



AREA AGENCY ON AGING

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Merced County Older Adult System of Care Program Receives Prestigious Aging Achievement Award from National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a)

The Merced County Human Services Agency and Area Agency on Aging announces that The Older Adult System of Care (OASOC) Program recently received recognition from the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) with a 2017 n4a *Aging Achievement Award*, among the highest honors presented by n4a to member agencies. The awards program is supported by WellCare. The Merced County Older Adult System of Care Program, specifically the Adult and Aging Services Program Nurse component, was among 52 national aging programs to receive honors during the n4a Annual Conference & Tradeshow, July 29–August 2, in Savannah, GA.

The 2017 n4a *Aging Innovations and Achievement Awards* recognizes Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and Title VI Native American aging programs that develop and implement cutting-edge approaches to support older adults, people with disabilities and their family caregivers. A part of the criteria for the selection of the honorees was the ease with which other agencies could replicate the program in their communities.

“With the health care landscape continuing to change rapidly, our members are discovering new ways to position themselves in the long-term and health care marketplaces, as well as to strengthen long-standing services, to meet the needs of America’s rapidly growing older adult population,” said n4a’s Chief Executive Officer Sandy Markwood. “Our members work tirelessly, and with little fanfare in their communities, and this program enables us to shine a well-deserved spotlight on their critical work to support older adults’ health, safety, independence and dignity,” Ms. Markwood added.

The OASOC Program was established as a collaboration between the Merced County Human Services Agency (HSA), Area Agency on Aging (AAA), Behavioral Health and Recovery Services (BHRS), and the Public Health Department. The program operates as a service hub for seniors throughout Merced County. Through the OASOC, older adults, their family members, and care providers, can access a variety of programs and be connected to community resources. The Program Nurse provides outreach, education, intervention, and advocacy for

elderly and disabled adults with the goal of improving clients' mental and physical health through assessment, case management/care coordination, and linkage to community services and resources. Services are provided at various locations throughout Merced County including in client's homes.

“Adding the Program Nurse to the Older Adult System of Care enhanced the level of service provided to seniors in our community,” said Alexandra Pierce, Deputy Director of Adult and Aging Services for the Merced County Human Services Agency. Deputy Director Pierce further commented, “The Program Nurse acts as a guide, helping clients navigate, access resources, and address barriers in the complex, and sometimes disjointed, system of available services. Through collaboration, care coordination, and case management, the Program Nurse helps improve outcomes for clients who may not have otherwise been served.”

All winners are showcased in an [n4a publication](#).

The Merced County Human Services Agency (HSA) provides a wide array of support and assistance to residents of Merced County. The Adult and Aging Services Branch of HSA, which includes the Merced County Area Agency on Aging, serves seniors and dependent adults, as well as their family members and care providers. Services focus on facilitating access to supportive and long-term care resources, advocacy, and promotion of safety, independence, and quality of life. For more information, please visit the Adult and Aging Services website at: <http://www.co.merced.ca.us/451/Adult-and-Aging>. Follow Adult and Aging Services on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/Merced-County-Human-Services-Agency-Adult-and-Aging-Services-230083730836252/>.

About n4a

The National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) is the leading voice on aging issues for the 622 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) across the country and a champion in our nation's capital for the 256 Title VI Native American aging programs. n4a's primary mission is to build the capacity of our members so they can help older adults and people with disabilities live with dignity and choices in their homes and communities for as long as possible. (www.n4a.org / www.facebook.com/n4aACTION)

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