

## Lac Courte Oreilles Elder Services

“We help our clients apply for Medicaid and assist them with Medicare and Social Security issues like prescription drug coverage, supplemental income and disability... We make sure that the clients know what types of services are available to them.”

– Terrance Manuelito, Veterans Service Officer

### Program Description

The Lac Courte Oreilles Elder Services Program is a tribally operated program that provides support and assistance to tribal elders living on the Lac Courte Oreilles reservation and the surrounding area, including elder veterans. The program focuses on case management and connects elder and disabled tribal veterans with available benefits. These benefits include housing services, disability compensation, pensions, Medicare, and Medicaid services. The program also includes direct services, such as home repair, auto repair, and snow removal. These services are available to all elder or disabled tribal members, not just veterans.

### Successful Strategies

#### Partnerships

The program partners with the tribal community's health nurse to provide medical and health services to tribal veterans. The program collaborates extensively with the regional U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) office in Minneapolis, providing referrals to the VA office and arranging transportation to the Minneapolis VA hospital for local tribal veterans for services that are not available on the reservation. The program also maintains a strong relationship with the Wisconsin Department of Human Services through regular communication and monthly meetings.

**Operated by:** The Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa

**Location:** Hayward, WI

**Contact Information:**

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<http://www.lco-nsn.gov/elder-information.php>

**Community:** The Lac Courte Oreilles Elder Services program is a tribally operated program that provides assistance to tribal veterans.



# LTSS Research: Veteran Support

Lac Courte Oreilles Elder Services

## Cultural Considerations

Several elderly veterans have expressed a desire for personal transport, rather than having to rely on the local county bus. To meet their needs, the Lac Courte Oreilles Elder Services Program makes every effort to use personal transportation when transporting tribal veterans to the VA hospital in Minneapolis. The program also has an annual powwow to honor tribal veterans.

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“We have almost monthly meetings with the Wisconsin Department of Human Services, so the communication is very frequent. We’re all included and feel like we’re being listened to”

– Mary Wolfe, Aging and Disability Services Director

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## Training

The Veterans Service Officer recently participated in training to obtain accreditation to provide direct client assistance to tribal veterans. This accreditation increases the program’s capacity to serve veterans.

## Funding

This program receives funding from the Lac Courte Oreilles Tribe and the state of Wisconsin, which works with local tribes to provide funding for tribal elder services.

## Future Considerations

Lac Courte Oreilles’ program could benefit from increased funding and resources, particularly to meet the transportation needs of its elderly and disabled veterans. Lac Courte Oreilles Elder Services is located in a very rural area of Wisconsin, so transportation to medical care is a serious issue. The VA medical facility that serves Lac Courte Oreilles is located in Minneapolis, which is almost a 3-hour drive one way, and many elderly and disabled veterans struggle to find reliable transportation.