

Tompkins County Office for the Aging



***ANNUAL REPORT
2014-2015***

From the Director...

I'm pleased to present this annual report for the NYS fiscal year 2014-15 on behalf of the Tompkins County Office for the Aging. The year 2015 marks the 40th year that the Tompkins County Office for the Aging has served our community. Over these 40 years, we have been a trusted source of information on aging services in Tompkins County, as well as a provider and funder of services. Our network of services has grown over this time, as has the demographics of the aging population. Older adults are the fastest growing segment of our population, and we are aware of their current needs as well as the implications for the future.

In 2014, the Office for the Aging launched a community-wide planning initiative. During this process, we involved over 145 older adults and community stakeholders in a series of eight meetings to discuss our community's strengths, issues, and priorities for action on important topics related to aging. The results are incorporated in the Strategic Plan for Aging in Tompkins County, which will be used by our office and many others to help guide decision making for the future.

Most recently in 2015, Tompkins County and the City of Ithaca joined the global network of Age Friendly Communities through AARP and the World Health Organization. This effort, spearheaded by the Office for the Aging and the Ithaca College Gerontology Institute, will continue to engage older adults, municipal leaders and others to make our community a great place for people of all ages.

Within this Annual Report, you will find these and other highlights from the last year. You will also find information about the core services we provide in partnership with our subcontractors, community partners and volunteers. We wish to thank them for the vital and cost-effective services that are delivered to older adults every day in Tompkins County. We also thank the Tompkins County Legislature for their ongoing support and the taxpayers who make our services possible. We are proud of our 40 year legacy of service to our community.

Sincerely,
Lisa A. Holmes,
Director



Autonomy, Dignity, Independence

Our Mission

The mission of the Tompkins County Office for the Aging is to assist older adults to remain independent in their homes for as long as possible and appropriate, and with decent quality of life and human dignity.

Office for the Aging Staff

Lorraine Cloud, Outreach Worker

Marge Dean, Part-time Account Clerk/Typist

Lisa Holmes, Director

Lai Siu Leung, Part-time Outreach Worker

Rae Lobreva, Part-time Office Assistant

Rodney Maine, Senior Account Clerk/Typist/Outreach Worker

Susan Martin, Part-time Dietitian

Lisa Monroe Aging Services Planner

Suzanne Motheral, Aging Services Specialist

Eileen Savino, Outreach Worker

Katrina Schickel, Aging Services Specialist

Dianna Schooley, Part-time Senior Account Clerk/Typist

Robert Slocum, Administrative Assistant Level 4

David Stoyell, Aging Services Specialist

2014-15 Advisory Committee Members



Advisory Committee Liaisons

Betty Balcome
Elizabeth Ellis
Jennie Graham
Charlie Hart
Satomi Hill

Ronda Ketcham
Eugenia Landers
Gene Lovelace*
Mary Jo Lovelace
Eleanor May
Mary Maynard

Peggy Merrill
Mary Oltz*
John Scott
Edie Spaulding*
Bill Tomek

Caryn Bullis (NY Connects)
Melissa Gatch (Health Department)
Kathy Luz-Herrera (County Legislature)
Jan Lynch (Finger Lakes Independence Center)
Peggy Merrill (Foodnet)

* Term expired 12/31/2014

Highlights of 2014-2015

Strategic Planning

The Office for the Aging engaged 145 older adults and community stakeholders in a strategic planning process, where participants articulated our community's strengths, issues/needs and recommendations for action across eight topic areas related to aging: Civic Engagement, Volunteerism and Education; Financial Exploitation and Elder Abuse; Financial Security and Employment; Housing; Long Term Care; Medical Care; Mental Health; and Transportation. The results are compiled in a Strategic Plan for Aging in Tompkins County and may be found online at: www.tompkinscountyny.gov/cofa Results will be used by the Office for the Aging and others to inform decision making into the future.

PERS Improvements

The Personal Emergency Response Program (PERS) Advisory Committee of the Office for the Aging issued a Request for Proposals and selected Doyle Medical Monitoring to handle the technology, billing and call center for the PERS Program. As a result, all PERS clients have received new medical alert machines with greater range, two-way voice communication, and capability to interface with digital and cellular phone service.

