



Washington State Council on Aging

Meeting Title: 2025 March Washington State Council on Aging Meeting

Date: 3/25/2025

Location: Zoom

	Members Present	Appointment		Members Present	Appointment
✓	Jean Kindem	At-Large East		Vacant	Association of Counties
	Gavin Carmichael	AAADSW WA Advisory Council	✓	Susan Conniry	O3A Advisory Council
✓	Suone Cotner	At-Large West	✓	Dennis Wheeler	Snohomish County AAA
✓	Georgiann Dustin	NWRC Advisory Council		Vacant	Kitsap AAA Advisory Council
	Vacant	Central AAA		Vacant	Yakama Golden Eagle Advisory Council
✓	Glen Harper (acting)	Lewis Mason Thurston AAA Advisory Council		Guests Present	
✓	Ron Vivion	At-Large West	✓	Cathy Knight	W4A
(✓)	Vacant (Michael Adusah)	ADS King County Advisory Council	✓	Walt Bowen	Senior Lobby
✓	Bob Scarfo	Aging & Long-Term Care Eastern Washington Advisory Council	✓	Mary-Anne Grafton	WA Assoc. of Senior Centers
✓	Michele Blythe	Association of Cities	✓	Melanie McGuire	ALTSA
✓	Stephanie Carpenter	Southeast WA Aging and Long-Term Care	✓	Cameron Akita	ALTSA
	Rep. Tarra Simmons	WA House of Representatives	✓	Mike Anbesse	ALTSA
✓	Bruce Dougherty	Pierce County Aging & Disability Resources Advisory Board	✓	Cathy MacCaul	AARP
✓	Martha Raske	At-Large East	✓	Amy Wooten, Ellen Rogers, Ken Lund	Clark Co. Commission on Aging
			✓	Lacey Ramon	Parkinson's Wellness Place



Washington State Council on Aging

Topic	Key Points and/or Decisions Made
Welcome/Introductions Review/Approve Minutes and Agenda	<p>Vice-Chairperson Bruce Dougherty called the meeting to order at 9am.</p> <p>Council members provided updates from their respective areas, including meetings with legislators, advocacy for nutrition, facility updates, and well wishes.</p> <p>Bruce shared about attending the first Dementia and Age-Friendly meeting on February 27th. There will be four meetings over the next year and the group will be discussing action steps to include a statewide survey.</p> <p>The Council passed a motion to approve the meeting agenda and February meeting minutes.</p>
Partner Updates	<p>Cathy Knight, W4A State Director Cathy Shared updates on the budget, highlighting \$27.9M funding for nutrition as a significant achievement, though W4A is still advocating for the full \$34M. AAA directors will provide further details. Budget meetings scheduled later in the day.</p> <p>Dementia Pilots: Three sites were funded, but O3A was overlooked which is assumed to be an error. Senate has funding, but the House is missing one site.</p> <p>Health Homes: Cuts from Gov. Ferguson's budget are absent. This program operates at a cost savings.</p> <p>Advocacy: Lynne Kimball, ALTCEW's Executive Director, will be testifying to thank for Senior Nutrition funding and address concerns over dementia supports. Will discuss case management and care transitions on behalf of AAAs. Nicole Kiddoo, LMTAAA's Executive Director is preparing to testify for Senate Means and Ways, emphasizing the value of health homes and SR Nutrition funding, which brought money back to the state.</p>



Washington State Council on Aging

Cathy noted that Cathy MacCaul wanted to create a press release for older adult needs, focusing on Senior Nutrition and Health Homes. May collaborate on a joint letter with W4A, Senior Lobby, and AARP.

Upcoming Event: Emergency preparedness event scheduled for tomorrow.

Bruce thanked Cathy for her comprehensive updates.

Walt Bowen, Senior Lobby President

Walt shared that budget discussions are underway in the legislature, slowing the process for some bills.

Federal programs: many programs are at risk due to the major cuts from the current administration. Walt noted \$26B in federal funds goes to WA state, with the state budget around \$75B. Impacts on Social Security are very concerning.

Walt shared that former Speaker of the House, Frank Chopp recently passed away, which is a major loss.

Many rallies have occurred across the state for which the Senior Lobby has provided data.

Cathy MacCaul, AARP

Cathy updated the Council on funding concerns, outreach, and WA Cares.

Funding Concerns: Nutrition funding secured so far in the state budget proposals, but dental funding excluded. Additional information needed on PACE funding. There are concerns raised about Adult Protective Services (APS) funding.

Advocacy Letter: Plans to draft a letter highlighting Senior Nutrition and two other positive items, alongside three areas of concern. The letter is intended for the Governor's office and media to raise awareness about older demographic needs and advocate for a shifting budget. A multi-sector plan on



