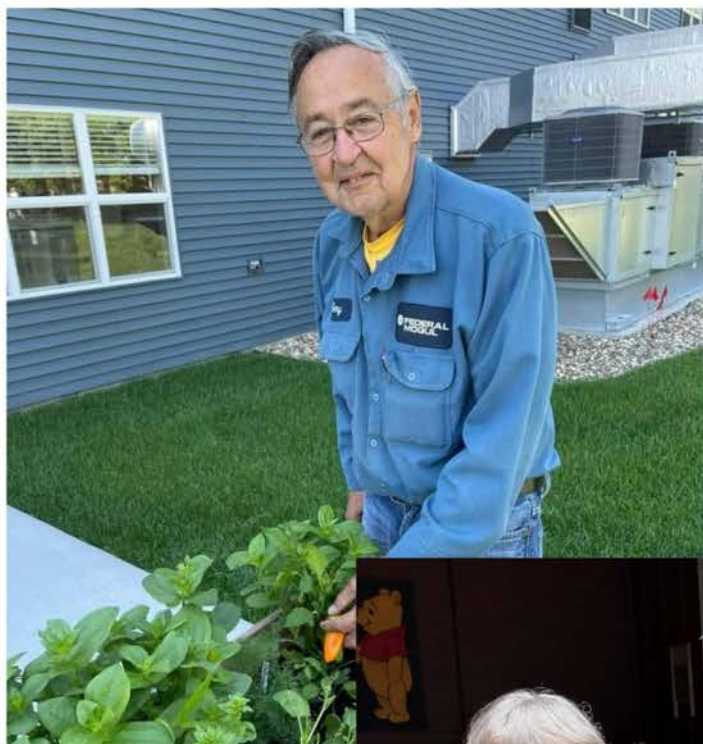




Southeastern Minnesota
AREA AGENCY on AGING



ANNUAL REPORT

2023
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Board Chair & Executive Director Report

Reflections from Jean – I truly appreciate SEMAAA’s management team for their leadership with navigating proposed funding changes.

Congratulations to Laurie on her new leadership role with the MN Association of Area Agencies on Aging (m4a), it is important that AAAs are unified with a strong voice, advocating for older adults and caregivers around the state.

I had the pleasure of working with the Age Friendly Freeborn County initiative. I am grateful for the support from AARP and the technical assistance we have received from SEMAAA staff. We have held two focus groups and have identified 4 core service areas for our survey.

We are looking for new Board Members. I encourage anyone interested in the work that SEMAAA does to learn more about Board Member qualifications & responsibilities at www.semaaa.org/volunteer.

Thank you to the SEMAAA staff and Board Members for making a difference in the lives of older adults and their families throughout rural SE MN.

- Jean Eaton, SEMAAA Board Chair

Reflections from Laurie – Moving our office after nine years was one of the most memorable moments of 2023. There were so many things that seemed to have multiplied by themselves without knowing how that happened and why we hung on to them for so long. With the help of SEMAAA’s Office Manager, Anna, we were able to find good homes for these items. We are so glad that our provider partners were able to use them. If you are around Superior Drive NW, stop in and check out the amazing view.

American Rescue Plan funds wrap up on September 30, 2024. I am pleased with the number of new/expanded programs that grantee agencies have developed. Red Wing Faith in Action launched an assistive transportation program, Elder Network filled a need for out of home respite/caregiver training, Winona State - Bridges Health provided non-evidence-based health promotion services including dental care and telephone reassurance support. Semcac used the funds for rural expansion of caregiver assistance services. Complete list on pages 6 & 7 of this report.

2023 showcased a successful effort to increase state funding for senior meals over the next several years, with m4a leading this charge. Thank you to SEMAAA staff for working through the state nutrition audit. Findings showed no evidence of fraud & confirmed that those who requested meals - received them. We continue to work on improving program compliance.