Care Transitions Efforts

The Office for the Aging received a \$223,365 grant from the New York State Balancing Incentive Program (BIP) Innovation Fund to fund a Transitions Program to serve high risk Medicaid beneficiaries. The program serves individuals upon discharge from local hospitals or skilled nursing facilities to assist with the transition from facility to home. The overall goal is to improve patient health outcomes, reduce avoidable hospital admissions, and enable individuals to manage their health conditions successfully at home. The Transitions Program is implemented by Visiting Nurse Services of Ithaca and Tompkins County and CAP Connect. Other participating clinical partners include Cayuga Medical Center, Schuyler Hospital, Beechtree Care Center, Cayuga Ridge and Seneca View nursing homes, as well as CAP primary and specialty

Highlights of 2014-2015

Senior Housing Expo

The Office for the Aging and the Ithaca College Gerontology Institute co-hosted a successful *Senior Housing Expo* on May 3, 2014. Twenty housing providers attended, representing all levels of care. Over 300 older adults attended. Workshops were offered on the topic of downsizing and on the various senior housing options available locally.

Housing Preferences

The Office for the Aging conducted a “Housing Needs/Preferences Survey” of older adults, and results were publicized through local media outlets. Survey results were distributed to municipal planners, developers, builders and the Tompkins County Legislature. A summary report is available on the Office for the Aging’s website. www.tompkinscountyny.gov/cofa

Falls Prevention Efforts

A partner in the *Step Up to Stop Falls* collaborative, the Office for the Aging continues to educate older adults on falls prevention and offer home safety assessments. As a result of these collaborative efforts, the rate of hospitalizations due to falls in older adults 65+ in Tompkins County decreased by 16.8% between 2008 and 2013. The *Step Up to Stop Falls* initiative is led locally by the Health Planning Council of Tompkins County, with the support of the Health Foundation of Western and Central NY.

Program Evaluations

The Office for the Aging conducts periodic evaluations of all its programs and contracted services to monitor client satisfaction, ensure that programmatic goals are being met, and to improve the quality of services. In 2014-15, the following programs were evaluated: The Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program , NY Connects, Home Safety Assessment Program and Caregiver Services. Results are available upon request.

Community Edu

Aging Services Network Meetings

The Office for the Aging organizes monthly Aging Services Network Meetings, attended by local aging services professionals and the general public.

In 2014-15, topics included:

- Cancer Resource Center
- Legal Assistance of Western New York (LawNY) Legal Services
- Project Lifesaver
- Tompkins Time Traders
- Suicide Risk Awareness for Aging Adults
- Cooking at home: Research on Food Preparation by Older Adults
- Aging and Brain Health: Strategies and Challenges
- Aging and Driving
- Green Burial Movement
- 2015 Strategic Plan for Aging in Tompkins County



Community Collaborations

In 2014-15 Office for the Aging staff members served on Advisory Committees including:

- The Health Planning Council Board and Executive Committee
- The Long Term Care Committee of the Health Planning Council
- Visiting Nurse Service Board and Professional Advisory Committee
- Gadabout Board
- Workforce Investment Board
- Tompkins County Workforce Diversity and Inclusion Committee
- Tompkins County Public Information Officers Committee
- Coordinated Human Services Public Transportation Planning Committee
- Ithaca College Gerontology Institute Community Advisory Board
- Tompkins County Human Services Cabinet
- Cornell University President's Family Life Advisory Council
- Working Group on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Aging
- Developmental Disability Subgroup of the Tompkins County Mental Health Board
- Project Advisory Committee of the Southern Tier Provider System under DSRIP
- Women with Disabilities Planning Committee
- Intergenerational Prom with Ithaca College
- Depression Conference Steering Committee



Collaborations with Educational Institutions

Cornell University, Tompkins Cortland Community College, Ithaca College, and Binghamton University provide us with student volunteers, interns and work-study students. Students serve as friendly visitors in the Project CARE program, help with administrative work and assist with evaluations and publications. Faculty and staff involved with gerontology at Cornell University and Ithaca College regularly share information and expertise with the local aging services network through the Office for the Aging.

