

WestMass  
ElderCare



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# ANNUAL REPORT

# Greetings!

As we celebrate the close of 2023, we reflect on a year marked by stability and significant investment for WestMass ElderCare (WMEC). The COVID public health emergency ended on May 11, 2023, generating an activity level at our agency best characterized as “full steam ahead.”

With a focus on recovery and rebuilding, this year has brought exciting opportunities for growth and expansion in several program areas, providing targeted new services that respond to demonstrated needs in our community. In response to the removal of MassHealth pandemic protections, four new Certified Application Counselors have joined our team to help minimize disruptions in coverage and navigate benefits for consumers with MassHealth. Beginning in December 2022, WMEC partnered with Taino Restaurant in Holyoke to provide older adults authentic Latino meals and vital social connections in this community setting. Critical mental health supports were created for older adults in our community through WMEC’s Elder Mental Health Outreach Team, which provides visits to people in their homes and at community sites, as well as ongoing resources and counseling.

WMEC was also awarded two grants to innovate service delivery models. In our “Hospital to Home” collaboration with Holyoke Medical Center, two WMEC Care Managers work alongside the HMC discharge team ensuring efficient and seamless transitions home by swiftly organizing services and resources. Additionally, the CARE (Caregiver Assistance, Respite and Enrichment) program offers family caregivers the navigational support of our Family Caregiver Specialist as well as flexible respite care options. Read more about these exciting initiatives on the center pages.

We also invested in key building renovations this year, renewing our commitment to keeping our office “home” here in Holyoke. This included remodeling and expanding our Nutrition Program’s packing and delivery space, thanks to a Food Security Infrastructure Grant from the MA Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs.

In 2024, WMEC will celebrate our 50th Anniversary milestone year. As we move into our next half century, our core services and recent innovations reinforce our resolve and commitment to caring and compassion for our staff, consumers and caregivers. WMEC continues to be driven and inspired by our mission [to preserve the dignity, independence and quality of life of older adults and persons with disabilities desiring to remain within their own community](#). Our staff’s dedication and hard work make our daily mission possible. We eagerly anticipate planning for the upcoming milestone while continuing to honor our consumers’ wishes to remain at home with their chosen supports.

As you’ll read in the pages that follow, WMEC’s core services, all centered on addressing health disparities and improving health equity, have positively impacted thousands of older adults and persons with disabilities in our community this year. This would not be possible without a true team effort. We express gratitude for the advocacy and support of local officials, and state and federal legislative delegations. We are grateful for the invaluable guidance, time, and skills of WMEC’s Board of Directors, Area Agency on Aging Advisory Council, and Money Management Advisory Council. We thank each consumer and caregiver for their trust and the opportunity to support their commitment to home and independence for themselves or their loved one. We appreciate all the contributions of our staff, volunteers, the direct care workforce, and our community partners that empower us to continue to care for our community, one person at a time.



**Roseann Martoccia and  
Hélène A. Florio**

*Roseann*

**Roseann Martoccia**  
*Executive Director*

*Hélène*

**Hélène A. Florio**  
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Massachusetts Council for Adult Family Care  
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Services Program  
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Western Massachusetts Elder Care Professionals  
Association

## HOW WE HELP

*in the words of our consumers*

“

*Being a full-time caregiver is exhausting, lonely, and incredibly stressful, but it's much better than the alternative, which is my mom living alone. The other alternative is her living in a nursing home, which I really don't want. Having her at home gives me a sense of peace, knowing she is safe all the time.*



*Even before we got home health aides or meals, WMEC helped with information. Once I had you guys on my team, it was just great to have a place to call when I had a question, and I feel more confident and a little more prepared. The aides have helped me get the chores of life done, like going to the grocery store, mowing my lawn, and going to the doctor for myself. I'm really grateful for that.*

**~ Vance Chatel, Family Caregiver**

“



*My husband recently had surgery and was sent to rehab. When we left, we were accidentally given the wrong patient's meds. He took the meds, thinking they*

*were his, and he aspirated and ended up in the ICU, not expected to live the night. Thankfully things went well once we figured everything out, and he is now doing well, but it took quite a bit out of him.*

*Through everything, Elba Pires (WMEC Ombudsman Director) has held my hand, both professionally and psychologically, and has gotten me through it. I knew we were heard, which made all the difference, and she was going to do everything in her power to make sure it never happens to anyone else. She went above and beyond to make sure we were ok and I knew she had my back. She was professional, courteous, kind and just a good human being, and that's saying a lot in these days.*

**~ Judy Nadler, Family Caregiver**

”



## NEW IN 2023

### HOSPITAL TO HOME

WMEC's new Hospital to Home program, in partnership with Holyoke Medical Center and funded through a grant from the MA Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS), provides support and procures services for those who want to return home after a hospital stay rather than going to a rehab facility. WMEC's Hospital Liaisons Olga (Lydia) Yanginski and Rosa Ramos join daily rounds at the hospital to provide in-person support to the medical team to increase discharges to home. "It saves both the state and consumer money," said Ramos, "and with our services in place, consumers have a chance to remain independent at home and not have to return to the hospital or rehab."

