

From: [Ashawnda Fleming](#)
To: [solicitation.questions](#)
Subject: RFI 014-21/22 Response Gracefully Aging
Date: Friday, June 3, 2022 12:56:03 PM
Attachments: [State of Florida RFI Final June 2022.pdf](#)

Dear Cody Massa,

I hope this email finds you well. Please accept the attached submission on behalf of my client, Gracefully Aging. This response is for RFI 014-21/22 Statewide Medicaid Managed Care Program. Please feel free to let me know if you have any questions or if you need any additional information.

My best,
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GRACEFULLY AGING



RFI RESPONSE

State of Florida

June 2022

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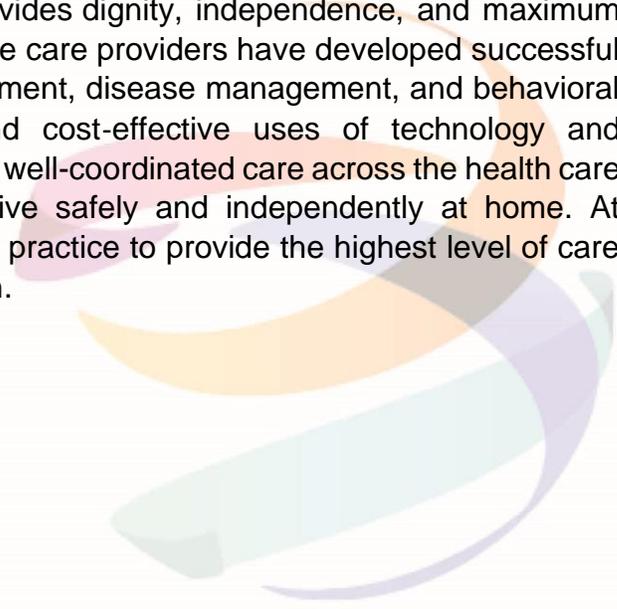
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About Gracefully Aging

Since its founding in 2018, Gracefully Aging (GA) has remained dedicated to improving the quality of life for Central Florida's most vulnerable populations, including seniors and those with special needs or disabilities. We provide various services that include in-home medical care, patient and caregiver education, therapy/rehabilitative services, companionship, medication management, and transportation services. Home care consists of professional support services that allow seniors to live safely in their homes. In-home care services are provided to help those who are aging and need assistance to live independently, are managing chronic health issues, are recovering from a medical setback, or have special needs or a disability. At Gracefully Aging, we believe that in-home care, done correctly, provides dignity, independence, and maximum comfort for the care recipient. In recent years, home care providers have developed successful models for care coordination, prescription management, disease management, and behavioral education. They have pioneered innovative and cost-effective uses of technology and therapeutics to deliver high-quality, client-centered, well-coordinated care across the health care delivery system, helping millions of Americans live safely and independently at home. At Gracefully Aging, we put these proven models into practice to provide the highest level of care for our clients throughout the Central Florida region.



RFI Responses

Gracefully Aging seeks to provide innovative ideas and best practices that meet the following focus areas as outlined in the RFI:

Gracefully Aging's Evidenced Based Approach to Maximize Community Based Placement and Services Through Aging-In-Place Strategies

In recent gerontological discussions and research, the focus of outcome-based models has been on the maintenance of good physical health, including the avoidance of chronic illness and functional limitations.¹ Process-oriented models have taken an alternative view and emphasized compensatory psychological and social mechanisms in dealing with age-related declines.² Recent work has also recognized the significant role of social involvement and participation in contributing to wellness in late life. New understandings of successful aging have been fostered by recent interest in resilience, posttraumatic growth, subjective evaluations of aging-in-place and attainment of a meaningful life.

Through our services at Gracefully Aging we utilize the Proactivity Clinical Model (PCM) that seeks to describe both processes and outcomes that can define criteria for successful aging-in-place. Our processes emphasize proactive behavioral adaptations, while our outcomes include the maintenance of psychological well-being and good quality of life (QOL) as the aging process occurs. Using this model, GA seeks to present a parsimonious formulation that offers insights into behaviors that can enhance the aging-in-place process. To the extent that mechanisms as well as behavioral processes can be described and understood, we also implement policies, practices and interventions that can enhance such behaviors and facilitate the attainment of positive QOL and aging-in-place outcomes.