Community Outreach

In 2014-15 Office for the Aging staff engaged in outreach at the following community events:

- Tompkins County Employee Benefits Fair
- Greater Ithaca Activities Center (GIAC) Festival
- Groton Olde Home Days Parade
- Juneteenth
- McGraw House Health and Human Services Fair
- Ithaca College Retirement Fair
- Senior Housing Expo
- Longview Wellness Fair
- Ithaca Festival



Office for the Aging staff offered services presentations to the following groups:

Local churches, Foodnet Board, Kendal, Clare Bridge support groups, McGraw House, Dr Stevanovic's office, Kiwanis Club, Rotary Club, Lansing Senior Group, Food Pantries and Mobile Food trucks including: Groton, Lansing, Freeville, Dryden, Danby, Brooktondale and Food Distribution Network Directors, Health Planning Council Board, Cornell Gerontology students, Cornell Club of Ithaca and the Tompkins County Mental Health Board. In addition, the Office for the Aging offered outreach to Foodnet clients and Advisory Committee on Medicare Saving Programs, offered falls prevention education to residents of Juniper Manor, Ellis Hollow Apartments and Newfield Garden Apartments, and helped to convene a meeting to inform services providers about the newly formed non-profit Love Living at Home.

- The Office for the Aging co-sponsored the annual day-long Conference on Depression: "Technology and Mental Health" together with several other community organizations.

Training and Staff Development

In order to remain current in the field of aging, Office for the Aging staff participated in the following trainings in 2014-2015:

- Applications of Sensory Integrative Strategies with Aging Adults
- Public Information Officer's training
- Step Up to Stop Falls Learning Sessions
- Webinars : Falls Prevention, Balancing Incentives Program, Database updates, NYS Justice Center, "Protecting from Financial Exploitation"
- Linking Late Life Depression with Dementia
- Community Priorities for Palliative Care Consensus Results
- Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) Training
- NYS Sanitation and Safety Training
- Program to Encourage Active and Rewarding Lives (PEARLS) Training
- Hearing Loss in Older Adults
- Annual Diversity Conference
- Life Review of Generative Contributions
- Social Adult Day Services Training
- NYS Senior Nutrition Conference
- Falls Prevention: Effective Assessment, Triage and Intervention Program Design
- Ithaca College Gerontology Distinguished Speaker, Holly Prigerson on Palliative Care
- CPR and AED Training
- Aging in Community
- Suicide Prevention
- Tai Chi for Falls Prevention
- Association on Aging in New York's Leadership Institute
- Health Insurance Information Counseling and Assistance Program (HIICAP) Trainings
- Long Term Care Ombudsman Program Certification Trainings
- Resident to Resident Elder Mistreatment
- Leadership Tompkins

Information and Assistance

The Tompkins County Office for the Aging is the community's primary source for information and assistance about the array of services available to older adults, caregivers, and others who are interested.

✓ **Outreach**

Through participation at food pantries, health fairs, senior group gatherings, home visits, and many other activities the Office for the Aging and its subcontractors work to bring services to older adults who need them. In the fiscal year 2014-2015, the Office for the Aging had 1064 community outreach contacts with older adults.

✓ **Senior Community Service Employment Program**

This program is designed to assist income eligible persons age 55 or older with a career transition or a re-entry into the workplace. Subsidized part-time community service placement and training is provided to participants to assist them to return to the workforce. The Office for the Aging has capacity to enroll 2 qualified individuals through the SCSEP. During 2014-2015, a total of four participants were served.

✓ **Senior Circle Newsletter**

The Tompkins County Office for the Aging and Lifelong jointly publish the quarterly *Senior Circle* Newsletter. Mailed to over 10,200 older adults in Tompkins County, the *Senior Circle* is a valuable medium to inform people of vital services and events.

✓ **Insurance Counseling**

The Health Insurance Information, Counseling and Assistance Program (HIICAP) is offered through a contract with Lifelong, with two trained HIICAP counselors on staff at the Office for the Aging and seven volunteer HIICAP counselors coordinated through Lifelong. Trained HIICAP counselors offer one-on-one counseling as well as group presentations on the various aspects of Medicare, Medicaid, private health insurance, long term care insurance, and prescription drug coverage including Medicare Part D and EPIC. The HIICAP program served 741 individuals in fiscal year 2014-2015.

Long Term Care Assistance

Long Term Care Assistance programs provide a continuum of care and supports to seniors and their families. Long term care services span from small, practical supports which help to keep people living in their homes longer, to hands-on personal care in the home, to assistance and advocacy within nursing homes.

Long Term Care Assistance Programs include the following:



✓ Personal Emergency Response System (PERS)

PERS is a communication system which links an individual with a call center that can dispatch emergency responders when needed. This system provides 24-hour-a-day protection for individuals who are frail and at risk of falling or

PERS units are available for rental through the Office for the Aging on an income based sliding fee scale. During the fiscal year 2014-2015 a total of 617 seniors utilized PERS machines in their homes in Tompkins County.

