

ANNUAL PROGRAM AND SERVICE REPORT
JULY 1, 2012 – JUNE 30, 2013
SAINT ANTHONY PARK AREA SENIORS (SAPAS)
(1981-2011: “Saint Anthony Park Block Nurse Program”)

Since the founding of the Saint Anthony Park Area Seniors (SAPAS) program in 1981, a volunteer board drawn from our immediate communities has guided our determinedly local program, sought program direction from senior and caregiver participants, served nearly 3,600 of those seniors and caregivers, stretched resources by collaborating with local and city-wide organizations, and provided to other communities a model of cost-effective, home-based, neighbor-to-neighbor senior assistance.

Updating SAPAS’ name from “Saint Anthony Park Block Nurse Program” to reflect better its geographic reach and its participants’ needs has not altered the organization’s mission. That mission remains to “enrich the capacity of the neighborhood’s older residents to maintain appropriate levels of independence and interdependence with the community through neighborhood-based professional and volunteer staff working together to integrate health services, social services, education and advocacy.”

Fifteen volunteers serve as SAPAS board members and employ one full-time program coordinator, one part-time service coordinator, and one part-time program assistant. The board includes college and nonprofit administrators, social workers, health care professionals, teachers, business owners, attorneys, a pastor, a publisher, and an information technology professional. Six are retired and several are senior caregivers. A volunteer pool of over 130 neighbors helps provide services to seniors and caregivers as well as assists with administrative tasks.

To ensure efficiencies and to publicize services, SAPAS collaborates widely with partners. This collaboration includes:

- participating in weekly neighborhood Senior Leisure Center activities/luncheons,
- working with the St. Anthony Park Library as the site for the 2012-13 Senior Cinema Series,
- using the library and two other community sites for senior exercise classes each weekday,
- publicizing SAPAS services at the annual St. Anthony Park Arts Festival,
- coordinating with the local grocery, Speedy Market, on deliveries to neighborhood seniors,
- enabling local scout troops and high school students to assist seniors with leaf raking and snow shoveling,
- cooperating with the Lauderdale and Falcon Heights Lions’ Club on fundraising and on publicizing services to seniors in those neighboring communities,
- making referrals to the Caregiver Support Group in cooperation with area churches,
- providing to Meals on Wheels trained drivers to deliver meals to seniors in the St. Anthony Park area, and
- partnering with Recover Health, a Medicare-certified home health agency that provides in-home services to 10 St. Paul block nurse programs, which enables uniform nursing to seniors participating in these programs throughout the city.

SAPAS also collaborates with the state-wide Living At Home/Block Nurse Program network and the nation-wide Charities Review Council. The Charities Review Council certified SAPAS with the Council’s “Meets All Standards Seal,” in October 2011. We were the first and as yet the only block nurse program to be so recognized. The Council’s rigorous certification in four critical areas—public disclosure, governance, financial activity and fundraising—attests to SAPAS’ accountable and ethical practices as well as its trustworthiness.

This report summarizes the highlights of SAPAS’ direct and indirect service during the past fiscal year, July 1, 2012 – June 30, 2013 (see accompanying five-year “Program Statistics”).

DIRECT SERVICE TO SENIORS & CAREGIVERS

After a busy 30th anniversary year that spanned fiscal years 2010-11 and 2011-12, the Board of Directors agreed to oversee a more measured pace during 2012-2013. The board and staff **concentrated on maintaining the quality of continuing programs**—coordination of nursing and other health services, home visits, daily weekday exercise classes, Meals on Wheels partnership, health transportation assistance, and social outings and activities—**and on two areas of special importance: recruitment of volunteers and extension of grant-writing.**

Recruitment, training, managing, and recognition of volunteers is crucial to ensuring quality service to SAPAS seniors and caregivers. SAPAS' attention to fundraising, especially grant-writing, reflects anticipated declines in government funding. Long-time foundations with neighborhood ties, the Saint Anthony Park Community Foundation and Elmer L. and Eleanor J. Andersen Foundation, remain crucial sources of operating expenses. SAPAS's board, however, is also taking steps such as improving its annual appeal, initiating a special appeal to participant families, inviting local churches to budget annual support of SAPAS, and, most expansively, undertaking research to identify new foundation and corporate granting sources.