Washington State Council on Aging

	<p>aging (MPA) did not receive budget allocation; may require an executive order from the Governor's office. Age-Friendly Work: Efforts to integrate this program with MPA continue.</p> <p>Outreach: a focused campaign is underway, including outreach events like the freshman breakfast.</p> <p>WA Cares Bill: Public hearing scheduled tomorrow in the Early Learning and Human Services Committee. Improvements to WA Cares are highlighted in a recent Everett Herald article.</p>
Parkinson's Wellness Place (PWP) Presentation	<p>Lacey Ramon, CEO</p> <p>Lacey thanked and introduced herself to the Council. She holds a degree in exercise science, an MBA, is an athlete and coach, a team USA roller derby, and co-founder PWP.</p> <p>Overview of Parkinson's Disease (PD): A neurodegenerative disorder affecting dopamine neurons; 90K Americans diagnosed annually.</p> <p>PWP Program: A nonprofit focused on exercise-based therapies to slow disease progression. Activities include boxing, yoga, and cardio.</p> <p>History & Research: Inspired by a 2003 tandem bike ride study showing improved PD symptoms. Forced intense exercise yields better outcomes.</p> <p>Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bringing in specialists (nutritionists, estate planners).• Hosting social events and fundraisers (golf tournaments covering 30-40% of the budget).• Supporting research, including collecting sweat from those with PD for diagnosis training in service dogs.• Expanding wellness offerings (theater classes, massage therapy, SLP recruitment). <p>Impact by Numbers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 80 athletes trained weekly, with 125-150 individuals participating in various capacities.



Washington State Council on Aging

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Weekly sessions include 12 boxing classes, 2 PD Wellness Recovery sessions, and 1 yoga class.• Assessments conducted yearly (21 in 2022, 19 in 2023, 35 in 2024, 8 in 2025). <p>Effectiveness: Significant balance improvements measured using Fullerton and Berg tests.</p> <p>Ron Vivion, Board VP at PWP and SCOA member, shared his experience with PWP's positive impact for his wife, Sandi. She experienced changes in 2023 and met with a neurologist who confirmed her PD diagnosis. She was not an athlete before, but after a neighbor suggested attending PWP, she is now engaged in boxing and yoga twice a week. She has seen many improvements and value in the social community.</p> <p>Lacey detailed other programs available in Ocean Shores and Gig Harbor, with plans for a new location in Shoreline, as well as assisting in launching a PD-focused gym in Bellingham.</p> <p>Outreach: Encouraging participation, especially in Snohomish Co. April is Parkinson's Awareness Month.</p> <p>Jean Kindem asked if there were any resources for Eastern Washington. Lacey suggested Rocksteady Boxing and Parkinson's Wellness Recovery, both searchable by zip code.</p> <p>Several Council Members expressed gratitude for the information and resources.</p>
ALTSA Update	<p>Mike Anbesse, Deputy Assistant Secretary, ALTSA</p> <p>Mike shared that he was coming from the Adult Family Home (AFH) Council meeting that had some promising updates, noting that the 2026-27 operating budgets look better than expected.</p> <p>Assisted Living Facility (ALF) Rates: there are still some questions about ALFs. ALFs are mostly private sector businesses, with costs starting at \$5K+ per month. Medicaid rates at ALFs start at a minimum \$117/day, maximum \$307/day, depending on location. Rates are mostly determined by Activities of Daily Living (ADLs).</p>



Washington State Council on Aging

	<p>Adult Family Home (AFH) Rates: Similar system, with rates decreasing as needs decrease. Assessments tied to ADLs impact rate calculations.</p> <p>ALF Length of Stay: Average - 22 days, some up to 1.5 years. Medicaid-contracted ALFs are mostly full. Transitions often happen from hospitals to Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNFs) before returning to ALFs. Medicaid rates cover room and board only, though Medicare Parts B & D may also apply.</p> <p>Governor's Budget: No rate increases this year though awaiting final determination.</p> <p>Questions & Discussions: Spreadsheet request: Suone requested the Medicaid rates spreadsheet, which will include AFH rates.</p> <p>Rate Setting Process: Bruce asked about rate-setting board involvement. Mike explained that AFH Council, Rate-Setting Board, Governor's office, Legislature, and Office of Financial Management (OFM) review data before decisions.</p> <p>Transitioning SNF Residents to ALFs: Ken Lund asked about plans for transitioning Medicaid-funded custodial residents to ALFs. Mike explained that transition efforts have been ongoing for decades. Barriers such as co-morbidities and conditions requiring 16+ hours of care often justify SNF level of care. Annual assessments may indicate a transition to ALFs or AFHs, but nursing coverage is the major differentiator. Families may hesitate to move loved ones.</p> <p>Cathy Knight added that WA ranks so highly for LTSS because of its rebalancing to HCBS in the 1980s. The Medicaid rate is very important and continues to be a struggle in WA. Housing, reimbursement rates, and regional variations are other issues.</p> <p>Stephanie Carpenter shared that she would be happy to discuss questions with Council Members as an Assisted Living facility Administrator.</p>
Legislative/Outreach/Advocacy Committee	Suone Cotner reviewed the committee's advocacy efforts to date, including legislative priorities distribution, nutrition advocacy letters, and support for W4A letters. Suone noted the updates to the SCOA webpage to include presentations and resources.



Washington State Council on Aging

	Suone added that more follow up is needed with the Governor's office following the legislative session.		
Open Discussion/New Business/Public Comment	<p>Bruce shared that he had reached out to the ALTSA grants manager in charge of civil money penalties for further discussion.</p> <p>Dennis: Mentioned SB 5337, regarding Memory Care Facility certification, with a Senate Health and Wellness Committee hearing scheduled for tomorrow. Cathy Knight provided the sign-in link for testimony, forwarded to Cameron for distribution.</p> <p>Ken Lund commended the meeting's content and engagement.</p> <p>Bruce shared details about public meetings regarding the WA Cares bill.</p> <p>The meeting adjourned at 10:51am.</p>		
ACTION ITEMS		Assignee	Due Date