

PCA Celebrates 50 Years of Aging With You: A timeline of our service to older Philadelphians



1965 Congress Passes Older Americans Act (OAA) to address lack of community social services for older people. The Administration on Aging (AoA) is also established to administer OAA grant programs and to serve as the federal focal point on matters concerning older people.

1971 Pennsylvania Lottery begins to provide property tax relief for older Pennsylvanians. It grows to include the funding of 52 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) across PA. The PA Lottery remains the only state lottery that designates all proceeds to programs that benefit older residents.

1973 PCA is founded as Philadelphia's AAA to serve older adults and adults with disabilities in Philadelphia County. Rodney D. Williams is appointed executive director.

1974 PCA provides support for older Philadelphians with these services: Senior community centers, congregate meals, telephone information and referral, homemaker assistance, and free or discounted transportation.

LATE 1970's PCA starts providing home-delivered meals throughout Philadelphia via six senior centers including Philadelphia Senior Center (PSC) Main (now PSC Avenue of the Arts), Holmecrest, North Broad Street Senior Center, Haddington Multi Services for Older Adults, and Center in the Park.

1977 PCA adds new supports for older adults: in-home care and domiciliary care to connect those with daily living barriers with families who can assist with their needs; and an employment/job training program.

1979 PCA begins administering the Emergency Fund for Older Philadelphians to older adults in crisis who need immediate assistance with shelter, food utilities and health care.

1980 Key services are added to PCA: Senior Housing Assistance Repair Program (SHARP) improves home accessibility through home repair; legal services for older adults with legal challenges or proceedings, including wills, taxes and landlord-tenant disputes. The National Channeling Project: Nursing Home Diversion Program is developed as a pilot program, and precedes the beginning of formal long-term care services at PCA with the goal of diverting older adults from nursing homes.

1981 The Ombudsman program is created to advocate for residents of Philadelphia's long-term care facilities.

1983 A pre-admission assessment tool is created to assist care managers to evaluate consumers' needs for care in the home. A state program, Community Care OPTIONS, is launched as a result of the National Channeling Project. Care management begins with trained social workers providing personalized coordination of services for older adults who need long-term support to remain safely in their homes.

1984 The Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) is established by Congress to provide federal support to state and local programs that assist victims of crime.

1987 Pennsylvania enacts the Older Adults Protective Services Act for older adults who lack the capacity to protect themselves and are at imminent risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation or abandonment. The law establishes services necessary to protect older adults' health, safety and welfare.

1988 PCA adds additional services for older Philadelphians: The Senior Companion Program matches individuals age 55 and older with a homebound older adult to provide companionship and some assistance; the Family Caregiver Support Program assists caregivers of older adults or adults with disabilities and older relatives caring for children; Older Adult Protective Services begins its confidential investigations of reports of suspected abuse, neglect, financial exploitation and abandonment of older adults.

1989 The Emergency Fund Coalition is formed by PCA by collaborating with 25 social support organizations to assist at-risk, low-income older adults who are facing severe hardship. PCA adds adaptive home modifications.

1990 PCA's offices move to its current location: the historic, six-story Wallace Building at 642 N. Broad St.

1992 National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA) becomes a permanent part of the U.S. Administration on Aging (AoA).

1993 The PCA Heatline begins, in collaboration with the Philadelphia Department of Health, offering callers of all ages tips to stay healthy during a heat health emergency.

1995 PCA expands services again: The Waiver Program provides older Philadelphians with care services in their home, such as personal care, home health and home-delivered meals. The In-Home Support Program, in partnership with five senior centers, provides short-term services on a temporary basis; The Pennsylvania Department of Aging Waiver Program is created for Philadelphians over 60 to enable them to continue to live in their homes and communities with support and services.

1997 PCA opens its Meal Distribution Center to create one location for centralized provision of home-delivered meals and regular contact to older Philadelphians and people with disabilities who are experiencing barriers to proper nutrition.

2000 The Community Relations Department is created to reach out to older Philadelphians and their families in their communities through awareness and informational campaigns and events.

2001 PCA centralizes all information and referral services, opens Helpline call center: 215-765-9040. PCA begins publishing the monthly Milestones newspaper.

2004 New PCA programs added: The Community Choice Program is created to expedite assessment and service for home- and community-based services to ensure nursing home placement diversion. Nursing Home Transition helps residents of long-term care facilities to transition back to community-based living.

2007 PCA launches its new website, pcaCares.org. PCA starts managing Southwest Senior Center and what is now Firehouse Active Older Adult Center.

2011 PCA undertakes operation of Older Adult Sunshine Center and Southwest Senior Center. The Environmental Protection Agency and the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging give PCA awards for Age-friendly Philadelphia.

2012 PCA's initial Executive Director Rodney D. Williams retires after 39 years; Holly Lange is named President and CEO of PCA. The U.S. Administration for Community Living (ACL) is established.

2014 PCA establishes the Philadelphia Senior Fund to support the vital, basic services that PCA provides to help older adults maintain their maximum levels of health and productivity, and to age in place.

2018 PCA secures funds from the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) federal grant creating the Victims Services Program (VSP). The grant helps meet the needs of crime victims and assists in providing and/or enhancing services to victims of crime.

2019 PCA Care Connections is launched to provide high-quality, person-centered and cost-effective service coordination for older adults and people with disabilities, who are consumers of Community HealthChoices (formerly served by the Waiver Program), in partnership with managed-care organizations and integrated health systems.

2019 Firehouse Senior Center opens under a new name at a new location after 42 years of operating in the Philadelphia community as Older Adult Sunshine Center.

2020 PCA's resilience: Caring through crisis was PCA's reaction to COVID-19. PCA pivoted to remote operations and continued services with limited interruption. More than 1.2 million meals were served. Former CEO Holly Lange retires and Najja R. Orr, MBA, DBA named new President and CEO. The former Philadelphia Senior Fund was renamed as the Rodney D. Williams Philadelphia Fund for Seniors. The Healthy IDEAS pilot program launched at PCA to heighten awareness about depression in older adults and provide resources for depression management.

2020-2022 PCA's fundraising efforts bring in nearly \$450,000 in crisis aid donations for older Philadelphians and people with disabilities in Philadelphia during the COVID-19 pandemic.

2022 PCA partners with City of Philadelphia, Philadelphia Department of Public Health, AARP and other community organizations to keep older adults informed during the pandemic by reducing social isolation, educating on safety and prevention methods, and scheduling vaccine appointments.

2023 PCA celebrates 50 years of Aging with You. PCA marks five decades of service to older Philadelphians and those with disabilities and launches its commemorative year with a variety of activities and events. December 3, 2023 is PCA's official golden anniversary date.