During the 30th anniversary year, SAPAS offered more outreach events than usual, which brought especially high numbers of contacts with seniors and caregivers, as the numbers of "unduplicated seniors & caregivers" for 2010-11 and 2011-12 show on the accompanying chart of SAPAS program statistics. Anniversary activity aside, the chart also reflects the **upward five-year trend for seniors and caregivers served**, from 185 in 2008-09 to 272 in 2012-13.

An additional part-time staff member enabled more service coordination during 2012-13. Most **service coordination** is sought and delivered by telephone, and our new program assistant was able to broaden our scope and deepen our involvement in meeting requests.

A portion of the service coordination is funded by a Caregiver Grant from the Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging. This grant enables **pairing a caregiver with a SAPAS senior** who is limited either cognitively or physically. Caregiving may start with a simple request to set up grocery delivery, snow shoveling, or housekeeping and then develop into multiple, more frequent requests. The requests, whose numbers are relatively constant year to year, may come, for example, from an adult child from out of the Twin Cities or even out of state for assistance to a parent in our service area or from a live-in family member needing respite from intense around-the-clock care.

Beside pairing caregivers and seniors, SAPAS offers **varied support to caregivers**, whether they are new to the role or been in it for some time, whether their involvement is limited or 24/7, whether they live with the senior or are assisting long-distance. SAPAS staff find listening to caregivers fundamental. Listening leads to coaching, counseling, problem-solving, informing of resources and their access, providing in-home respite so a live-in caregiver can leave, arranging volunteer visiting so a non-resident caregiver may visit less often, making "check in" phone calls, transporting the senior in place of the caregiver, guiding to the caregiver support group, facilitating adjustment in caregiver's role when a senior moves to a nursing care facility, and even giving post-caregiving assistance after a senior's death.

Another portion of service coordination entails assisting **seniors and caregivers outside SAPAS' geographic target area**. Although "non-SAPAS seniors and caregivers" remain relatively few, a condition of funding from the Metropolitan Area Agency on Aging requires tracking these out-of-area queries that most often require additional research to refer further appropriately.

Although the number of "unduplicated nursing participants" has remained relatively constant, **home nursing care and therapy as well as home health and homemaker visits** and total hours for those visits have trended downward. Changes in practices by HMOs and insurance companies are mostly responsible for the decline.

For home health nursing, SAPAS continued contracting with Recover Health, whose services include skilled nursing, physical and occupational therapy, and homemaking assistance.

“**Home visits**” by SAPAS program staff are usually to access needs and plan service or to see if needs have changed. SAPAS volunteers’ visits are most often either to provide companionship to seniors or to provide respite for caregivers, yet these volunteers are trained to alert SAPAS program staff if additional assistance seems needed.

The number of **exercise classes** and hours decreased in 2012-2013 because of unusually bad weather, some staff unavailability, and the deaths of several frequent attendees.

For our **partnership with Meals on Wheels**, which estimates the approximate number of meals per day and per year, SAPAS recruits, trains, and schedules both the regularly scheduled and substitute drivers.

SAPAS’ Health Transportation Assistance Program continues to offer seniors not only rides to health care appointments but also assistance within the appointments, as the over one-hour average suggests. Drivers take seniors to nearby appointments and then almost always join in the appointments to assist framing questions, remembering answers, and providing reassurance. Statistics for both transportation assistance and exercise classes in 2012-13 reflect the number of participants using these programs heavily during 2010-11 and 2011-12 who either moved out of our service area (9) or passed away (15) during 2012-13.

In this context, it is important to note that SAPAS staff regularly assist **participants and caregivers facing end of life issues**. This assistance may consist of, for example, comfort, guidance on assisted living and hospice options, or referrals for grief support.

As the SAPAS board and staff focused on a more measured pace for 2012-13, SAPAS participants, however, endorsed unchanged daily weekday exercise classes, nursing services, health transportation assistance, and the Senior Cinema offerings in partnership with the St. Anthony Park Library.

SAPAS participants did ask for fewer, less ambitious **social outings**, that is, lower-key outings in smaller groups for lunch or to nearby destinations rather than more costly trips by mini-coach to plays and other cultural attractions. The list of outings for 2012-13 included a visit to the spring flower show at the Como Park Conservatory near St. Anthony Park, a tour of Minneapolis’ American Swedish Institute, a Cirque de Soleil performance, and lunches and dinners at local restaurants.

In place of the monthly senior-focused speaker series during 2011-2012, which was labor-intensive but moderately-attended, SAPAS staff organized fewer presentations this past year and rather compiled a **list of resource people to meet with seniors and caregivers one-on-one** as requested.

