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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Two Maine Agencies on Aging Awarded over \$1M in Federal Grant Funding

July 18, 2016 – Spectrum Generations and the Southern Maine Agency on Aging (SMAA) have recently been awarded \$636,500 and \$478,779 respectively, from the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to build a sustainable network of evidence based health and wellness programs dedicated to older adults and disabled persons. The agencies received two of only 16 grants awarded throughout the country for these initiatives by the US HHS Administration for Community Living.

Gerard Queally, CEO of Spectrum Generations said, “The awarding of these two grants present an enormous opportunity for Maine to develop a sustainable, statewide Evidence Based Health and Wellness network. It speaks to the confidence the Administration on Community Living has in the Area Agencies on Aging in our state and to the collaborative nature in which both grant applications were written. All of Maine’s health systems and many other community-based organizations, like Somerset Public Health, fully supported the application and their older patients and members will now have an increased opportunity to attend classes in or close to the communities in which they live. This is a big win for improving the health culture of Maine.”

Spectrum Generations will focus its program on chronic disease self-management and education, chronic pain self-management, and diabetes self-management, while expanding the delivery infrastructure and geographic reach of educational offerings. Citing CDC statistics that 86% of healthcare costs are attributed to chronic diseases like diabetes and heart disease, anticipated outcomes include increased participant confidence and self-efficacy, decreased emergency room visits and hospital admissions, and incorporation of healthy eating and exercise into daily routines.

The Southern Maine Agency on Aging will use the grant to develop an evidence-based falls prevention program network across the State of Maine. Statewide AAA’s will develop more systematic outreach

strategies, build relationships with health providers including MaineHealth Accountable Care Organization, and ultimately embed and sustain falls prevention programs within regional healthcare systems.

Laurence W. Gross, SMAA's Executive Director stated, "This grant will significantly increase the number of older adults across Maine who are referred to and participate in evidence-based falls prevention programs. SMAA has a strong history of partnership with ACL. In 2014, we were awarded a three-year, \$954,457 grant, – *The Alzheimer's Disease Initiative: Specialized Support Services* – to improve services for adults living with dementia. We are thrilled for this next opportunity to continue partnering with ACL as we now work to reduce the risk of falls for older Mainers."

Spectrum Generations and the Southern Maine Agency on Aging expect that by collaborating with other Maine Agencies on Aging, as well as with health systems, state health departments and other community-based health organizations, that the quality of life for older adults and those disabled persons living in Maine will improve. By focusing on improving balance issues and chronic disease and pain management, the ideal outcomes will be increased capacity of targeted population to live healthier lives while maintaining their ability to age in place. In addition, results will show the efficacy of these programs and help determine the structure of future services within the healthcare arena.

About Spectrum Generations

Spectrum Generations is the Central Maine Area Agency on Aging as well as a federally designated Aging and Disability Resource Center. The 501c (3) nonprofit organization helps older and disabled adults – plus those who care for them – live healthy, independent lives in their own homes and communities. For more information please call 1.800.639.1553 or visit online at spectrumgenerations.org. Like our page on [Facebook](#) for updates.

About Southern Maine Agency on Aging

Since 1973, the Southern Maine Agency on Aging has provided residents of York and Cumberland counties with resources and assistance to address the issues and concerns of aging. The Agency serves people ages 60 and older, family caregivers, and people under 60 with a disability. Agency services are devoted to fulfilling its mission of improving the quality of life for older adults, adults with disabilities and the people who care for them in southern Maine. For more information, please call 207-396-6500 or www.smaaa.org.

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