Health Care Research for the Health Care Center Campus

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OVERVIEW

The aging population in Sauk county is booming. By the end of this year, there may be as many 11,000 residents who are over the age of 65, accounting for more than 17% of the county's current population of 63,316. While many of these persons live in cities like Baraboo and Reedsburg, a substantial number live in the more rural parts of the county. In addition, as many as 2,200 of these older residents may experience a significant disease or disability and as many as 1,000 may be living in poverty.

In the coming decade, as more baby boomers in Sauk county reach and surpass their 65th birthdays, this altogether unprecedented demographic event known as population aging will correspond with an increased demand for age-related programs and services. Most notably, Sauk county will experience increased demand for health as well as long-term services and supports (LTSS) such as adult day care, meal support, and transportation. Alternatively, the continued growth of Sauk county's aging population will correspond with an increased supply of labor and financial capital as more older adults consider working past the age of 65.

Within this rapidly changing landscape, the **Sauk County Health Care Center** (the Center) has been a mainstay in supporting older persons who are in greatest need. However, ***the Center's current approach focusing on skilled nursing care may not be sustainable.*** The Center must prepare for the growth and diversification of the county's aging population, and respond to the financial pressures that go along with the increasing demand for programs and services.

As such, an analysis of the programs and services provided by the 82 bed Sauk County Health Care Center Campus is warranted.

How does the Center compete with or complement other health and LTSS providers in Sauk county? How does the Center assume a unique position relative to other age-related programs and services? Looking into the future, what does a financially sustainable Center look like?

To answer these questions, this proposed analysis will:

(a) evaluate the current landscape most relevant to older persons in Sauk county,

(b) identify specific challenges and opportunities in meeting the needs and preferences of older adults in Sauk county, and

(c) offer three empirically based recommendations concerning the future of the Sauk County Health Care Center.

Rather than just focus on the structure and operations of the Center itself, a more useful analysis will consider the landscape inhabited by the Center. For example, given how older residents of Sauk County vary across a number of key characteristics such as health, wealth, and housing status, this analysis will

consider other points on the county landscape most relevant to older adults including: (a) health and mental health care services; (b) long term care services and supports ranging from those provided at home, in the community as well as assisted living, skilled nursing and other residential facilities; (c) housing and related supports associated with livable communities; (d) transportation options; and (e) employment and other opportunities for engagement.

Most communities have only recently recognized the unprecedented growth in their local population of persons over 65; they are just starting to realize how this demographic phenomenon is substantially shaping local markets, and creating challenges and opportunities for the public as well as the private sector. It is at this point that communities often have discovered that existing structures and operations most relevant to older adults may not be sufficient. Relative to the Center, in particular, simply providing more skilled nursing facility services may not be enough to meet increasing demand that goes along with more older adults, and such an approach may not be financially sustainable.

It is hoped that this analysis will not only illuminate viable options for the Center but also may be useful in positively shaping community level efforts across Sauk county. For instance, by identifying ways the Center and others can improve the provision of health and long term care for older adults, county and city departments may be able to reduce the total number of unnecessary (and costly) ambulance trips and health care providers can avoid the inefficiencies associated with non-urgent emergency room visits. Alternatively, by expanding options for work and volunteering, older adults can share their experiences and wealth, making valuable contributions to Center as well as the local communities in which they live.

In what follows, the goals and objectives of this analysis are presented. Then, actions steps and their critical components for success are considered. The proposal concludes by describing the deliverables of this work and reviewing previous efforts.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL 1:
Understand current structure and functions of the Sauk County Health Care Center in regard to providing care to older adults and relative to other county programs and services.

Objective A:
Examine previous evaluation and planning efforts as they pertain to older adults in Sauk county such as the County Plan for Aging published in 2015;

Objective B:
Acquire current data on size of older population and create a population portrait that, among other features, estimates the need for residential care including assisted living and skilled nursing facilities.

Objective C:
Account for capital and operations of the Center.

Objective D:
Account for other age-relevant programs and services offered in Sauk county, and determine how they complement or compete with the Center; these may include health clinics, at-home service delivery, the aging and disability resource center, day care options, employment and volunteer opportunities, housing, protective services, and others.

Objective E:

Conduct a gap analysis that highlights the Center's current strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to providing care to older adults, and stake out initial directions for either: (a) expanding current Center operations, (b) transforming Center operations, or (c) discontinuing Center operations.

GOAL 2:
Enlist county officials, program administrators, direct care providers, older adults, and the general public to consider viable directions for the Center (Goal 1, Obj E) and incorporate feedback into the analysis.

Objective A:
Conduct up to 12 one hour interviews with recognized leaders and experts from across Sauk county, and gather their perceptions about the Center including a surveillance of competing resources and environmental threats. These interviews will include public officials, health system administrators, community based programs and others identified by the County Department of Health (the County).

Objective B:
Convene up to five focus groups with local older adults, as well as members of the public, in different locations across the county from cities like Baraboo to villages like Ironton. These groups will capture individual perspectives about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats to enhancing service delivery to older adults in Sauk County, and specifically focus on what individuals consider to be the role of the Center.

GOAL 3:
Based on identification of greatest gaps between existing structures and functions (Goal 1) and the perceptions and preferences of county leadership as well as older citizens (Goal 2), develop three viable directions for the Center.