The **Senior Cinema Series** serves both to enhance social interaction of neighborhood seniors and publicity of SAPAS services. Hosted and advertised by the local branch library, the series also complements the library’s print and media offerings. The offerings are recent, but not current, films (“Moneyball,” “The Help,” “War Horse,” “Fishing on the Yemmen,” “Best Exotic Marigold Hotel,” “The Odd Life of Timothy Green,” “Trouble with the Curve,” and “Robot and Frank”). By screening recent-but-not-current films, the series does not compete with commercial theaters, of which there are none in SAPAS’ service area. SAPAS was pleased that increasing the number of films from 4 to 8 also saw an increase in the average attendance from 11 to 16.

Direct service volunteer hours during 2012-13 continued the five-year upward trend: 3,110 hours in 2012-13 up from 1,434 hours in 2008-09, a 117% increase. This trend is especially notable because the number of unduplicated volunteers decreased from the highs during the anniversary year that, not surprisingly, drew increased volunteers to the celebratory activities.

The total paid and volunteer hours that SAPAS expends per senior and caregiver attest to **SAPAS’ cost-effectiveness**—without trying to calculate its humane neighborliness. SAPAS requires approximately a half hour per week of staff and volunteer time (if counting only staff time, approximately 15 minutes per week) to assist each senior participating in SAPAS, with help as

needed from a caregiver, to live both independently at home and productively in our neighborhoods as long as they desire and are able to do so safely.

INDIRECT SERVICE

The Board of Directors took several **steps in 2012-13 to improve the effectiveness** of staff and the board itself.

Throughout 2012-13, the board sought to improve staff productivity with **information technology improvements**. The board, for example, purchased an iMac for office use, authorized a database that integrates record-keeping on all aspects of SAPAS program work, adopted a new accounting program (Quickbooks) for financial and budget work, and implemented Dropbox to optimize communication between staff and board members as well as among board members.

In January, the board hired a **new 10-hour-per-week Program Assistant**. The Program Coordinator and Service Coordinator provided training on programs and systems as well as introductions to participating seniors, caregivers, and volunteers. The Program Assistant, who came to play a significant role in recruiting and training the 21 new volunteers, is assuming primary responsibility for volunteer recruitment, training, assignment, and recognition.

The board made three **by-law changes** to improve its own effectiveness. First, board meetings as of 2012-13 became bi-monthly as a whole board and as needed, usually monthly, in the two-to-three committees to which each board member belongs. The board intended the change to decrease the demand of board meeting attendance and increase the efficiency of both committee work and board meetings themselves. Second, the newly formed Executive Committee (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, & Treasurer) assumed the functions of the Personnel Committee and the Nominating Committee. Third, to increase the board's capacity to complete its work, it increased its maximum size from 15 to 19.

The board also developed a **"cost-sharing" policy** in response to Minnesota state expectations that program participants be encouraged to share in the cost of programming.

To increase effectiveness, the board also moved to **meeting every other month and relying increasingly on working in committees**, in consultation with the Program Coordinator and the Board Chair. The Strategic Planning Committee provided overall direction. The Public Relations Committee, for example, took responsibility for the Senior Cinema Series and carried out an annual update of the SAPAS website. The Fundraising Committee worked in three sub-committees that, for example, crafted a new "cost-sharing" appeal to SAPAS participants to share in the expense of services they receive; met with clergy of each the service area churches to learn their congregants' senior and caregiver needs as well as their willingness to include SAPAS in benevolence; and oversaw a compilation of foundation and corporate funding sources that has guided grant-writing.

Services to our aging neighbors help them stay in the neighborhood where they volunteer in our schools, share expertise on neighborhood organization boards, contribute financially to local civic initiatives, spend money at local businesses, and simply keep an eye on the streets while younger neighbors are away at work. With caring direct service by staff and volunteers as well as efficient indirect service by the board together with staff, SAPAS is determined to keep neighborhood seniors in our communities for as long as they choose to stay.

INCOME AND EXPENSE SUMMARY

The board continued to implement its decision in 2010-11 to use assets from the Stanford Fund that is restricted to needed innovation. During 2012-13, board drew from the fund to cover new staffing (program assistant salary), technology (software and tech support), and fundraising (grant research) initiatives.

Even though income was less than budgeted, expenses were also less and so the \$5,530 deficit at year-end was significantly less than anticipated early in the year. Expenses were lower primarily in the Board and Volunteer, Public Relations, and Client and Caregiver categories.