We Stand With Seniors... Will You?

TOOLKIT

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We Stand With Seniors... Will You? is a nonpartisan, public awareness and education campaign supported by West Health and The SCAN Foundation.
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Governor Gavin Newsom and state lawmakers must act now. California needs a plan and strategy to address the needs of its aging population today and into the future. We can no longer afford to wait. The challenges impacting older adults and families will only worsen with time.

Consider this:

- 1 in 5 California seniors lives in poverty.
- Nearly 35 percent of people working today have no money saved for retirement.
- Many families cannot afford the cost of long-term care, often leading to a bankruptcy and a reliance on Medi-Cal to meet their loved ones’ needs.
- 3 in 10 older Californians do not have enough income to cover basic needs.
- 1 in 4 older adult households faces a housing cost burden.
- Medicare does not cover dental care, leaving many older adults without coverage which can lead to serious health complications.
- Denti-Cal ranks among the state government’s greatest deficiencies and falls short in providing dental care to our most vulnerable communities.
- 9 out of 10 voters feel it is important for California to have a Master Plan for Aging to invest in services that allow older adults to age in place.
- 90 percent of older adults would like to age in their homes, but programs and systems to help them do this are minimal, expensive and currently not scalable.
Your participation and active engagement over the last several months has helped us elevate issues impacting older adults in the public discussion. Your ongoing advocacy is needed to ensure Governor Newsom turns his promise to develop a Master Plan for Aging into a reality.

**In the governor’s first year, We Stand With Seniors will:**

- Ensure the Master Plan for Aging stays at the forefront of the governor’s policy agenda.
- Educate policymakers about the necessary elements for a Master Plan success.
- Engage stakeholders to bolster support for the Master Plan.
- Advocate for a Master Plan that is comprehensive, with data-driven priorities, specified timelines and accountability for implementation.
We encourage you to continue communicating the following messages, as well as your own experiences, with the governor, the media and your communities so that these issues receive the attention they deserve.

**Campaign Summary**

The *We Stand With Seniors* campaign is a nonpartisan, public awareness and educational effort sponsored by West Health and The SCAN Foundation to encourage California’s elected leaders to focus on the needs of older adults and implement policies that will improve the lives of all Californians.

The campaign’s goal is to advocate for a Master Plan for Aging that transforms California into a state where every individual is afforded the opportunity to age with dignity and independence.
The Problem

• California’s older adults face a number of challenges, including lack of access to services, lack of long-term care financing options, and increasing rates of homelessness and poverty, among others. Meanwhile, the state’s population is rapidly aging. These problems will only worsen unless there is leadership and intentional planning to address the underlying system challenges.

• The Public Policy Institute of California reports that California’s senior population will increase by nearly 90 percent, or 4 million people, in the next couple of decades. Yet, the state is woefully unprepared to meet this demographic growth.

To prompt solutions, We Stand With Seniors wants Californians to know that:

• Every Californian deserves to age with dignity and independence. A Master Plan for Aging is needed to ensure the state is prepared to achieve this goal and meet the population’s needs.

• In light of the current and growing challenges faced by California’s older adults, California is heading for a crisis unless it outlines a clear plan with specified goals and a timeline for implementation to ensure all Californians can age with dignity and independence.

Voters Want Solutions!

In 2018, We Stand With Seniors conducted two surveys, each of 1,000 California voters, to see where they stand on issues affecting seniors. The survey results made clear that voters understand what older adults are facing. They demand increased services and they want a Master Plan for Aging:

• 67 percent of voters believe that California is NOT prepared to care for its aging population.

• In polling numbers rarely seen in statewide surveys, super majorities of Californians want the state to create and implement long-term plans that will address healthcare, dental care and other services that will allow our aging population to age safely and with dignity.

• 9 out of 10 voters feel it is important for California to have a Master Plan for Aging to invest in services that allow seniors to age in place.
• 79 percent of voters support the state investing in in-home healthcare services that allow seniors to age successfully in place, including medication delivery, telehealth and house calls.

• 87 percent of voters agree that providing dental care for seniors is as important as access to healthcare.

• 86 percent of voters support the state investing in more caregiver services for older adults and their families.

• 73 percent of voters say they are concerned about their ability to pay for long-term care.

In a time when we see so much political polarization, it is amazing to see that California Democrats, Republicans and independent voters of all ages can all agree on one thing: we need to do more for California’s older adults and families that care for them.
What is a Master Plan for Aging?