✓ Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly Program (EISEP)

The EISEP Program provides case management, homemaking/personal care and housekeeping/chore services on a sliding fee scale to income-eligible older adults. Case management is offered through contract with Tompkins County Adult and Long Term Care Services, and aide service is offered through contract with Caregivers, Comfort Keepers, Redmoon, and Stafkings. During the fiscal year 2014-2015, 150 frail elders received 3,582 hours of case management services, 55 individuals were served with 5,985 hours of homemaker/ personal care services, and 75 individuals were served with 5,907 hours of housekeeper/chore services through EISEP. Additionally, under the consumer directed component of EISEP, 17 clients hired their own aides and were provided with 3,375 hours of service.

Long Term Care Assistance

✓ **NY Connects Long Term Care Services**

Staff at NY Connects provide objective and unbiased information about long term care options in Tompkins County, as well as in-home assessment and ongoing case management. A partnership between the Office for the Aging and the Department of Social Services, NY Connects Long Term Care Services offers information about long term care to consumers of any age, regardless of income or payer source. In 2014-2015, 1,505 people received information and assistance.



✓ **The Long Term Care Committee of the Health Planning Council**

serves as the NY Connects Long Term Care Council. The Long Term Care Committee plays an active role in ensuring a coordinated local long term care delivery system, identifying needs and gaps in service and recommending system improvements.



✓ **Falls Prevention**

Many falls are preventable. Trained outreach staff from the Office for the Aging offer Home Safety Assessments to older adults in the community. During an assessment, fall hazards are identified and addressed wherever possible. If necessary, assistance and referrals are provided for issues requiring modification or repair, such as installation of grab bars or railings. In 2014-2015 this program assisted 36 older adults in resolving over 46% of identified hazards.

Long Term Care Assistance

✓ The Registry

The Office for the Aging contracts with the Finger Lakes Independence Center to offer the Registry Program. The

Registry is a free service linking individuals in need of in-home help with independent job seekers. The Registry lists jobs for personal care aides, home health aides, elder companions, housekeepers and cooks.

The program prescreens and checks references for all caregivers. The family must interview and negotiate the specific terms of employment.

During the fiscal year 2014-2015 81 older adults utilized

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✓ Long Term Care Ombudsman Program

The Long Term Care Ombudsman Program works to resolve concerns expressed by, or on behalf of residents of long term care facilities.

This is accomplished by recruiting and training community volunteers to visit long term care facilities and advocate on behalf of residents, giving them a stronger voice in their own care and lives. Currently there are six certified long term care ombudsman volunteers in Tompkins County.



✓ Friendly Visiting

The Friendly Visitor Program of the Office for the Aging works with volunteers who offer companionship and a chance to share mutual interests. The Office for the Aging partners

with programs at both Ithaca College and Cornell University whose student volunteers are paired with older adults. During 2014-2015, 164 individuals received 2,676 volunteer hours of visiting, an increase of 14% from the previous year.

Services

Northside Southside Program

The Office for the Aging contracts with Lifelong to offer the Northside Southside Program which serves the historic African American neighborhoods of the City of Ithaca. The program includes regular visits and phone calls to homebound residents, as well as educational programming activities. In 2014-2015 96 people were served through the program.



Enhance Fitness

The Office for the Aging contracts with Lifelong to offer the Enhance Fitness Program, a series of exercises designed specifically for mature participants. The program consists of one-hour classes meeting three times a week. Classes are socially stimulating while focusing on areas of recognized importance for mature participants. In 2014-2015 approximately 52 people attended weekly Enhance Fitness classes.

Walk Program

The Office for the Aging contracts with Lifelong to offer a series of planned walks for older adults. In 2014-2015, 11 group walks took place throughout Tompkins County.



Legal Services

The Office for the Aging contracts with Legal Assistance of Western New York, (LawNY) for legal assistance with civil matters. In 2014-2015, 18 people received over 108 hours of legal assistance.



Transportation

The Office for the Aging contracts with Gadabout for transportation services for persons over 60 or with disabilities. During 2014-2015, 166 people received 3,180 rides through this contract.



Nutrition Program

The nutrition program is provided through a subcontract with Foodnet Meals on Wheels and offers meals to older adults, both in their homes, and in congregate settings at four sites in Tompkins County. The nutrition program assures that clients receive a nutritious, hot meal up to five days per week and learn healthy nutritional habits through education and counseling.

