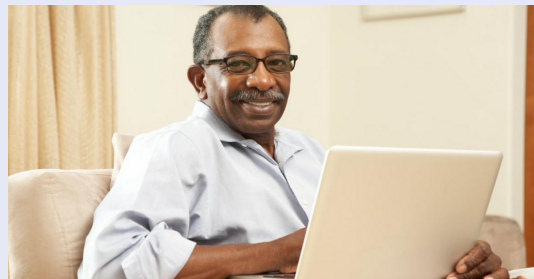


January 13, 2021

Age-Friendly Public Health Systems Learning and Action Network News



News:

News from the Hill! Congress recently increased the funding for Alzheimer's and dementia research for the 2021 fiscal year by \$300 million. In addition, \$15 million was included in this [omnibus spending bill](#) to implement the BOLD Infrastructure for Alzheimer's Act and advances the Improving HOPE for Alzheimer's Act. While Medicare provides care planning for individuals with cognitive impairment, including dementia, less than 1% of older adults living with Alzheimer's disease received the care planning benefit. This act provides the tools to help people living with dementia and their families.

Events and Opportunities:

Age-Friendly Public Health Systems Monthly Trainings

The first of TFAH's monthly trainings occurs next week – *January 21st at 3:00 pm ET*. This training will provide valuable context on ageism and its relevance to both public health and the aging services sector as they engage in efforts to improve older adult health and well-being. TFAH is delighted to host presenters from the Gerontological Society of America which facilitates the national Reframing Aging initiative. You can register now for our first training session and subsequent sessions using the links below.

January 21st – [Understanding and Overcoming Ageism](#)

February 17th – [Reducing Older Adult Health Disparities](#)

March 18th – [Public Health's Role in Addressing Social Isolation](#)

April 15th – [Public Health, Housing, and Older Adults](#)

The Challenges of Aging During COVID-19: Long Term Care, Vaccination and Isolation – *January 15, 2021, 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm ET* More than 125,000 long-term care residents and staff have lost their lives due to COVID-19. Even though older adults have early access to the COVID-19 vaccine, there are still challenges with distribution. In addition, the impact of the pandemic on the mental health of older adults is also critical to address. This webinar will focus on COVID-19's challenges to long-term care and vaccine distribution among older adults, and one health plan's efforts to address isolation and loneliness. Register [here](#).

Equity By Design Webinar Series: Intergenerational Engagement – *January 14, 2021, 11:00 am - 12:00 pm ET*. The fifth dialogue in this series will focus on the importance of creating living environments that facilitate regular interaction and engagement to benefit all generations. Register [here](#).

Social Engagement Technical Assistance Opportunity – *January 27, 2021, 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm ET.* engAGED: The National Resource Center for Engaging Older Adults will launch an office hours pilot program this month. Aging Network staff will be able to participate in small groups technical assistance calls every other month. The first office hours call will focus on virtual learning opportunities. Register [here](#).

COVID-19: Urgent Federal Actions to Accelerate America's Response – *January 29, 2021, 12:00 pm – 1:30 pm ET.* Several challenges in America's health care systems and public health infrastructure have been exposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This webinar will focus on recommendations related to six issues: COVID-19 testing and contact tracing, vaccine transparency and distribution, supply chain management, surge capacity, racial disparities, and funding for states, localities and providers. Register [here](#).

Resources:

CDC's Audience-Specific COVID-19 Toolkits

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has curated several toolkits to support the dissemination of COVID-19 vaccine information. These [toolkits](#) focus on vaccine communication, recipient education, long-term care facilities, and proper storage and handling of the vaccine.

Supporting Medicaid Enrollees and Caregivers

In order to provide aid during COVID-19, states have used Medicaid Emergency Preparedness and Response authority to temporarily modify their home- and community-based service waivers. This allows them greater flexibility in the services and supports they can provide to Medicaid enrollees and their caregivers. As a result of this temporary modification, states have engaged [several innovative modifications](#), including remote delivery of adult day programs and payment to nontraditional meal and transportation providers.

New Podcast Highlights Contact Tracing Resources

The National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP) and Mathematica staff discussed the features of an interactive contact tracing map in a [special video episode of *On the Evidence*](#). This map highlights different state approaches to contact tracing during the COVID-19 pandemic. Guests on the podcast shared contact tracing web tools and latest trends. NASHP and Mathematica also shared how they will continue to support contact tracing in 2021.

Action Brief Highlights Strategies to Strengthen Caregiving

Caregivers need support from across many sectors, including public health. This [action brief](#) provides an overview of caregiver challenges and calls on public health to convene stakeholders from multiple sectors to develop a macro-level approach to support caregivers. The brief suggests setting priorities and goals to address services, policies, systems and environments that need to be re-evaluated and reformed.

COVID-19 Pandemic Prompts Shift away from Nursing Homes

Nursing home occupancy has dropped 15% since the end of 2019. Some families are now opting to take care of their loved ones at [home instead of a skilled nursing facility](#). According to a study from AARP, three in 10 respondents are less likely to seek institutional care. Regulatory changes that allow Medicare to pay for digital doctor's visits has also fueled this shift.

Equity in Access to COVID-19 Vaccines

Consisting of about 80 organizations, the Vaccine Education and Equity Project is focused on equal access to COVID-19 vaccines, clinical trials and regulatory reviews. In an [interview with the CEO of the Alliance for Aging Research](#), the importance of engaging diverse constituencies in this work was highlighted.

Functional Decline Linked to Influenza among Older Adults [Results from a study published in the Journal of the American Geriatrics](#)

Society show that even though influenza is associated with having a short-term impact, a significant number of older adults hospitalized due to the flu experience longer-term functional decline. Of the 925 older adults included in the study, 18.2% had some clinically meaningful functional decline.

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