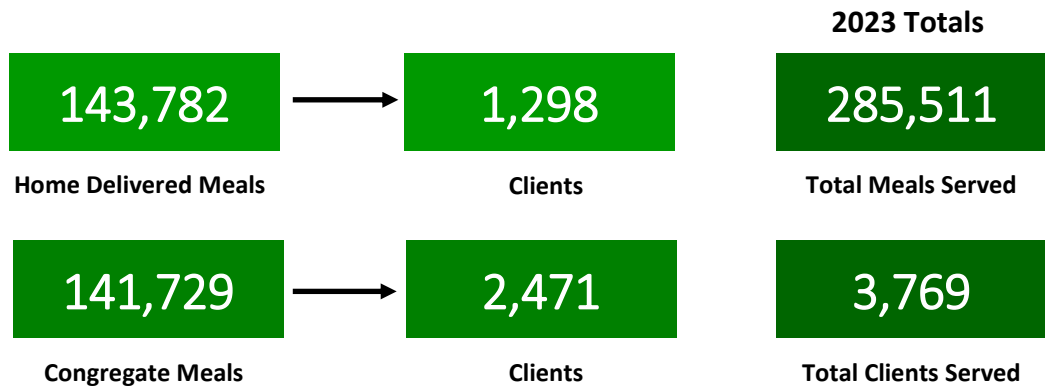
Age Friendly work in SE MN continues to grow with several counties and communities actively working to identify key strategies to become more livable and accessible to older adults and their caregivers for years to come.