## OUR WORK

is firmly rooted in the principles of self-determination, independence, dignity, and choice for older adults and people with disabilities. In 2023, we served over 12,000 individuals throughout Western Massachusetts.



**1,721 consumers hired and managed their own Personal Care Assistants to help them maintain their independence with activities of daily living.**



**Our Community Resource Specialists took 13,844 calls and provided support and information to 6,787 consumers.**



**Our Care Alliance of Western Massachusetts team provided compassionate case management to over 2,017 persons with disabilities from ages 3 to 64.**



**Our 43 Meals on Wheels Drivers delivered over 359,500 nutritious meals and vital daily wellness checks to consumers in their homes.**



**174 consumers were provided adaptive equipment so that they could remain safe at home.**



**252 consumers were able to remain in a home setting thanks to our Adult Family Care Program.**

## INDIVIDUALS SERVED IN 2023

Adaptive Equipment...174  
 Adult Foster Care...252  
 Advocacy and Navigating Care in the Home with Ongoing Risk (ANCHOR)...30  
 Behavioral Health Services...24  
 Brown Bag Program...235  
 Case Management - Home Care...1,843  
 Case Management - SCO/One Care...3,012  
 Chore...72  
 Clinical Assessment Eligibility and Screens...2,805

Community Choices...134  
 Community Table Meals...1,116  
 Companion...212  
 Comprehensive Screening and Service Model...157  
 Congregate Housing...25  
 Consumer Directed Care...75  
 Elder Mental Health Outreach Team...59  
 Emergency Funds...36  
 Enhanced Community Options Program...285  
 Family Caregiver Special Needs Fund Grants...143  
 Family Caregiver Supports...93





Our 28 Volunteers spent over 750 hours helping consumers maintain their independence through our Money Management, Ombudsman, and Nutrition programs.



3,012 consumers received knowledgeable and caring case management from our Senior Care Options and One Care Team.



## NEW IN 2023

### CARE

WMEC also received grant funding from EOHHS this year to enhance our supports to family caregivers. Our CARE (Caregiver Assistance, Respite and Enrichment) Program provides family caregivers with paid respite through a provider of their choice or one of WMEC's trusted partner agencies. With the CARE Program, caregivers can choose when, how often, and who they want to provide respite care. These flexible respite resources are critical to give caregivers time to recharge, prevent burnout, and have some much-needed time for themselves. "This is a very special program," said WMEC Family Caregiver Specialist, Monica Crespo. "Caregivers are so excited to find out that they can get respite care at no charge to them."



968 consumers were kept safe by personal alert systems provided through our Home Care Program.



212 consumers received companion services to help combat social isolation.



1,116 people enjoyed a hot meal at a Senior Center or housing site through our Community Table Program.



Our Registered Dietitian provided personalized nutrition counseling to 23 consumers, and to hundreds more through in-person Nutrition Education workshops and "Back of Menu" updates.

Farmers Market Produce Program...800  
Home Delivered Meals...2,122  
Home Health Aide...114  
Homemaker...1,251  
Information & Referral...6,787  
Laundry...180  
Legal Assistance...143  
Little Necessities Funds...25  
Long Term Services and Supports  
Community Partners...2,017  
Medication Dispensing...36  
Money Management...47  
Nursing...533

Nursing Home Ombudsman...1,129  
Nutrition Counseling...23  
One Care Program...464  
Options Counseling...161  
Outreach...3,510  
Personal Care...562  
Personal Care Management...1,721  
Personal Emergency Response...968  
Respite Care...197  
Senior Care Options...2,548  
Supportive Home Care Aide...26  
Supportive Housing...454  
Transportation...164

# WE ARE GRATEFUL

*to those whose generosity helped improve quality of life for the people we served this year.*



