



A major gift campaign of Senior Services of Alexandria

The City of Alexandria's senior population has grown to over 22,000 individuals - and more than 5,000 of these seniors live alone! Working in partnership with the Division of Aging and Adult Services, **Senior Services of Alexandria (SSA) delivers more than 48,000 meals** to our community's homebound seniors annually, providing this critical service 365 days a year.

The current Meals on Wheels delivery system is the "eyes and ears" of the community, often coming to the aid of a client in crisis. However it is not designed to be more proactive in serving seniors who live alone with chronic medical conditions or those who have been recently discharged from the hospital and are at risk of being re-admitted because of medication issues, a fall, or inadequate nutrition. To meet this need, **SSA, with more than 15 years' experience delivering food to seniors**, is implementing a bold mission called **Caring Connection**; a new sister program to Meals on Wheels that will serve the City of Alexandria's most vulnerable seniors.



"It's heartbreaking when a volunteer arrives at a client's home to find them ill, injured, or in need of urgent medical attention. As the senior is hurried off in an ambulance, volunteers and family members are left to ask, 'What could have been done?'"

- Mary Lee Anderson, Executive Director of SSA

Caring Connection offers daily meal delivery, but goes beyond the standard Meals on Wheels program to provide personalized health and safety checks managed by dedicated staff as part of the scheduled deliveries. **Through this exciting expansion, SSA expects to double the number of clients it serves in the first year alone.**

How Caring Connection works:

- Daily meal service delivered by **paid trained staff** for a fixed period, typically 30-90 days
- Delivery drivers ask pre-determined questions (chosen by each healthcare provider) relating to health status, living conditions, possible falls, issues with medications, etc.
- Significant changes in condition recorded and tracked using HIPAA-compliant software, and immediately reported back to healthcare providers for appropriate follow-up
- Software-based tracking, reporting and incident follow-up
- Monthly report summarizing all client deliveries and condition reports issued to the healthcare provider
- Option to transition to volunteer-based Meals on Wheels after completion of Caring Connection services

Similar pilot programs implemented in Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, and Texas have demonstrated a significant reduction in hospital readmission and an increase in client stability. They have proven that a small investment in nutritious food, software-based health tracking, efficient communication, and consistent monitoring - all hallmarks of Caring Connection - provide excellent returns, ensuring the seniors in our community are healthy and well-cared for.

*Too often our volunteers find seniors in crisis. Too often we feel too little too late.
With Caring Connection, SSA continues its mission to keep our community's seniors in their home.*

“In my profession, I see the need for Caring Connection services every day. This is such a vulnerable population and Caring Connection can help NOW. Implementing this program today will allow us to stay ahead of the curve with the growing demand in the coming years. Otherwise, we will be playing catch up in crisis.”

– Donna Shaw, Healthcare Administrator & SSA Board Member



Please help us create a Caring Connection for our seniors one visit at a time!

Implementation Phases

Phase I: Implement ServTracker software

Use the computer-based ServTracker to streamline the process of food delivery, enhance client records, and provide data to measure the impact of the program

Phase II: Implement staffing plan

Hire dedicated staff for the new Caring Connection program, streamline volunteer coordination for the rapidly expanding client base, and manage relationships with the healthcare community

Phase III: Implement electronic reporting

Develop electronic reporting and routing processes using smartphone and tablet technology

Senior Services of Alexandria aims to fully develop, pilot, and implement the new Caring Connection program in three phases over the next two years. By the end of 2019, all three phases will be fully implemented and the City of Alexandria will have the critical Caring Connection for its at-risk seniors.

A generous donor has already given \$50,000 in seed funding to kick start our campaign. Our goal is to raise a total of \$230,000 to fully fund the Caring Connection program for the next two years.

Once Caring Connection is fully operational, it will be sustained by ongoing financial commitments from partner healthcare organizations.

About Senior Services of Alexandria

Named by the Catalogue for Philanthropy as “one of the best small charities in the Greater Washington region,” Senior Services of Alexandria (SSA) was founded in 1968 with the mission to foster independence and self-sufficiency in seniors, enabling them to age within the City of Alexandria with dignity. SSA is the only private, non-profit agency that provides programs and services for all older residents of Alexandria.

SSA is a 2017 Winner of a “Best Practices Award” by the Commonwealth Council on Aging and is a GuideStar Platinum participant.

**For additional information, please contact Executive Director, Mary Lee Anderson at:
Senior Services of Alexandria - 700 Princess Street – Mezzanine Level Alexandria, VA 22314
Phone: 703-836-4414 ♦ Email: executivedirector@seniorservicesalex.org ♦ seniorservicesalex.org**