

## Advisory Council meeting minutes

March 28, 2024

Present: Evans Waller, Don Kline, Larry Kudej, Shirley Gadelmann, Kay Fisk, Marianne Hanshaw

Staff: Harrison March, Paul Swanson

Evans Waller called the meeting to order shortly after 1 p.m. Those present introduced themselves.

### **Acceptance of Agenda**

Shirley Gadelmann motioned to approve the agenda, Kay Fisk second. Motion passed, 6-0.

### **Consideration of the meeting minutes for February 2024**

Kay motioned to approve the minutes as presented, Larry Kudej second. Motion passed, 6-0.

### **Agency Report**

Harrison March provided the agency report:

- Heritage's run of Caregiver 101 sessions wrapped up in March with a discussion on choosing in-home care providers. There are no future sessions currently planned, but there will likely be more in the coming fiscal year that begins in July. Shirley said she enjoyed the March program and made sure to bring the information she learned back to her church group.
- Heritage's Area Plan Update for the coming fiscal year has been submitted to the state, and Harrison thanked members for their time and input at last month's meeting to review the plan. Attention now turns to the bigger 4-year plan that will cover FY25-29. The Advisory Council will again be important to that process, with more information to come.
- Harrison assured members that the agency is monitoring changes at the state level regarding the structure of the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services. There is no current need for concern, but as with all changes at that high of level it is important for the agency to closely follow the situation. Kay Fisk asked if Heritage is still getting the same level of support as before, and Harrison said yes.

### **Program Report – Older Workers Employment Program**

Paul Swanson introduced himself and reported on the Older Workers Employment Program (OWEP):

- OWEP is a partnership between the AAAs and Iowa Vocational Rehab Services (IVRS). works with older adults seeking to enter or reenter the workforce. Paul assists with creating resumes, job hunting and securing interviews. An ideal discharge is a consumer earning a job or internship in their desired field.
- Last fiscal year (FY23) Paul had about 20 placements in fields including manual labor, sales, medical, manufacturing and self-employment.
- Unfortunately, at the state level it was decided to end the grant funding OWEP. Paul is now on a job hunt of his own while still supporting his caseload either until his last day or until the end of the grant in September 2024.
- Paul noted that Heritage management and the Board of Directors were very supportive in advocating to maintain the grant, which has been successful at Heritage. Ultimately the decision was out of the agency's hands.

Discussion included:

- Larry: any chance the grant/state funding renews? Who funded the grant? Paul said it was previously funded by the Iowa Dept. on Aging and IVRS, then just IVRS. He thinks it is unlikely to be renewed.
- Evans: can Heritage pay for the program entirely to keep it going? Harrison said that while this was discussed briefly, it is not possible for the coming fiscal year. So many funds that come into Heritage from governmental sources, grants and private supporters are designated for specific programs. This is helpful for those programs, but lessens the flexibility to address a situation like this one. Paul added that Heritage has been supportive during this stressful process.

- Kay suggested looking into county-level grants to see if services could be provided part-time or in the certain areas willing to support.
- Evans thanked Paul for this years of service at Heritage and his professionalism in a difficult time. All members wished him well.

### **Q2 Data Report**

Harrison reviewed data from the first half of the current fiscal year. He will include the charts with the meeting minutes for later reference. Questions included:

- Karri: does higher amount of time per consumer correlate with more home visits? Harrison said that is one factor, though many consumers still prefer phone calls or Zoom meetings. Heritage's policy, however, is an attempted home visit at least every three months. Sometimes it is more frequent based on the severity of the case.
- Evans: how often do people refuse help from Heritage? Harrison has it's not very common because most cases are initiated by the consumer themselves or someone who was given the consumer's blessing (family, friend, doctor, etc.). The rare cases are most common for Elder Rights, where Heritage gets some anonymous referrals as well as people worried that accepting help will mean their abuser, who is often family, will get in trouble.

### **County Updates**

Benton: Harrison recently attended the VGH Health Fair, which was very well attended.

Cedar: Shirley said the senior center in Tipton has its pancake breakfast coming up soon in April. This was a popular event last year and should hopefully raise a nice amount for the senior center.

Johnson: Larry shared the Task Force is planning a forum on updating you Wills for April 8. The event will be in honor of Bob Welsh.

Jones: Harrison shared that Lisa and her staff have been collecting donations in memory of a diner who recently passed away from a car crash. The donations will support that diner's favorite local animal hospital.

Linn: Kay said the Life Enrichment Center is going steady for attendance. They may be on the move soon as the facility was recently purchased. New location is TBD.

Marianne Hanshaw: Encore in Washington continues having tremendous turnouts, which she attributes to a great program put on by staff and volunteers.

Iowa: Harrison is in talks with a local bank that has a few locations to do some outreach and education on fraud and scams.