- Laurie Brownell, SEMAAA Executive Director



2023

Meals by the Numbers

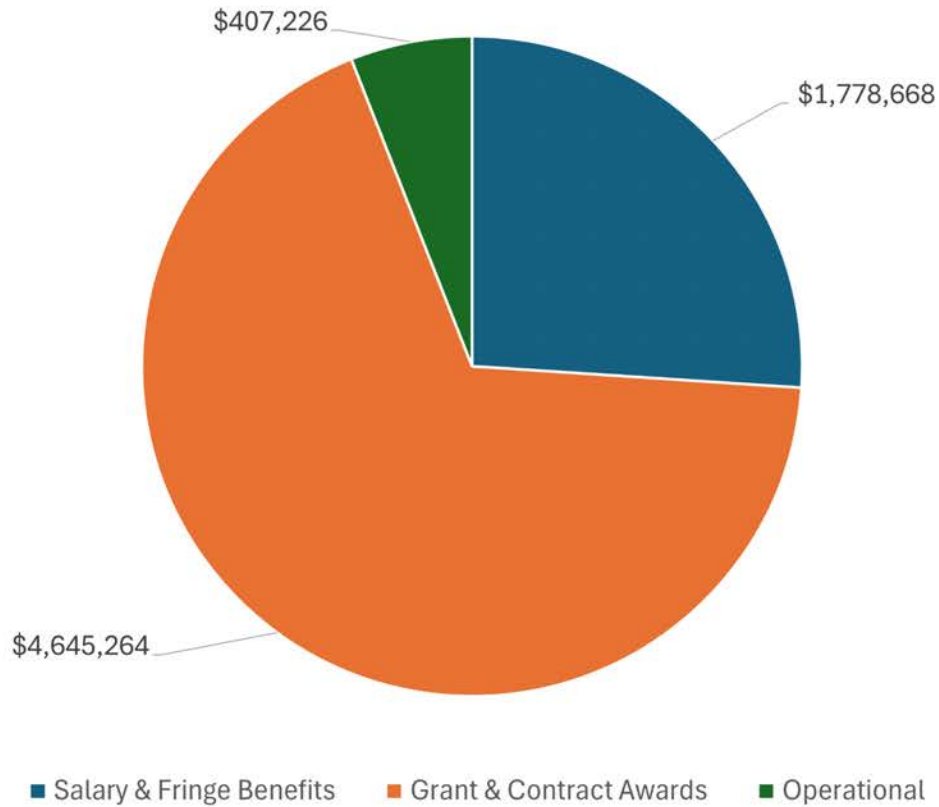


2023 Financial Summary

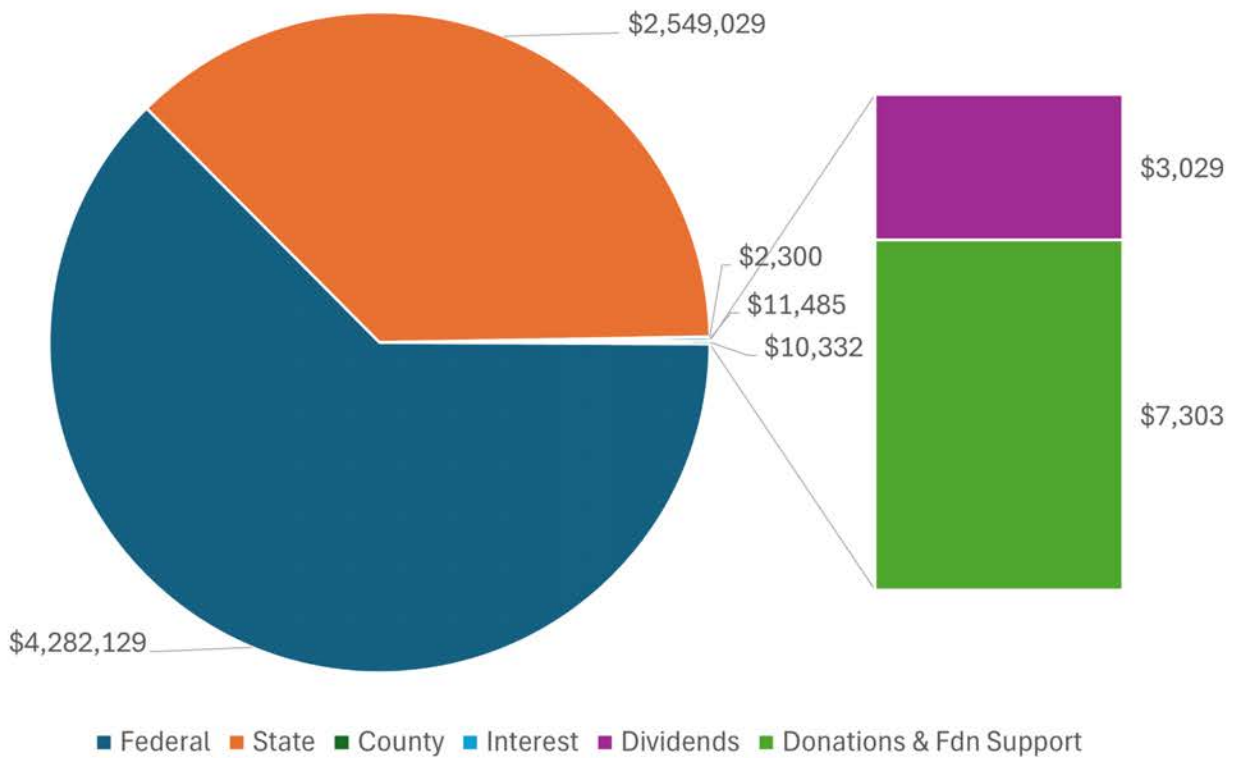
Support and Revenue		*all figures unaudited
Federal		\$ 4,282,129
State		\$ 2,549,029
County		\$ 2,300
Interest		\$ 11,485
Dividends		\$ 3,029
Donations & Fdn Support		\$ 7,303
Total Revenue		\$ 6,855,275

Expenses	
Salary & Fringe Benefits	\$ 1,778,668
Grant & Contract Awards	\$ 4,645,264
Operational	\$ 407,226
Total Expenses	\$ 6,831,158
Revenue Over Expenses	\$ 24,117

2023 Expenses: \$6,831,158



2023 Revenue: \$6,855,275



2023 Snapshot of Covid Funding American Rescue Plan (ARP)

Family Service Rochester – ARPB funded for Home Modifications, Visiting and Assisted Transportation. During 2023, 20 home modification projects, 383 visits and 2,674 one-way rides were provided.

Neighbors in Action La Crescent – ARPB funded for Chore, Homemaker and Assisted Transportation. During 2023, 163 chore hours, 2,049 homemaker hours, and 445 one-way rides were provided.

Winona State (Bridges) – ARPB funded for non-evidence based Health Promotion and Telephone Reassurance. During 2023, 511 non-evidence based health promotion hours and 181 telephone reassurance calls were provided.

Family Service Rochester – ARPB funded for Rice Chore and Homemaker. During 2023, 346 chore hours and 408 homemaker hours were provided.

City of Winona – ARPB funded for Chore. During 2023, 722 chore hours were provided.

Red Wing Faith in Action – ARPB funded for Assisted Transportation. During 2023, 3,747 one-way rides were provided.

Southern Minnesota Regional Legal Services (SMRLS) – ARPB funded for Legal Risk Detector Tool development. During 2023, funding was provided from three AAAs (SE, SW, Metro) to finalize development of a Legal Risk Detector Tool.

Elder Network – ARPB funded for Technology. During 2023, technology support was provided to 44 older adults.

