

Taos Pueblo: Senior Citizen Center

“We care for our elders. We treat them with respect, honor, and dignity, because our wisdom comes from them. I have learned so much from them; day and night...I teach my staff that.”

– Lillian Romero, Director, Taos Pueblo Senior Citizen Center

Program Description

The Taos Pueblo Senior Citizen Center supports its tribal caregivers through funding received from Title VI, Part C. The program provides respite care, training, information, referral, and equipment. The Center also hosts a number of community events such as dinners, shopping excursions, and workshops.

Successful Strategies

The Taos Pueblo Senior Citizen Center has developed strategies that work for its community to provide support to caregivers through partnerships that created an extensive referral program, conducted outreach to the community to raise awareness about training opportunities, and emphasized respect for elders’ cultural considerations.

Partnership

The Taos Pueblo Senior Citizen Center communicates with local agencies to identify resources, provide training, and make respite care available for caregivers. These local agencies include:

- Various community health services
- The state Social Services Department
- A state-operated Home Health Care Agency
- Organizations with knowledge about diabetes, Alzheimer’s disease, and other specialized diseases

Operated by: Taos Pueblo

Location: Taos, NM

Contact Information:

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Community: Taos Pueblo Senior Citizen Center is a tribally operated program that provides services to the community’s elders and tribal members. The Center provides caregiver support services through Title VI, Part C.



LTSS Research: Caregiver Support

Taos Pueblo

Cultural Considerations

The Center's community of elders is small and tight-knit. They are generally cautious of outside help coming into their homes. The Center respects elders' wishes and uses community members to provide respite or caregiver services.

Training

The Taos Pueblo Senior Citizen Center offers various trainings for caregivers, including group lectures or individualized sessions. To address low turnout to trainings, the Center uses unique outreach strategies to reach caregivers, including:

- Home visits to caregivers
- Flyers developed and posted in popular community centers
- Public service announcements played on the local radio station

"The senior program is always out there, providing services...We also give information to the family, [letting them know] there are services available to them."

– Lillian Romero, Director,
Taos Pueblo Senior Citizen Center

Funding

Funding sources for the Taos Pueblo Senior Citizen Center include:

- Title VI, Part C grant monies for caregiver support services
- A New Mexico state grant to assist with operational costs
- Other local programs that provide caregiver training

Future Considerations

The Taos Pueblo Senior Citizen Center hopes to increase the range and availability of services provided to caregivers and elders by establishing an adult day care center and a new senior citizen center. They are looking into third-party billing from Medicaid for services they provide. The Center plans to provide training in First Aid and CPR for caregivers. The Center would also like to provide training for caregivers focused on care for elders with disabilities—caring for those who spend much of their time in bed, use a wheelchair, or live with dementia.

Lessons Learned

The Taos Pueblo Senior Citizen Center would like to see the services provided to caregivers and elders grow. Since individuals other than immediate family provide many elder caregiver services, the Center still must address issues of isolation and cultural sensitivity. Transportation, staffing, and cultural sensitivity trainings are three areas the Center hopes to build on for caregivers inside and outside of the community.