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✓ Home Delivered Meals

This service is provided to Tompkins County older adults who are homebound and/or unable to prepare their own meals. A hot mid-day meal is delivered weekdays, with the option of an optional sandwich meal for the evening. Frozen meals are provided for weekends and holidays. A voluntary and confidential contribution of \$8 is requested, but no person is denied a meal if they are unable to contribute. During the fiscal year 2015, 5,596 seniors were served 150,480 meals in their homes.



Nutrition Program

✓ Nutrition Counseling

Nutritional assessment and counseling is provided to older adults on a one-on-one basis. Foodnet's registered dietitian assists older adults in understanding their dietary needs and restrictions, and provides methods for changing their dietary habits.

During fiscal year 2014-2015, 420 people were provided with 601 hours of nutrition counseling.

✓ Nutrition Education

Nutrition education is provided to Foodnet participants in a group setting, covering topics of interest and emphasizing good nutrition as a component of health. During the fiscal year 2014-15, 648 older adults received nutrition education.



✓ Senior Farmer Market Nutrition Program

The Office for the Aging distributes coupon booklets worth \$20 to income-eligible households. Coupons are for the purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables at participating NYS Farmers Markets. During 2014-15, 615 booklets were distributed to seniors throughout Tompkins County.

Home Repair and Energy Services

Home repair and energy services assist senior homeowners in maintaining their homes and living safely, independently and affordably.

✓ **Tompkins County Home Repair Program**

The Office for the Aging contracts with Better Housing for Tompkins County and Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Services to provide small home repairs for older adults in Tompkins County. Priority is given to repairs related to health and safety. In 2014-2015 the Home Repair Program served 61 seniors.



✓ **Elder Cottage Program**

The Office for the Aging administers the initial application process for the Elder Cottage Lease Program operated by Better Housing for Tompkins County. An elder cottage is a small, free-standing, energy efficient, removable modular home installed adjacent to an existing single-family home. Tompkins County is the site of New York State's first subsidized Elder Cottage Program. There are currently five elder cottages in Tompkins County.

Home Repair and Energy Services



✓ Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP)

The HEAP Program offers benefits to income eligible individuals to offset the costs of heating their homes or apartments. During the fiscal year 2014-2015, the Office for the Aging processed 647 HEAP applications for older adults and individuals with disabilities.

✓ Weatherization Referral and Assistance Program (WRAP)

The WRAP Program of the Office for the Aging assists income-eligible senior citizens in addressing home repair needs. The WRAP Program helps the client assess the work to be done, assists with applications and contractors' bids, and coordinates funding from several agencies. During 2014-2015 96 older adults were served by the WRAP Program.



Caregiver Services

Family caregivers are an integral component of the long-term care system, and the Office for the Aging strives to support them through a number of services.

✓ Project CARE



Project CARE is an initiative of the Office for the Aging that can help stressed caregivers and the older adults for whom they are caring. The Office for the Aging matches older adults and their caregivers with volunteers who are able to help with a number of tasks including errands, shopping, light housekeeping, yard work, transportation and respite. Volunteers provide opportunities for socialization to those who are homebound and isolated. Additionally, the Office for the Aging contracts with agencies to provide professional respite for older adults with medical needs.

In 2014, the Tompkins County Sheriff's Office began **Project Lifesaver**, a radio location device for tracking individuals who wander. The Office for the Aging partners with the Sheriff's Office to refer caregivers of individuals with Alzheimer's Disease or other dementias to sign up for this important service when needed. Currently 10 individuals in Tompkins County utilize the Project Lifesaver program.



Caregiver Services

✓ Caregivers' Resource Center & Alzheimer's Support Unit

The Caregivers' Resource Center provides:

- Information to caregivers
- Counseling to caregivers
- A lending library of written and digital materials—including local resource guides
- Quarterly *In Support of Caregivers* newsletter
- Workshops on caregiving issues
- Support Group for caregivers of those with Alzheimer's Disease and other dementias.
- Six week Workshop series: Powerful Tools for Caregivers
- New in January 2015, a digital monthly *Dementia Caregivers Bulletin*



