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**Primary Care Liaison Program Receives Prestigious Aging Innovations Award
from the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a)**

Vancouver, WA: The Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities of Southwest Washington (AAADSW) announces that the Primary Care Liaison program recently received recognition from the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging (n4a) with an Aging Innovations Award, the highest honor presented by n4a to member agencies. The awards program is supported by WellCare Health Plans. AAADSW's Primary Care Liaison program was among the top 16 of 45 local aging programs to receive honors during the n4a Annual Conference & Tradeshow, July 28–August 1, in Chicago, IL.

The 2018 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 changing at a rapid pace, our members continue to meet the needs of America’s rapidly growing older adult population by finding new ways to position themselves in the long-term and health care marketplaces while strengthening the services they already offer,” said n4a’s Chief Executive Officer Sandy Markwood. “Our members work tirelessly, 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,” said Markwood.

AAADSW collaborated with the Northwest Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Center (NW GWEC) through the University of Washington and another AAA in Washington State to design and implement a new Primary Care Liaison (PCL) role. The PCL serves to provide targeted outreach and on-going support to primary care practices and healthcare providers in AAADSW’s five county service area. Additionally, the PCL coordinates an AAA-based practicum, educating residents from a family medicine residency program on the aging network and best practices for connecting their patients to community resources. These proactive efforts work to bridge the clinical and

community environments to forge new partnerships and strengthen existing relationships. Since the inception of the program, 32 resident physicians have completed a practicum and AAADSW has received over 3,600 referrals from healthcare providers working to connect their patients to services.

“Working in partnership with the University of Washington School of Medicine, AAADSW has provided valuable education and increased awareness to the medical providers of our community to better serve their geriatric population within their practice. It is wonderful to have national recognition of this program”, stated AAADSW’s Executive Director Dave Kelly.

The 2018 n4a *Aging Innovations Awards* honored traditional and new strategies in a range of categories including Caregiving, Community Planning & Livable Communities, Economic Security, Elder Abuse Prevention, Health-LTSS Integration, Healthy Aging, Home & Community-Based Services, Information & Referral/Access to Services, Transportation & Mobility and Workforce Development.

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

About AAADSW

The Area Agency on Aging & Disabilities of Southwest Washington is a multi-service public agency providing assistance to the elderly and disabled of Clark, Cowlitz, Klickitat, Skamania and Wahkiakum counties. Requests for information, assistance and general inquiries may be directed to (360) 694-8144. (www.helpingelders.org / <https://www.facebook.com/HelpingElders/>)

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 more than 250 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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