To plan for population growth and ensure that older adults can live with dignity and independence and that families and communities can be supported, California needs a Master Plan that addresses the myriad challenges confronting the state’s aging population, including: system fragmentation; access to services within the healthcare, long-term services and supports (LTSS), oral care and behavioral health sectors; integrated service delivery; affordable/accessible housing; and a trained and culturally competent workforce.

What does *We Stand With Seniors*’ education and awareness campaign entail?

Through grassroots action, the *We Stand With Seniors* campaign will:

- Work with the governor, the administration and policymakers to raise awareness about the needs of California older adults and families who care for them.
- Hold the governor accountable to developing a statewide Master Plan to ensure all Californians can age to ensure all Californians have the opportunity to age with dignity and independence.

Who funds *We Stand With Seniors*?

*We Stand With Seniors* is funded by West Health and The SCAN Foundation, both nonpartisan, nonprofit organizations dedicated to improving the lives of older adults.

What are the primary concerns about issues facing older adults in California?

- California’s system for older adults is broken. Change is needed to address issues including access to healthcare, social services, housing, transportation and a high-quality workforce.

What are some of the specific Master Plan for Aging priorities?

We need a Master Plan for Aging that includes more coordinated, community-based care to enable older adults to age successfully with the dignity, quality of life and independence they deserve.

- Create an easily-accessible, organized system of care - including healthcare, housing, transportation and long-term care services.
- Expand access to affordable in-home care and support services.
- Prepare families about the importance of financial planning for long-term care.
- Ensure all older adults have access to affordable dental care.
- Provide support to family caregivers including education, affordable access to home health supports, family leave protections and caregiver tax credits.
- Increase availability of affordable housing and transportation options.
- Build a culturally competent workforce, including home health workers and geriatricians.
- Develop best practices in preventing physical and financial abuse and neglect.
- Streamline bureaucracy to improve delivery of services.

What are some of the potential solutions?

Working with advocates and policymakers across the state, We Stand With Seniors seeks to share and uncover best practices and smart approaches to caring for older adults. Many organizations like West Health and The SCAN Foundation have had success promoting quality, affordable programs to help older adults age safely and with dignity. We strive to harness all of these ideas and apply them to addressing the looming crisis in California.

- Address system fragmentation at state and local levels by:
  - Articulating a vision and acting on a plan for our aging population that assures access, coordination and affordability.
  - Promoting expansion of models of coordinated care statewide, such as the Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly (PACE), and informing those who can benefit from these models of available options to drive demand.

- Establish a precedent for Age-Friendly Communities that includes increased access to affordable housing and transportation.
- Strengthen Denti-Cal by increasing reimbursements to Denti-Cal providers to improve access to critically-needed oral healthcare services.
- Ensure access to proper nutrition and other community-based supportive services to stay healthy, and provide more caregiver training on senior nutrition.
How You Can Help

Sign up to #StandWithSeniors at www.WeStandWithSeniors.org

With many issues vying for policymakers’ attention, you can help elevate the need for solutions to the crisis facing older Californians by using the content in this kit. Making our collective voices heard will help ensure senior issues receive the attention they deserve.

Talk to State Leaders

Using the messages and materials provided in this toolkit, as well as your own experiences or other data you have, contact state lawmakers and the governor and ask them how they plan to address the looming crisis facing our seniors. Phone calls, tweets, Facebook posts, emails and questions posed at events will help educate them and let them know voters are looking for their leadership toward solutions, including a Master Plan for Aging.

Contact Governor Gavin Newsom on:
Twitter @GavinNewsom, on Facebook @GavinNewsom, or by phone (916) 445-2841.

To find your State Senate and Assembly representatives, visit:
http://findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov
Visit Our Website

- Learn more about the growing challenges faced by California seniors and their families in accessing high-quality, affordable healthcare, dental care and supportive services.
- Engage your networks and direct them to sign up to #StandWithSeniors at www.WeStandWithSeniors.org.
Sample Social Media Tactics and Content

Social media is an excellent tool to help raise awareness and educate elected officials, policymakers, the media and your community about the problems California seniors face and the need for solutions. By regularly (every day!) posting content about senior issues on your Facebook and Twitter feeds, you can help put California seniors front and center.

