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Shapiro Administration Announces First Local Aging Agencies Selected for Tailored Support to Develop New, Regional Teams to Protect Older Adults from Abuse

Five counties and regional coalitions across PA – covering 12 counties – have been selected to receive expert consulting to support the development of multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) to improve collaboration and outcomes for complex protective services cases in their communities, ensuring professionals from different fields are all part of the process of protecting older adults.



Indiana, PA – The **Pennsylvania Department of Aging** today announced that five Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and/or coalitions within the AAA Network will be among the first in Pennsylvania to receive individualized, tailored support from outside experts and the Department as they develop Multidisciplinary Teams (MDTs) to help address complex older adult protective services cases in their respective counties and regions.

MDTs are community-based groups that support the Department's commitment to protecting older Pennsylvanians from abuse by bringing together professionals from various fields like social services, criminal and civil justice, mental health, medicine, finance, and public health to improve collaboration and outcomes for protective services cases. Under the leadership of **Secretary Jason Kavulich**, the Department has been working to bring this collaborative approach, which is supported by the U.S. Department

of Justice and utilized by several other states including New York and California, to Pennsylvania.

“We are doing groundbreaking collaborative work at the state level to ensure protection of older adults at the community level,” said **Secretary Kavulich**. “One of our Administration’s priorities is to continuously advance and modernize our practices while supporting the AAAs, District Attorney’s Offices, and our community partners to ensure older adults are cared for and safe in their chosen community. With today’s announcement, we are deploying national level expertise and proven practical approaches to help AAAs and community partners build teams that are person-centered and able to move quickly to get the right resources for the victim.”

Five applications were selected through a competitive process to receive consulting from Weill Cornell Medicine. These include three individual counties – Bucks, Cumberland and Indiana – and two multi-county collaborations or “MDT Hubs,” one consisting of Lehigh, Lancaster, and Berks counties; and the second consisting of Clearfield, Jefferson, Potter, Cameron, Elk, and McKean counties.

Through its partnership with the Department, Weill Cornell Medicine will provide key technical support to help the selected AAAs establish, formalize, and enhance MDT structures. This effort works to improve cross-sector coordination, decision-making, and system effectiveness to better protect older adults. Weill Cornell Medicine will also support MDTs through evidence-based frameworks, advanced data analysis, and subject-matter consultation to ensure rigor, consistency, and measurable outcomes across all the participating AAAs and AAA hubs. The geographic diversity of the participating AAAs also enables the Department to test, refine, and scale the MDT model across rural, suburban, and regional settings.

“Our agency is excited for the opportunity to work with Weill Cornell Medicine. Over the past five years, we have seen a 55 percent increase in elder abuse cases in our county. These cases have become increasingly complex and now require deeper collaboration with a wide range of community partners,” said **Indiana County Aging Services executive director Janine Maust**. “We view this consultation as an essential step in supporting both the older adults we serve and the protective services workers responsible for reducing or eliminating risk. This initiative will equip us with the tools and structure needed to bring partner agencies together, strengthen communication, and engage in more effective case discussions.”

“Being the first county in Pennsylvania to receive Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) development consulting support demonstrates the Commonwealth’s confidence in Indiana County’s Aging Services and the Elder Abuse Task Force,” said **Indiana County District Attorney Robert F. Manzi Jr.** “We are grateful to our state partners for

providing this support, which will allow us to enhance services and protections for the senior citizens of Indiana County.”

“As someone who has created and supported elder abuse teams around the country and internationally, I can say that the Commonwealth’s commitment to statewide availability of this vital resource is unprecedented,” said **Dr. Mark Lachs, professor of medicine at Weill Cornell School of Medicine**. “Kudos to Secretary Kavulich and his team for protecting the rights and dignity of older Pennsylvanians!”

Governor Josh Shapiro’s [2025-26 budget](#) includes a \$10 million investment for those AAAs so they can continue to provide key services to older adults.

The Department works with a network of [52 AAAs covering Pennsylvania’s 67 counties](#) to deliver services to older adults that help them stay healthy, live safely and thrive in their homes of choice as they age. The Department continues its commitment to provide more transparency and accountability of the AAA network with the Comprehensive Agency Performance Evaluation, or CAPE – the Department’s new overhauled approach to monitoring the performance of the AAAs, including protective services. In April 2025, for the first time ever, The Department began posting performance results on its website for AAAs monitored under CAPE. [There are results for 18 AAAs currently on the Department’s website with more to follow in the coming months.](#)

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