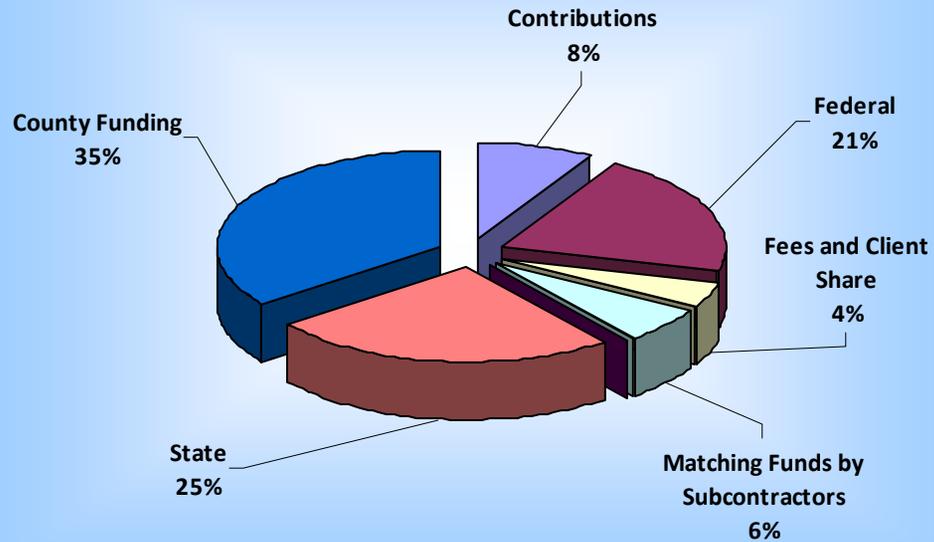
The Caregiver's Resource Center

In 2014-2015, the Caregivers Resource Center sponsored the following training sessions to the public:

Legal and Financial Issues for LGBT Caregivers, Creative Self-care for Caregivers, Exploring the Aging Experience, Common Struggles for Caregivers, Living with Alzheimer's- Middle Stage Caregiving, When An Elder Refuses Help

In addition, a series of six-week sessions of "Powerful Tools for Caregivers" classes were offered to local caregivers in both the fall and spring.

Tompkins County Office for the Aging Sources of Funding for 2014-2015



<u>FUNDING SOURCE</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
County Funding	\$898,534
State	\$640,357
Federal	\$534,507
Contributions	\$208,394
Matching Funds Contributed by Subcontractors	\$156,516
Fees and Client Share	\$102,515
	\$2,540,823

Funding Sources	2013-2014 Program Total	2014-2015 Program Total	Increase (Decrease) from 2013-2014
Federal Assistance to Caregivers: TITLE III-E	43,397	40,407	(2,990)
Federal Balancing Incentives Program: Care Transitions	0	69,576	69,576
Federal Care Transitions Program: CCTP	3,600	15,250	11,650
Federal Employment Service: TITLE V	32,781	46,176	13,395
Federal Health Promotion: III-D	4,142	4,465	323
Federal Health Insurance Counseling Program: HIICAP	41,185	43,038	1,853
Federal Home Delivered and Congregate Meals: IIIC	542,438	555,212	12,774
Federal Home Energy Assistance Program: HEAP	50,867	46,841	(4,026)
Federal Nutrition Services Program: NSIP	122,000	123,116	1,116
Federal Older Americans's Act: IIIB	306,709	323,318	16,609
Federal Ombudsman Program: TITLE VII	16,865	18,022	1,157
Federal Systems Integration Program: SYST INT	23,114	13,991	(9,123)
NYS Caregivers Resource Centers: CRC	23,338	24,144	806
NYS Community/Congregate Services: CSE/CSI	203,807	227,976	24,169
NY Connects	43,987	43,987	0
NYS Expanded In-home Services for the Elderly: EISEP	449,120	459,004	9,884
NYS Ombudsman Program-SLTCOP	3,608	3,608	0
NYS Wellness in Nutrition Program: WIN	387,367	369,537	(17,830)
Personal Emergency Response: PERS	95,250	89,222	(6,028)
Weatherization Program: WRAP	30,681	23,933	(6,748)
TOTALS	2,424,256	2,540,823	116,567



GET INTO THE ACT.
OLDER AMERICANS MONTH
MAY 2015

Tompkins County
Office for the Aging
Autonomy Dignity Independence

Tompkins County Human Services Annex Building
214 W. Martin Luther King Jr./State St.
Ithaca, NY 14850
(607) 274-5482

<http://tompkinscountyny.gov/cofa>