A few tips on effective social media tactics:

- Always include #StandWithSeniors in your posts.
- Always tag Governor Newsom in your posts @GavinNewsom.
- Follow the Facebook pages and Twitter accounts of We Stand With Seniors, West Health and The SCAN Foundation.
  - We Stand With Seniors Facebook: @WeStandWithSeniors and Twitter: @WeStandWSeniors
  - West Health Facebook: @WestHealth and Twitter: @WestHealth
  - The SCAN Foundation Facebook: @TheSCANFndtn and Twitter: @TheSCANFndtn
- Repost and retweet relevant content from We Stand With Seniors, West Health and The SCAN Foundation’s channels to your personal and organization’s social media accounts.
- When you encourage others to carry the message, please remind them that facts and civility always win the day.
- Use a website like bitly.com to shorten links for Twitter posts.

Supporters who sign up for We Stand With Seniors updates will receive monthly news roundups. Email info@WeStandWithSeniors.org if you have other information needs or questions.
Sample posts include:

9 out of 10 voters support the governor developing a Master Plan for Aging in California so we can all age safely and with dignity. #StandWithSeniors
https://westandwithseniors.org/infographic-is-california-failing-seniors-voters-say-yes

California’s older adults are facing a #healthcare crisis. Let’s work together to solve #LongTermCare so our seniors can age safely & with dignity. #StandWithSeniors www.WeStandWithSeniors.org

Dropping the ball on looming senior care crisis now will mean massive long-term costs to the state & taxpayers later. #StandWithSeniors to take action. www.WeStandWithSeniors.org

1 in 5 seniors live in poverty and that number will only grow. We need a master plan & solutions to this crisis to ensure CA’s older adults age safely, with dignity. We #StandWithSeniors… Will You? www.WeStandWithSeniors.org

67% of voters say the state is NOT prepared to care for its #aging population. Now is the time for state leaders to take action. #StandWithSeniors www.WeStandWithSeniors.org
We Stand With Seniors.org

WEBSITE/BLOG POST

Californians Want Action for Seniors – Will You Join Them?

A June 2018 survey by *We Stand With Seniors* found that an overwhelming majority of California voters – 9 out of 10 – say it is important for California to have a Master Plan for Aging to invest in services that allow seniors to age in place.

With California’s senior population expected to increase by nearly 90 percent, or 4 million people in the next couple of decades, there is a daunting crisis in senior care looming on the horizon. In addition, 1 in 5 older Californians currently lives in poverty, nearly 35 percent of workers have nothing saved for retirement, and access to quality, affordable healthcare, dental care and supportive services is already limited for most of California’s seniors.

While public discourse tends not to focus on the critical problems facing older adults, the survey results prove that large, bipartisan majorities of California voters want the state to create and implement a Master Plan for Aging that will address healthcare, dental care and other services that will allow our aging population to age safely and with dignity.

West Health and The SCAN Foundation launched the nonpartisan, public awareness and education campaign *We Stand With Seniors… Will You?* in 2018 to highlight the need for a statewide, comprehensive Master Plan for Aging to address the growing challenges faced by California older adults, their families and caregivers. Governor Gavin Newsom has since included the development of a statewide Master Plan for Aging among his top initiatives, as outlined in his January 2019 State of the State address.

To LEARN more about the aging population in California, and to JOIN the grassroots effort working to implement solutions before it is too late, visit www.WeStandWithSeniors.org
Join the Effort to Address California’s Looming Senior Care Crisis

In March 2018, West Health and The SCAN Foundation launched We Stand With Seniors, a nonpartisan, public awareness and education campaign. The goals of the campaign were to raise awareness of the specific challenges older adults and families face in accessing high-quality, affordable healthcare and supportive services in California. We Stand With Seniors will continue engaging stakeholders and working with the governor’s team to hold true to his promise of developing a Master Plan for Aging to ensure all Californians can age safely and with dignity as outlined in his January 2019 State of the State address.

You can help improve the outlook for California seniors starting today by:

1. Joining the We Stand With Seniors campaign by signing up at www.WeStandWithSeniors.org

2. Following the campaign’s social media accounts, and encouraging your networks to do so, as well:
   a. Twitter: @WeStandWSeniors
   b. Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/WeStandWithSeniors/
   c. Use the #StandWithSeniors hashtag in all your social media communications!

3. Communicating to the governor and your state lawmakers directly on social media, citing #StandWithSeniors. Ask them to make older adult issues a priority and support the development of a Master Plan for Aging in California.

To LEARN more about the coming senior care crisis in California and the grassroots effort to implement solutions before it is too late, visit www.WeStandWithSeniors.org

Thank you!
Your organization can help educate California about the looming crisis and need for solutions now.

To download the badge image, simply click on the link below. Once you download the image, add it to your website to link those interested to the We Stand With Seniors website for more information.

www.WeStandWithSeniors.org/toolkit