Objective A:
Meet with county officials to conduct a preliminary determination of administrative, financial, and legal aspects concerning the viability of the three proposed directions.

Objective B:
Focus on financials involved with each direction including investment, operational costs, revenue, expenditures, and potential cost offsets generated by the particular direction for the Center (e.g., reduction in unnecessary ambulance visits, reduction in non-urgent emergency room visits).

Objective C:
Prepare a 30-40 page report that presents findings of the analysis and details three directions that could be pursued in short-term (1-2 years) and long-term schedules (3-5 year).

ACTION STEPS

1. Text and Numeric Data Collection (Goal 1, Objectives A, B, C, D)
This information can be acquired through contacts identified by the County Department of Health. Data also will be retrieved from publicly available resources such as the County Needs Assessment of 2015 and individual program websites for local non-profit and private organizations.
Date of Completion: Month 1

2. Key informant interviews and focus groups with stakeholders (Goal 2, Objectives A&B)
Engage key stakeholders in the process by conducting on-site visits in Sauk county
Date of Completion: Month 2

3. Based on interview and focus groups, update potential directions for the Center (Goal 1, Obj E)
Reconcile initial data analysis with "on the ground" perspectives.
Date of Completion: Month 2

4. Interview county officials, and discuss current efforts and proposed directions related to (Goal 3, Objective A)
Reconcile potential directions for the Center with pragmatic perspectives on administrative, financing and legal matters.
Date of Completion: Month 3

5. Produce white paper and powerpoint outlining directions for future Center activity (G3,Obj C)
Present to key stakeholders and determine next steps for the Center.
Date of Completion: Month 4

CRITICAL COMPONENTS

The following elements are critical to reach the proposed goals and objectives. While it is not necessary that the County provide such assistance, it certainly would be valuable to the success of the analysis.

Text and Numeric Data
The county may provide documents pertaining to structure and functions of the Center and any other age-relevant activities. This includes previous strategic plans, county level needs assessments, and other relevant information.

Leaders and Administrators and Older Constituents
The County may assist with identifying all potential stakeholders at the county level. These include key leaders from public, non-profit and private organizations as well as programs and service locations willing to host up to five focus groups across the county. The county may also provide contact information, and an introductory letter of support concerning the goals and objectives of this project.

Principal Involvement
The County may identify up to six principals who will be available for at least one hour to review proposed directions in terms of administrative, financial and legal matters.

DELIVERABLES

Upon concluding the analysis, two products will be presented to the County:

(a) a report of up to 40 pages that includes a portrait of the aging population in Sauk county, an evaluation of current programs and services relevant to older adults, and a focus on current operations of the Center. This report also will detail the methods used to gather data supporting the analysis, and then present three viable directions for the County to consider.

(b) A powerpoint presentation that includes key information featured in the report, and can be used as a complementary form of information when presented to the County. The powerpoint presentation also will serve as a meeting among County leadership to discuss the analysis and identify the best direction for the Center.

QUALIFICATIONS

Brian Kaskie is among a small group of individuals who have earned a doctoral degree in gerontology, graduating from the Davis School of Gerontology at the University of Southern California in 1998. Brian then was appointed as a postdoctoral fellow in the Institute for Health and Aging at the University of California, San Francisco. Since 2000, Dr. Kaskie has served as a professor in the Department of Health Management and Policy at the University of Iowa. Most recently, Brian was selected as an American Political Science Association Congressional Fellow. During the 115th Congress, Brian staffed the United States Senate Special Committee on Aging, chaired by Senator Susan M. Collins of Maine. Senator Collins then appointed Brian as a project specialist through the start of 2018.

Brian Kaskie has established himself as a nationally recognized researcher whose work focuses on how theoretical models, legal principles and empirical research can advance our understanding of the delivery of health care to older adults. He has published nearly 100 peer reviewed journal publications and policy reports, and teaches three graduate courses in health policy.

Outside of his academic responsibilities, Brian has been engaged in a number of formal evaluations and strategic planning efforts. In 2000, Brian was appointed by the University of California, Office of the President to manage the California Strategic Planning Initiative for Older Adults. In that role, he co-authored three reports that addressed challenges and opportunities presented by the nation's largest constituency of older citizens, and one of these contributed to the passage of SB639 which sought to improve the provision of services to older Californians. In Iowa, he was appointed to the National Governors Association Taskforce on Long-Term Care, served the Governor's Economic Advisory Council as a subject matter expert, and was selected as an advisor to the CMS State Innovation Model.

Brian also has completed several evaluations for cities and counties. Most notably, Brian guided a strategic planning effort on behalf of the Johnson County (Iowa) Task Force on Aging. The Task Force fielded more than 1,000 surveys from older adults in Johnson County, interviewed more than 100 service administrators, and identified several critical points to pursue. The project evolved into the Johnson County Livable Community Initiative and was one of the first in the country to receive recognition from the AARP Livable Community Initiative in 2006. Johnson County has since hired an "aging specialist" and Iowa City recently was ranked as the best small-metro area to retire by the Milken Institute. In short, Brian understands the "on the ground" provision of health and supportive services to older persons, and brings a fund of knowledge and analytic skill set that will support the success of the proposed analysis. Brian is well suited to help Sauk county determine the best direction for the Center.