### **Open Agenda**

Members shared anecdotes about their experiences with attempted fraud and scams, including an increase in gift card scams.

Evans asked Larry about any developments in the legislature related to older Iowans. Larry said:

- A bill updating guardianship laws has passed and is awaiting the governor's signature.
- Several bills are still on the floor with uncertain futures. Overall, not an active session for laws pertaining to older adults.
- The budget has not yet passed, which is a big factor in having several bills still undecided.

### **Adjournment**

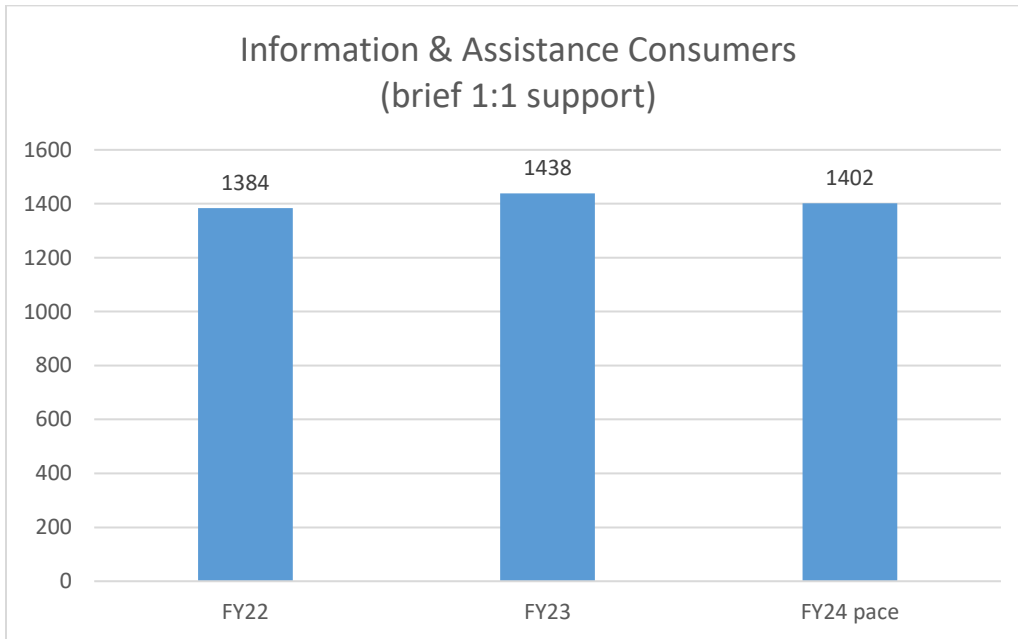
Shirley motioned to adjourn the meeting, Larry second. Meeting adjourned at 2:30 p.m.

# Heritage

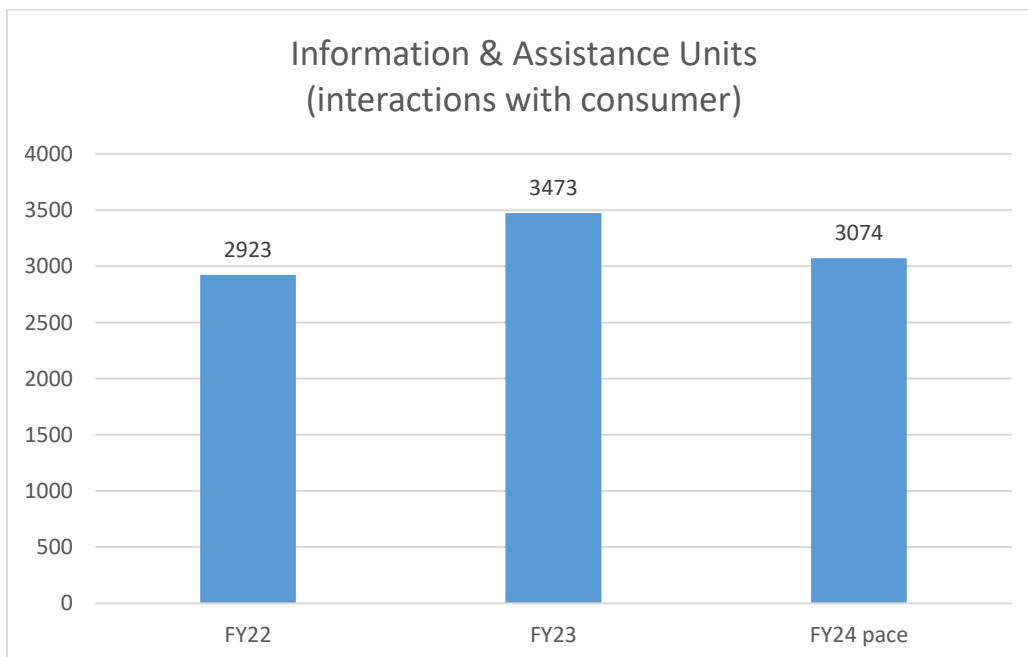
Area Agency on Aging

Advisory Council  
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Service data report as of Feb. 14, 2024