Family Service Rochester – ARPB funded for Mental Health Counseling. During 2023, 487 mental health counseling sessions were provided.

Mower County Seniors – ARPE funded for Caregiver Respite and Support Groups. During 2023, 68 respite hours and 134 support group sessions were provided.

2023 Snapshot of Covid Funding American Rescue Plan (ARP)

Family Service Rochester – ARPE funded for Caregiver Counseling, Respite and Public Information. During 2023, 68 hours of counseling, 296 hours of respite, and 615 public information activities were provided.

Elder Network – ARPE funded for Out of Home Day Respite and Caregiver Training. During 2023, 1,703 hours of out of home day and 20 hours of caregiver training were provided.

Semcac – ARPE funded for Caregiver Assistance – Rural Expansion. During 2023, 237 contacts were provided.

Elder Network - ARPD funded for PEARLS evidenced based mental health program services.

Olmsted Medical Center - ARPD funded for PEARLS evidenced based mental health program services.

Winona Friendship Center – ARPD funded for PEARLS evidenced based mental health program services.

Semcac- ARPD funded for Bingocize program offered at congregate dining site.

Semcac – ARP-C1 funded congregate services.

Three Rivers Community Action - ARP-C2 funded home delivered meal services.

Semcac - ARP-C2 funded home delivered meal services.





**AGE
FRIENDLY
FREEBORN
COUNTY**

**AGE
FRIENDLY
FILLMORE
COUNTY**



**AGE
FRIENDLY
WABASHA
KELLOGG**

2023

SEMAAA staff took over 3,400 calls during Open Enrollment. The team averaged 1,383 calls the other months of the year.

Preadmission Screening team processed an average of 410 screenings each month. Staff partnered with the Return to Community team to provide virtual outreach events to nursing homes, hospitals, and clinics.

Statewide, SLL staff received 24,618 calls but were only able to answer 14,184 of those calls during Open Enrollment

“You know your stuff! I have told all my friends and neighbors to call the Senior LinkAge for help.”

During 2023 staff learned a new phone system and have expertly mastered it.

“Sharon,” a caregiver who worked in the fraud division for the State of MN has always referred people to SLL but made her first personal call to Senior LinkAge Line and was on the phone with a specialist for over an hour. At the end of the call, she got choked up and said, “You guys are so good at what you do!”

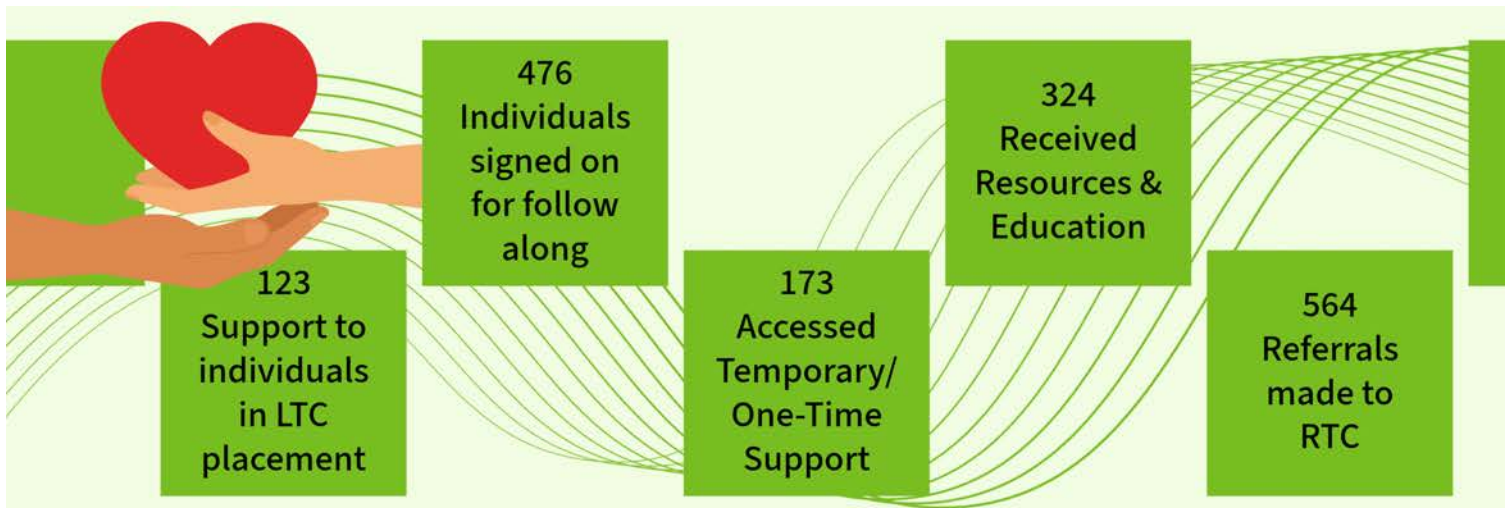
Jerry Roberts, an SLL specialist who had worked on SLL at SEMAAA for 19 years, left the agency. His expertise and ability to manage a high volume of calls has been greatly missed.