The PCM asserts that successful aging is based on the assumption that with increasing age there is an accumulation of health-related and social stressors. Without such normative age-related stressors, there would be no need to distinguish successful aging from successful living at any age. Based on our recognition of the inevitability of age-related stressors, our service model is anchored in the stress process theory³. Those individuals who can maintain the requisites of successful aging-in-place is based on good physical and mental health and engagement in social activities. For most of the clients served by Gracefully Aging, they are faced with aging-related stressors such as health declines or losses in other domains, competent coping and adaptation to age-related changes and stressors. Dealing with these issues is paramount to achieve or maintain positive QOL and aging-in-place outcomes.

¹ Depp CA, Jeste DV. Definitions and predictors of successful aging: a comprehensive review of larger quantitative studies. *Am J Geriatr Psychiatry*. 2006;14:6–20.

² Baltes P, Baltes M. *Successful Aging: Perspectives from the Behavioral Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; 1993.

³ Pearlin LI. The sociological study of stress. *J Health Soc Behav*. 1989;30:241–256.

Our approach to the PCM has seven succinct areas that allow us to ensure that our clients can successfully age-in-place.

1. **Personal Care:** The GA team assists our clients with everything from bathing, washing their hair, and getting dressed.
2. **Household Chores:** GA team members assist clients with everyday chores such as housekeeping, grocery shopping, and laundry.
3. **Meals:** GA team members coordinate nutritious meal plans and the delivery of meals for all clients in our program. Our staff are trained on understanding how to plan meals based upon any of the priority health issues outlined in the 2022-2026 Florida State Health Improvement Plan.
4. **Financial Management:** The GA team assists clients with tasks such as ensuring that bills are paid on time and creating budgets based upon their monthly income level.
5. **Health Care:** GA staff members adhere to the medication management plan as outlined by the prescribing physicians. We assist our clients with utilizing special pill boxes that allow us to coordinate client medication even during the times that we are not there to administer them. Our team is trained to check these devices upon return to the home to ensure that medications have been taken properly. We also work with our clients to make sure that they understand the benefit structures associated with the medical plan that they utilize.
6. **Transportation:** The GA team works with clients to obtain the modes of transportation best suited for their needs. This includes transporting clients to and from appointments, securing walkers/electric scooters. This also includes helping clients to understand what their insurance benefits will or will not cover.
7. **Social Connections:** GA team members work to ensure that our clients have the appropriate social supports in place to ensure they have a network to assist in their emotional health and well-being.
8. **Home Environment:** GA staff members work with clients to make sure that the physical space in their homes promote the successful process of aging-in-place. This includes strategies such as:
 - ❖ Checking area rugs and check that all carpets are fixed firmly to the floor.
 - ❖ Replacing handles on doors or faucets with ones that are comfortable for client use.
 - ❖ Installing grab bars near toilets and in the tub or shower.
 - ❖ Reducing fall hazards by placing no-slip strips or non-skid mats on tile and wood floors or surfaces that may get wet.
 - ❖ Placing light switches at the top and bottom of stairs and turning on night lights.
 - ❖ Installing ramps with handrails as needed.

These transactional behaviors, which are anchored in future-oriented thinking, reflect human agency directed at stress reduction, resource development and problem resolution. A unique feature of the specific proactive behaviors proposed in our program is that they target specific stressors that are associated with aging. For example, health promotion and proactive illness management are adaptations relevant to chronic illness. Similarly, anticipatory moves and environmental modifications target lack of person-environment fit.

Using this model of care, we have learned that proactivity originates from future-oriented motivations and refers to behavioral efforts to build one's resources and to direct them towards preventing or minimizing problem situations or environments. Proactive adaptations in our service delivery model refers to specific behavioral actions undertaken by older individuals to actively deal with impending or extant aging-related stressors. The concept of proactivity is also consistent with strength-based approaches to meeting stressors and challenges of aging that include resilience and self-regulation.

Through our years of service to the elderly throughout Central Florida, we have learned that while proactivity can be a valuable behavioral orientation throughout the life course, it plays a more salient role in late life, when individuals encounter more normative stressors and challenges related to aging. Furthermore, while instrumental or affective coping is a reaction to already existing stressors, proactive adaptations also have a strong preventive focus.