FY24 year-to-date: 876



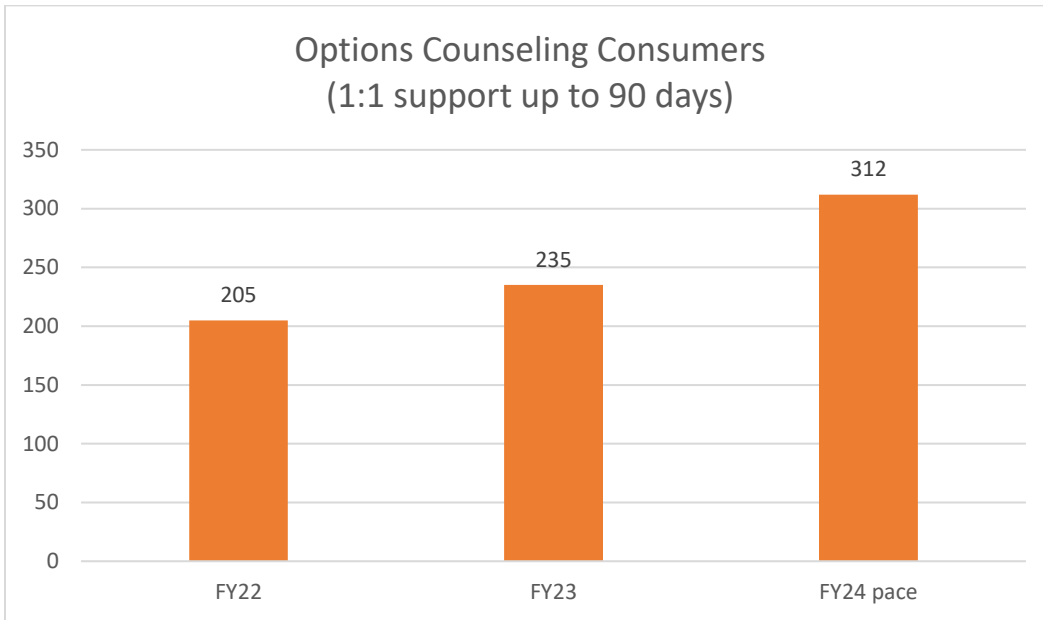
FY24 year-to-date: 1921

# Heritage

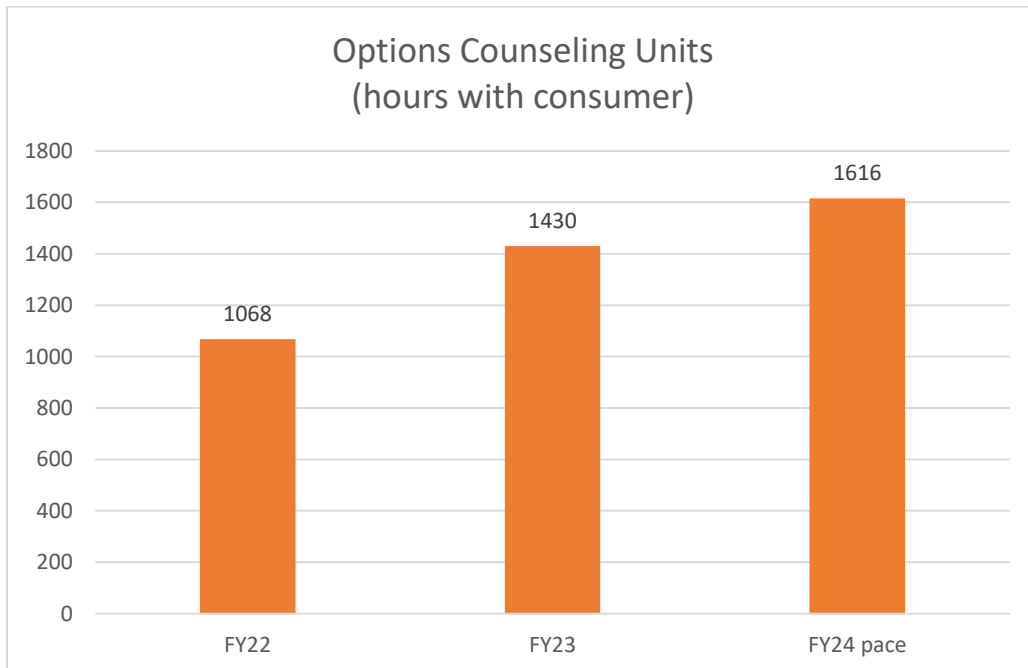
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FY24 year-to-date: 195