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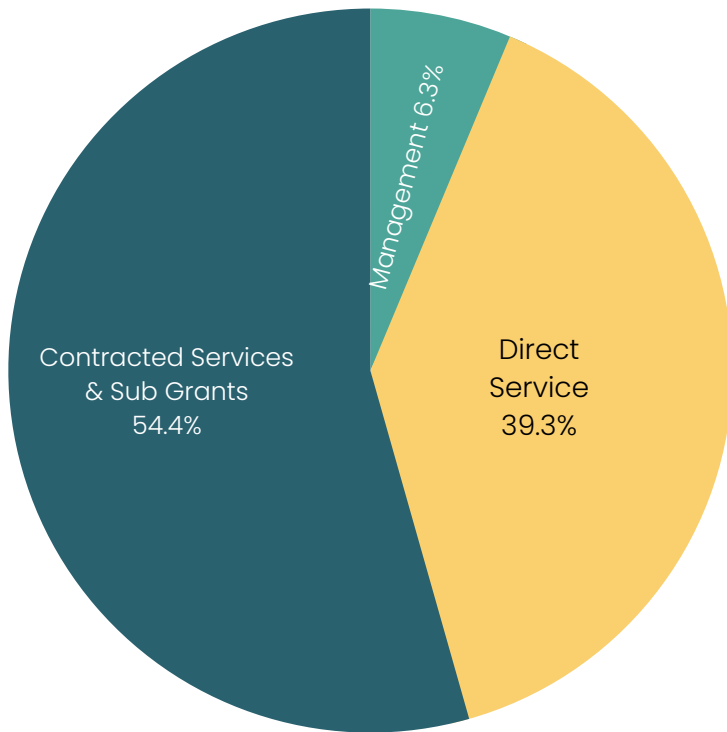
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Ronald Gersham  
Julia Godek  
Henry

Kathy Herlihy  
Helen Kapinos  
Charles Suprenant

## 2023 EXPENSES



## MAJOR FUNDING SOURCES\*

<b>Commonwealth of MA</b>	<b>\$13,360,723.22</b>
<b>SCO/One Care/PACE</b>	<b>\$7,006,089.00</b>
<b>MassHealth</b>	<b>\$6,213,534.47</b>
<b>Nutrition - Donations and Block Grants</b>	<b>\$1,369,451.21</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>\$1,091,595.04</b>
<b>Older Americans Act</b>	<b>\$607,011.31</b>
<b>Municipalities</b>	<b>\$30,000.00</b>
<b>Total (*unaudited)</b>	<b>\$29,678,404.25</b>

## 2023 OLDER AMERICANS ACT GRANT AWARDS

### BELCHERTOWN COUNCIL ON AGING

Medical Transportation \$5,100  
Senior Nutrition \$30,000

### CHICOPEE COUNCIL ON AGING

Older Adult Transportation \$7,500

### COMMUNITY LEGAL AID

Elder Law Services \$24,865

### SOUTH HADLEY COUNCIL ON AGING

Senior Tech Specialist Program \$5,304  
Elder Transportation \$2,069

### WARE COUNCIL ON AGING

Elder Transportation \$7,500

### VALLEY OPPORTUNITY COUNCIL

Senior Companion Program for Caregivers \$7,020

### LUDLOW COUNCIL ON AGING

Memory Café Program \$900

### GRANBY COUNCIL ON AGING

Elder Outreach Services \$4,149



*our staff to describe WMEC's strengths and values. Here are the words they chose.*

*The team approach to care lends itself to a more inclusive understanding of the elders' needs in hopes to aide them in remaining safely home. The mission of the agency is close to my heart. I feel respected by the agency and my coworkers.*

A circular inset photograph showing three women standing outdoors in front of a line of cars. The woman on the left is wearing a light green polo shirt and a pink baseball cap. The woman in the center is wearing a black and white plaid off-the-shoulder top and sunglasses. The woman on the right is wearing a white polo shirt and glasses. All three are smiling. The circular image is overlaid with the text 'United, Diverse, Empathetic, Supportive' in a stylized font.



*I'm able to assist the consumer/family with getting the services they need. Health care is hard to navigate. People need to feel that they're not going through their struggle alone...especially the families.*

**Kat Mangiafico, Care Manager, Home Care**



*A consumer has received the services and support needed at home (meals, adaptive equipment, caregiver support, etc.); they have a reduction in hospitalizations and readmissions; they understand the importance of routinely taking their medications; they have the knowledge to prevent/reduce falls; and they openly express gratitude for giving them space/time to express their needs and concerns.*

A photograph of three women smiling and posing together. The woman in the center is holding a large, pink and yellow balloon that is shaped like a microphone. They are all wearing name tags. In the background, there is a banner with the text "Day of Caring!" and "Committed to Service".

*The atmosphere of acceptance and feeling of positive energy here make WMEC a great place to work!*

**Sabrina Denesha, Administrative Assistant**



WestMass ElderCare is a private, nonprofit agency founded in 1974 and funded in part by grants and contracts from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs. We are part of a network of Aging Services Access Points and Area Agencies on Aging.

**Serving Holyoke, Chicopee, Ludlow, Granby,  
Ware, South Hadley, Belchertown, and  
surrounding communities.**

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Open & Inclusive