How Gracefully Aging Enhances Specialty Health Plans Services to Improve Outcomes for Recipients

Gracefully Aging is specifically poised to improve client outcomes because our specialty health plans involve comprehensive, wraparound services that include a team approach which is patient centric; a dedication to quality and safety, including evidence-based clinical decision support tools; and coordinated care across settings. In addition to providing the highest quality of in-home care, Gracefully Aging ensures that our clients maintain enhanced access to and continuity of services. We provide self-care support and linkages to community resources so that we are able to track and coordinate care while measuring and improving our performance.

Some of the best practices we have implemented in our delivery of home care services include enabling our care team to provide more precise and efficient care through automated training and tracking, data analytics, and the personalization of our onboarding process. We utilize a software called HHA Exchange that enables us to communicate with staff and clients via an easy-to-use app. This allows the client to communicate with Gracefully Aging in private if the caregiver is present. This system also shows each staff person's location and keeps us in compliance with the Agency for Healthcare Administration to prevent fraud. In addition, we use HHA exchange to document all services provided to our clients. We also use an electronic visit verification system to ensure we follow Medicaid's billing process, which decreases the chance of Medicaid fraud through incorrect billing and places liability on the caregiver as opposed to the agency.

To maximize our services and improve outcomes for our clients, we conduct ongoing home and safety checks to identify common hazards that could result in injuries, including checking bathrooms for grab bars, a shower chair, a raised toilet seat, and slip resistant rugs; making sure bedrooms are free from clutter and that there is a raised mattress and night lights placed along the path from the bedroom to the bathroom; ensuring furniture in the living area is arranged to create clear paths, loose rugs are secured and there are no loose floorboards, light switches are easily accessible, and cords are out of the walking path; making sure the kitchen has no liquid or food spilled on the floor, there are no throw rugs, dishes and cooking equipment are stored at an easy-to-reach, waist high level, and a step stool with a handrail is available to reach upper cabinets; ensuring stairways are well lit, steps have stair treads, and stairways have a strong handrail, preferably on both sides; and making sure carpet is not patterned or deep pile and is a solid color to show the edges of steps more clearly. In addition, to maximize our services and improve outcomes for clients we also explore the benefits of clients remaining at home versus seeking alternative housing, assess transportation, and tap into community networking. We also create and send a quarterly newsletter to all clients providing them with wellness recommendations and safety tips.

To maximize communication, we stay in constant contact with case workers, social workers, and people within the community to ensure they know of our services. We also contact senior living communities to conduct health/education fairs to let people know about Gracefully Aging and the services we provide. To improve coordination of care for individuals enrolled in Medicare and Medicaid, we ensure we are adhering to individual care plans. Gracefully Aging has a Registered Nurse on staff who works with Primary Care Physicians around managing and monitoring client's health improvement plans. Our program increases timely access to providers and services providing us with 3-5 days for care to be implemented once we receive authorization. If we are unable to reach a client within 1-2 days, we do an unscheduled visit to ensure the client's safety.

How Gracefully Aging Aligns Metrics and Outcomes with the Florida State Health Improvement Plan

Gracefully Aging aligns metrics and outcomes with the Florida State Health Improvement Plan by providing ongoing training to our staff on the seven identified priority health issues and topic areas:

- ❖ Alzheimer's/Dementia
- ❖ Mental Wellbeing & Substance Abuse Prevention
- ❖ Chronic Disease & Conditions
- ❖ Transmissible & Emerging Diseases
- ❖ Injury, Safety & Violence
- ❖ Maternal & Child Health

❖ Social & Economic Conditions Impacting Health

How Gracefully Aging Aligns with Consider Innovative Delivery Methods Including Care Bundling that Empower Recipients in Making More Informed Health Care Decisions

At Gracefully Aging, we have found that in some instances services needed by our clients are not added to their care plans. To fill this critical need, we work with our client's care teams to add and monitor services, overseeing and tracking care as it is provided. Through this system of care, we essentially provide our clients with comprehensive case management services. At Gracefully Aging, case management is all about meeting the complex needs of our clients. Our staff carefully assess patients' current situation, arrange access to critical services, help coordinate care delivery, and ensure service delivery is carried out in a timely and effective manner. Our person-in-environment perspective allows our staff to look beyond patients' physical status and take a holistic look at conditions that influence individuals' well-being. Our ultimate goal through our case management approach is to optimize client functioning by providing quality services in the most efficient and effective manner to seniors with multiple complex needs.