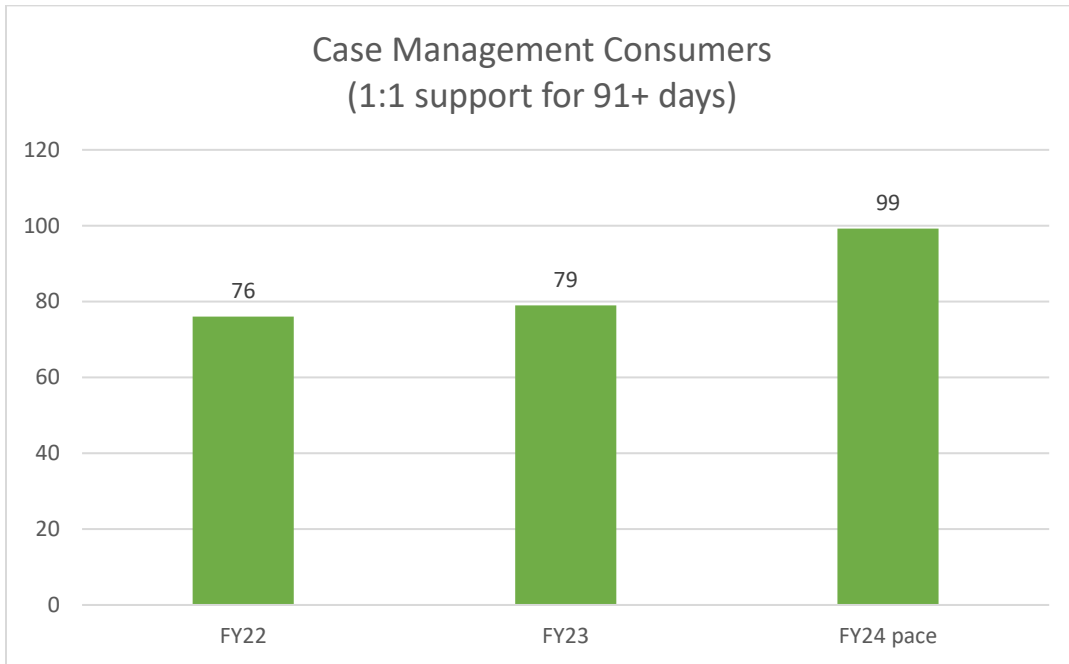
FY24 year-to-date: 1010

# Heritage

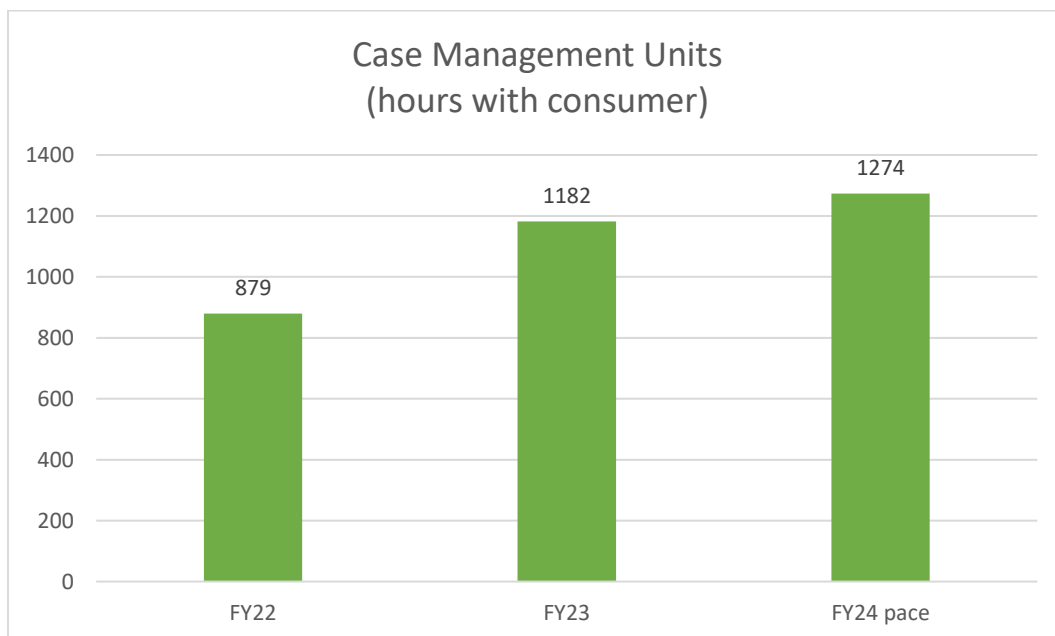
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FY24 year-to-date: 62



FY24 year-to-date: 796