SLL provided 60 presentations and information at various health fair booths

“A guardian/grandmother of a disabled young man called. She paid cash for his medication at the pharmacy because he was out of drugs. He is on Medical Assistance, has Extra Help, & has a Medicare Part D plan for drug coverage. The guardian had worked with the county worker & financial worker and could not get the situation resolved. The county told her to call SLL. The specialist called Medicare to double check his coverage. Together they called the pharmacy to find out why it was denied. The caller and the specialist were able to get the billing information updated, and called the pharmacy back, and they reran the meds and got the \$0 copay with everything covered. The caller was elated and grateful, especially since she had wasted hours trying to find help!”

MINNESOTA
SENIOR LINKAGE LINE





RETURN TO COMMUNITY RECAP 2023

Our Return to Community staff continued to provide assistance throughout 2023 to individuals and families working through complex transitions, often from a hospital or nursing home back to their home in the community or to remain in their homes even when encountering difficulties. Staff worked diligently to explore needs and preferences, connect individuals with supportive services to meet their goals and then follow up to make sure services were working successfully.

This past year brought a variety of changes for our Return to Community team. Our primary source of client referrals, “the nursing home profile list,” was adjusted, and the criteria for eligibility now comes solely from the Pre-Admission Screening document. We continued to learn and become familiar with our client tracking system for documentation, and a new phone system was also implemented, called Genesys, that staff were trained extensively on. Our team also transitioned to new titles, now being identified as “Resource Coordinators,” but continue to do the same great work as always! We said goodbye to staff and welcomed new staff aboard.

In 2023, 476 individuals signed on for ongoing follow along services while another 173 accessed temporary or one-time assistance. Staff also provided education and resources to an additional 324 individuals and provided support and information to 123 individuals who made the decision for long term placement in a skilled nursing facility.

We again saw an increase in the use of the online referral option (www.sllreferral.org) as well as direct referrals from Senior LinkAge Line call center staff which brought another 564 referrals to the Return to Community team. Referrals came from individuals themselves, caregivers, nursing homes, hospitals, home health agencies and the Senior LinkAge Line.

Our team boasts experienced, well-trained individuals with backgrounds in nursing, occupational therapy, and social work. Resource Coordinators, Jay Hall, Sara Kohrs, Emily Krowiorz, Jen McLaughlin and Supervisor, Lori Wacek, make up the Return to Community team.

Return to Community 2023: Making a Difference

“You and SLL were valuable assets and a resource a number of times, and I appreciated all your help through this process.”

- Caregiver

Client and nursing home staff unable to find home health care agency that would work with client’s insurance plan. RTC staff researched in-network providers with the Advantage plan, made calls to determine availability, had referral information faxed to the agency and was successfully able to secure home health services.

Assisted client through multiple nursing home stays, an eviction from his apartment, finding temporary housing options and emergency funding for gas money, legal assistance for bad credit history and past eviction, working with the homeless shelter, numerous housing applications...and after one year of working to secure housing, client was able to get a new subsidized apartment! RTC staff helped to arrange the move-in and unpacking too. “You helped me one heck of a lot!” - Client

“Thank you for whatever ideas you could suggest. And thank you so much for keeping in touch! I feel like you're one of the best resources I have for staying on top of my caregiving!” - Caregiver

