

## Multipurpose Senior Centers—Bridging the Gap

**M**ultipurpose Senior Centers (MSCs) are playing a new role in helping millions of older Americans and their families to bridge the gap between work and retirement, full independence and limited support, good health, and chronic conditions.

More than 10 million older adults are participating in activities at MSCs across the nation.

MSCs are part of, and a gateway to, the National Aging Services Network, which includes more than 29,000 local, regional, tribal, and national service providers for older adults and their caregivers. Under the authority of the Older Americans Act, the National Aging Services Network, headed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Aging, works to plan, coordinate, and provide home and community-based services to meet the unique needs of older persons and their caregivers.

These centers are often both the first and the foremost source of vital community-based social and nutritional supports that help older Americans remain independent in their communities. MSCs often provide the following:

- Meal and nutrition programs
- Information and assistance

- Health, fitness, and wellness programs
- Recreational opportunities
- Transportation services
- Arts programs
- Volunteer opportunities
- Educational opportunities
- Employment assistance
- Intergenerational programs
- Social and community action opportunities
- Other special services

### Emerging Roles

By 2010, the baby boom generation will constitute more than two-thirds of the 50+ population. MSCs, like all others in the service delivery business, are adjusting their enterprises with new and improved methods and systems to address the issues (such as time, comfort, and access) embraced by the boomers. Many centers are offering programs with interactive information systems and technology-based activities that boomers now use to gain time, pursue comfort, and achieve access. These MSCs are leading the way in adapting and refining services for use by tomorrow's older generations.

MSCs continue to offer a variety of resources for seniors. Many MSCs are offering retirement planning seminars that often include developing new skills for part-time employment. Additionally, some are offering pro-

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## FACT SHEET

### *Senior Centers...cont'd.*

grams to introduce new ways to improve health status, reduce health disparities, increase economic security, decrease caregiver stress, and increase the independence of older persons.

Learn more about programs for older Americans by visiting [www.aoa.gov](http://www.aoa.gov). To find resources in your community, visit [www.eldercare.gov](http://www.eldercare.gov). Or call the Eldercare Locator, between 9 a.m. and 8 p.m. EST Monday through Friday, at 1-800-677-1116.

*This fact sheet was prepared in collaboration with the National Institute on Senior Centers, a constituent unit of the National Council on the Aging.*

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The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Aging (AoA), works with a nationwide network of organizations and service providers to make support services and resources available to older persons and their caregivers. For more information about the AoA, please contact: **the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration on Aging**, Washington, DC 20201, Phone 202-619-0724, e-mail [aoainfo@aoa.gov](mailto:aoainfo@aoa.gov), Web site: [www.aoa.gov](http://www.aoa.gov)

