

## LIAISON REPORT

AGENCY: Heartland Senior Service

LIAISON: Andrea Rich

**1. Need for Program.** Describe who the target population is and whether their numbers are increasing or decreasing. Indicate the source of this information. Also, indicate how the program/service is different and how it is similar to others and what would happen if the program/service ceased to exist. List the priorities established by ASSET Funders, which the programming addresses.

Heartland Senior Services (HSS) provides resources and socialization to seniors throughout Story County. HSS has four program areas: outreach, adult daycare, activities, nutrition (home delivered meals- through partnership with Mary Greeley Medical Center).

HSS addresses the health and income needs of seniors by providing resources directly through programming as well as through connecting seniors with other resources in the community.

**2. Program Strengths.** Pick two to four factors that contribute most importantly to the program/service outcomes. Do not list everything that is satisfactory. We will assume that things not mentioned are okay. For each strength describe some supporting evidence.

HSS has continued to capitalize on partnerships with other community agencies to bring the best possible quality of life for seniors in Ames and Story County. HSS has been impacted significantly by the COVID-19 pandemic, suspending in-person contact at the facility until a vaccine is implemented and it is safe to return to pre-pandemic life. HSS has seen a marked increase in requests for home delivered meals as the pandemic has worn on, perhaps because individuals are hesitant to leave their homes or because families are less able to provide informal care to their senior loved ones. As the adult day service is suspended, nursing staff have assisted in meeting the additional need in home delivered meals and found that they have an enhanced ability to spot needs in the intake process that were previously going unseen. As a result, nursing staff will continue to do intakes for home delivered meals as a permanent enhancement to the process (a COVID silver lining). HSS has a strong tradition of spotting emerging needs and is continuing to work with other agencies and businesses in the community to advocate for the unique needs of seniors.

**3. Program Weaknesses.** Select factors that detract most from the program/service achieving its outcomes. Present details as described above. Recommendations for reducing these weaknesses should follow the discussion of each weakness.

HSS continues to face challenges of a changing aging population, which has required creativity in meeting the needs of seniors in a manner that is meaningful and desirable to the aging population. The COVID-19 pandemic has further amplified this need as the population HSS serves is sometimes not as comfortable jumping on a video call as others may be. HSS continues to work to find creative solutions to create community and ensure seniors are safe and well, while ensuring vigilance against the spread of COVID.

**4. Financial Outlook.** Current funding concerns should be described. In addition, the assessment of the program's plan to cope with shrinking resources should be given.

Heartland has substantial cash reserves that have been earmarked for a new facility. The current facility has outlived its useful life both due to the age of the building and the changing needs of seniors.

**5. Internal Management Practices.** Summarize your assessment of the management of the agency, and the role of the Board. If there are deficiencies, details should be provided. Conclude with recommendations when appropriate.

HSS executive director Nancy Carroll continues to tackle challenges and opportunities with infectious positivity and energy. HSS also has an active and supportive board that is committed to finding solutions to the changing needs of the agency as well as the aging population.

**6. Agency Suggestions/Comments.** Make note of any suggestions, comments or questions agencies may have with regard to the ASSET process, budget forms and or anything else that relates to the process.

N/A

**GENERAL ASSESSMENT:**

HSS demonstrated a creative, enthusiastic approach to partnering with numerous community agencies to provide the highest possible standard of living for Story County residents. COVID-19 is particularly impactful for HSS as the virus is particularly dangerous for the oldest and most frail members of our community, which HSS serves. Heartland has tackled the COVID challenges with its signature cheer and can-do attitude.