

California Department of Aging's Local Aging and Disability Action Planning (LADAP) Grant Program

Progress Report

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Executive Summary

The vision of the California Department of Aging (CDA) is “an age and ability friendly California where we choose where and how we live throughout our lives.” CDA’s Local Aging & Disability Action Planning (LADAP) Grant Program seeks to support local communities in planning for and addressing the needs of California’s older adults, people with disabilities, and professional and family caregivers of today and tomorrow. The LADAP Grant Program is a planning and capacity-building grant program focused on supporting communities and populations that have been historically under-resourced and under-served. The Budget Act of 2022 allocated \$4.5 million one-time General Fund dollars over three years (fiscal years 2022-25) to CDA to support this grant program and enable communities across California to plan and develop their own local age- and disability-friendly plans. The goals of the LADAP Grant Program align with California’s Master Plan for Aging (MPA), CDA’s Strategic Plan, Governor Newsom’s Executive Order (EO) on equity (EO N-16-22), and the guiding principles and strategic priorities of CalHHS. Agencies received funding to support LADAP initiatives within their local communities, which could be defined as a city, a group of cities, a county, a group of counties, or Tribal land(s). In this second progress report, we review the activities of 21 grantees.

CDA contracted with the University of California, Davis-Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing, Family Caregiving Institute (UC Davis FCI) to evaluate the LADAP Grant Program. The evaluation includes multiple data sources and methods, including surveys, report and document review, and focused interviews.

Six grantees were fully on schedule with their original workplan, 14 reported they were "mostly on track," and only one requested modification to their workplan. However, 17 out of 21 grantees requested no-cost extensions through June 30, 2025. Additionally, five of the 21 grantees reported they had not yet fully staffed their LADAP teams by the July 31, 2024 reporting deadline.

The 21 LADAP grantees customized their awareness efforts, community assessment strategies, and implementation plans to fit their unique communities. They made intentional efforts to engage cross-sector local leaders who can act as bridges to diverse sectors and underserved geographic and demographic communities. These partners included elected officials, government staff, Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs), Independent Living Centers (ILCs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs), libraries, private sector partners, philanthropic organizations, and more. Grantees made substantial progress on objectives related to awareness and engagement of the community, elected officials, and key partners. Nineteen of the grantees established Advisory Councils, eleven enrolled in the AARP Age Friendly Community Network, and five completed their needs assessments with 12 in process.

CDA’s LADAP grant program has already gained national recognition as a pioneering initiative, highlighting the feasibility and importance of investing in leadership and public-private partnerships at multiple system levels to create communities that are inclusive for people of all ages and abilities. This national interest is demonstrated through several examples:

- At the 2024 Grantmakers in Aging conference, CDA’s MPA philanthropic partners invited our team to present on California’s local MPA efforts.
- Following the publication of New Jersey’s statewide blueprint for age-friendly communities, the New Jersey Department of Human Services is in the process of launching a \$5 million grant program to support local age-friendly planning efforts like California’s LADAP grant program. Through our ongoing partnership with colleagues at Rutgers University, leaders are exploring the opportunity of a formal partnership with the

California team, facilitating shared learning between California and New Jersey through 2026.

- The American Society on Aging accepted two proposals highlighting the LADAP grant program for their April 2025 conference

State leaders who presented at the *CA for All Ages & Abilities: MPA Day of Action* emphasized the importance of tailoring state MPA implementation to the diverse regions of California, considering the unique geographies, demographics, and service barriers present. The LADAP grant program offers a structure to facilitate communication and coordination between state and local efforts. As the program progresses, it will be important to assess the multifaceted ways in which the work and its impact are sustained, including monitoring how grantees address potential implementation gaps after the LADAP grant concludes. Establishing a structure for continued shared learning among local and state leaders would continue the momentum beyond the grant period. Overall, grantees are optimistic about the future and enthusiastic about their role in supporting the statewide Master Plan for Aging.

Recommendations

To continue to support Local Planning efforts, we propose six recommendations as follows:

1. Continue to facilitate inter-grantee relationships and knowledge sharing through Office Hours and Learning Labs. Consider reaching out to grantees with low attendance to better understand barriers to participation.
2. Encourage grantees to focus their remaining time on refining actionable priorities, including identifying resources, funding, leadership, and staffing needs for plan implementation. Facilitate discussion of local sustainability strategies, including exploring options for implementation that do not require funding, and identifying potential funding sources for those that do.
3. Provide additional guidance on evaluation metrics for plan implementation, through an Office Hours session or Learning Lab, to help grantees make use of existing resources such as Canada's [Age-Friendly Communities Evaluation Guide](#) and the World Health Organization's guide, "[Measuring the Age Friendliness of Cities: a Guide to Using Core Indicators](#)."
4. Continue identifying opportunities for local planning efforts to inform statewide MPA initiatives, for example, by tracking local priorities, analyzing variations across regions, and reviewing promising policies, programs, and practices for scalability. As more Local Plans are developed, identify alignment among them, track promising policies, programs, and practices that could be scaled, and seek opportunities to align local and statewide efforts to enhance outcomes and improve coordination.
5. Explore strategies for CDA to promote the sustainability of local planning and implementation efforts beyond the LADAP grant program.
6. Consider establishing a structure that enables continued shared learning opportunities across local regions beyond the LADAP grant program.