

WFA Timeline with Milestones

1898 The roots of Wellesley Friendly Aid (WFA) are in the establishment of a "Friendly Aid Committee" to assist a Wellesley family that lost its home in a devastating fire in 1898. At the request of the Selectmen, the Committee expanded its mission to providing relief to residents of the "poor farm" in town. Over the next few years other programs were added, including an employment bureau, a free bed at the Newton Cottage Hospital, a sewing school to provide clothes for the needy, and the establishment of nursing and health services.

1909 After ten years of service to the community, the Wellesley Friendly Aid Association was officially incorporated as a private, non-profit organization and the directors pledged to "promote the welfare of the poor, suffering or friendless in Wellesley." In these early days, Wellesley Friendly Aid collaborated with other organizations to provide services to residents. Child welfare, nutrition, eye, and dental clinics were established in conjunction with the Board of Health and the local schools. To this day, the collaboration with local entities continues.

1939 WFA launched Friendship Circle to bring together senior women for socializing and activities. WFA coordinates Friendship Circle with Wellesley Service League and the program is still going strong today!

1949 WFA needed more space to accommodate its growing programs and staff and acquired the property at 219 Washington St from the heirs of a former Friendly Aid president, Mrs. Arthur Brown. Friendly Aid continues to operate from this colonial revival house constructed in 1883.

1970s Wellesley Friendly Aid Nursing Services, founded in 1908, spun off in 1974 to become the Newton-Wellesley Visiting Nurses Association. WFA initiated the Wellesley Council on Aging, which is now run by the Town of Wellesley. WFA also introduced Meals on Wheels to Wellesley and administered the program until 2007 when it was taken over by Springwell.

1989 WFA partnered to launch the Wellesley Food Pantry.

2016 WFA started Wellesley Connects (now Connect to College) to mentor college-bound Wellesley High School students who need additional support and guidance to negotiate the college application process successfully.

Today We continue to improve the well-being and quality of life in the Wellesley community. Each year, over 140 residents borrow medical equipment for help after surgery, during illnesses and while recuperating from injuries. About 300 households receive grocery gift cards to buy holiday meals. All eligible children with financial need are funded to attend summer camp. WFA gave 67 camp scholarships in 2025.