“You make my day. You cheered me up!” - Client

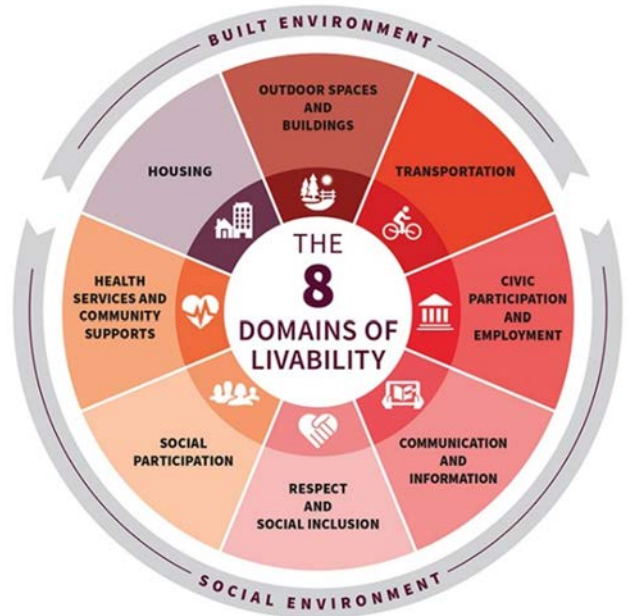
“You always made me feel like there was hope, I’m one very happy gentleman to have all this support. You’ve always helped me consider all the options and brought up good questions and things to think about.” - Client

“Thank you for the resource and thank you for all you have done. I sure do appreciate someone that is willing to do the follow-up as you have! You are a gift to society!” - Caregiver

“You have done wonders! Every time you’ve called me, we’ve had a problem to deal with and you dealt with it with no reservation. You don’t know what it means to have that kind of a back-up team working with me. Life is hard! I couldn’t have a better friend on the planet than you at SLL. Thank you ever so much!” - Client

Age Friendly Community Highlights

Age Friendly work is meant to prepare states and communities for the aging population, it creates a process and strategy to meet the needs of older adults and everyone in between. This demographic shift is already impacting our region and can be especially problematic in rural areas. Addressing gaps in the 8 domain areas, ensures communities are more livable, affordable, accessible, and better designed in ways that truly benefit everyone. We know older adults want to age in place but can only make this a reality if there are improvements in the physical design and social environments of communities. We are excited to be able to support this.



Currently, SE MN has eight communities or counties working through the process of becoming Age Friendly. The state of MN is also a member of the AARP network committed to Age Friendly planning (offering grants and support to promote change and improvements). In total, MN has 23 Communities who have officially applied to be members of the network. To learn more about these cities and Minnesota's Age Friendly efforts and action plans go to the MN Age Friendly Hub.

The SE MN communities or counties involved include:



Oronoco Area includes New Haven and Oronoco Townships



SEMAAA Staff Dan Conway (dan@semaaa.org) and Chris Johnson (chrisj@semaaa.org) provide technical assistance to communities interested in learning more about this initiative and process. Additional resources and examples of what communities are going to become Age Friendly can be found on AARP's website.

2023: SEMAAA in Photos



SEMAAA Board

Jean Eaton, *Chair* - Freeborn County
Dave Vandergon, *Vice Chair* - Goodhue County
Marie Hlava, *Treasurer* - Member At-Large
Mike Hancock, *Secretary* - Olmsted County
David Beimers - Rice County
Maggie Cook - At-Large
Jenelle Cummings - Mower County
Marjorie Fuller - Fillmore County
Karen Hanson - Winona County
Dwight Jennings - Member At-Large
OPEN - Dodge County
OPEN - Houston County
OPEN - Steele County
OPEN - Wabasha County

SEMAAA Staff

Laurie Brownell - Executive Director
Anna Thomson - Office Manager
Kim Voth - Finance Director/Grants Manager
Patti Schad - Finance Assistant
Laurie Marreel - Grants Administrator
Dan Conway - Lead Eldercare Developer
Chris Johnson - Eldercare Developer
Annie Avery - SLL Contact Center Manager
Starla Inman - SLL Resource Specialist
Tambi Lokken - SLL Resource Specialist
Laurie Magnus - SLL Resource Specialist
Jone Trapp - SLL Resource Specialist
Chad Wojchik - SLL Resource Specialist
Amy White - SLL Resource Specialist
Nicole Cummings - Preadmission Screening
Lori Wacek - SLL Resource Coordination Supervisor
Jay Hall - SLL Resource Coordinator
Sara Kohrs - SLL Resource Coordinator
Emily Krowiorz - SLL Resource Coordinator
Jen McLaughlin - SLL Resource Coordinator
Claudia Bell - APS Community Coordinator