities in 2017 as well. LSS secured a Minnesota Department of Human Services Live Well at Home Grant to expand its Neighbor to Neighbor companionship program with additional strategies, including the development of a sliding-scale fee model. In addition, churches and healthcare providers are considering the Neighbor to Neighbor program as a valuable outreach service in their communities.

Senior Corps partnerships with healthcare systems grew in 2017. For example, our pilot project with Olmsted Medical Center became a formal program to provide Senior Companion services for patients who are at high risk for hospital readmission and emergency services. The goal is to provide community-based support to increase patient health outcomes and reduce healthcare costs.

We are grateful to the volunteers, staff members, organizations and donors who help us make our programs successful, and we're looking forward to continued growth and excellence in service during 2018.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,

Catherine Blonigen
Senior Director

2017 FUNDING SOURCES

Foster Grandparent Program

Federal	949,576	62.9%
State	498,486	33.1%
Local	60,500	4.0%
TOTAL	\$1,508,562	100.0%

Senior Companion Program

Federal	1,077,048	46.7%
State	531,115	23.0%
Local	699,728	30.3%
TOTAL	\$2,307,891	100.0%

Total Senior Corps Funding

Federal	2,026,624	53.1%
State	1,029,601	27.0%
Local	760,228	19.9%
TOTAL	\$3,816,453	100.0%

Funding for Senior Companions and Foster Grandparents is provided by the Corporation for National and Community Service, Minnesota Board on Aging, UCare, United Way, and community agencies through their partnership with Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota.

ACTIVE. HEALTHY. INDEPENDENT.

LSS Older Adult Services

With the right community supports, older Minnesotans are *'Abundantly Aging'*: staying healthy, choosing to live at home longer, giving back as volunteers and remaining as independent as possible.

Senior Linkage Line: 800.333.2433
MinnesotaHelp.info

MN Relay 711: Dial 711 from anywhere in the country and you will be connected to the relay service in the state where you are located.



GRANDMA RITA!



On any given weekday morning, when Rita Neal makes her first appearance at the classroom door, the squeals of toddlers and preschoolers are deafening. "Grandma Rita. Grandma RITA!" they say. The little boys and girls saw Rita just yesterday, but her reappearance offers healing and continued friendship for children whose lives are often filled with uncertainty.

LSS Foster Grandparents like Rita volunteer in classrooms and early childhood development programs to provide one-to-one attention to children who are at risk or having difficulty at school. The kids Rita mentors live with their families at People Serving People in downtown Minneapolis, the region's largest shelter for families experiencing homelessness. For the past three years, Rita has supported the teachers by helping the preschoolers in the program's early childhood development classes.

Rita knows kids. She raised a large family and has worked as both a Head Start volunteer and tutor. "When I found out about the LSS Foster Grandparent program, I thought that would be a great place for me," she said. "When I leave for the day, some of the kids ask, 'Are you coming back tomorrow?' Sometimes they cry. I always say, 'When Grandma Rita goes out the door, Grandma Rita will be back.'" Last year, LSS Foster Grandparents helped over 3,500 children meet teacher-identified goals in 183 schools and early childhood programs across Minnesota.

GET INVOLVED — NOW SEEKING VOLUNTEERS

Consider making a difference by becoming a Senior Companion, Neighbor to Neighbor Companion or Foster Grandparent! Volunteers serve one or more days a week. **Volunteer Benefits:**

- Fun and meaningful way to impact your community
- Training and mileage reimbursement provided
- Opportunity to meet new people
- Receive a tax-free or taxable stipend

Get started at 888.205.3770 or go to www.lssmn.org/volunteer.

WHAT IS NEIGHBOR TO NEIGHBOR COMPANIONS?

Similar to LSS' Senior Companion, this service matches older adults across the state with a trained companion who offers assistance and transportation through weekly visits. The difference is that Neighbor to Neighbor is available as a private-pay option, with fees assessed on a sliding scale.

Services include:

- An ongoing resource, advocate and friend
- Transportation to medical appointments and errands
- Assistance with correspondence and paperwork
- Help with simple household tasks

For more details, call 877.540.9443 or email neighbortoneighbor@lssmn.org.