

January 28, 2021

Age-Friendly Public Health Systems Learning and Action Network News



News:

Public Health Accreditation Board and Healthy Aging

The Public Health Accreditation Board (PHAB) has recently released a [Healthy Aging Commissioned Paper and Think Tank Summary](#) proposing recommendations for including healthy aging into the PHAB Standards and Measures for accreditation. The recommendations are aligned with the 10 Essential Public Health Services and include addressing aging determinants of health and implementing a life-course approach to health. PHAB also released a [Healthy Aging Tip Sheet](#) that provides examples of how public health departments can begin the age-friendly transformation. TFAH was honored to participate and support the development of these resources in partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Six Directions to Improve Care for Older Americans

Terry Fulmer, President of The John A. Hartford Foundation and John Auerbach, CEO of Trust for America's Health, contributed to the article [Actualizing Better Health And Health Care For Older Adults](#), recently published in *Health Affairs*. The article identifies six vital directions to improve the care and quality of life for older adults: create an adequately prepared workforce; strengthen the role of public health; remediate disparities and inequities; develop, evaluate, and implement new approaches to care delivery; allocate resources to achieve patient-centered care and outcomes, including palliative and end-of-life care; and redesign the structure and financing of long-term services and supports.

Events and Opportunities:

Age-Friendly Public Health Systems Monthly Trainings

To successfully promote health equity, it is vital to understand disparities in access and care. TFAH's next AFPHS training session will focus on addressing health disparities and the specific challenges of health equity for older adults. Some of the major challenges for public health practitioners will be highlighted along with examples of how some public health programs are working to address them. Participants will also learn about the importance of having access to robust data.

You can register now for this training session and subsequent sessions using the links below.

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

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. The Bipartisan Policy Center offers this webinar to provide 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](#).

Bridging the Digital Divide for Older Adults and People with Disabilities February 4, 2021, 3:00 – 4:30 pm ET. Many older adults struggle to pay for internet service and to purchase an internet enabled device. They also may lack the skills necessary to navigate the internet, a serious challenge with the transition to telemedicine and virtual services. Such challenges could lead to further social isolation and limit access to needed health services. [This webinar](#), offered by the U.S. Administration for Community Living, will provide an overview of key concepts, barriers, and opportunities for funding, delivery of services, and providing technical assistance.

Funding Opportunity: 2021 Empowering Communities to Reduce Falls and Falls Risk

To help communities reduce falls and the risk of falls among older adults and adults with disabilities, the Administration on Aging (AoA), part of the U.S. Administration for Community Living (ACL), plans to award approximately six cooperative agreements to public or private non-profits. Applicants may request up to \$300,000 to implement evidence-based falls prevention programs. **The due date for applications is February 2, 2021.** These cooperative agreements have an anticipated start date of May 1, 2021. More information can be found [here](#).

Funding Opportunity: 2021 Integrated Networks to Deliver and Sustain Evidence-Based Falls Prevention Programs

To address behavioral and social determinants of health of older adults and adults with disabilities, AoA is providing a funding opportunity designed to strengthen integrated, sustainable networks. This opportunity also seeks to increase the number of these individuals who participate in evidence-based community programs to reduce falls and fall risks. Two public or private non-profits will receive up to \$1,100,000 for the three - year project period. **The due date for applications is February 2, 2021.** These cooperative agreements have an anticipated start date of May 1, 2021. More information can be found [here](#).

Funding Opportunity: 2021 Empowering Communities to Address Behavioral Health and Chronic Pain through Chronic Disease Self-Management Education Programs

AoA is offering funding for eight domestic public or private non-profit entities to address behavioral health and/or chronic pain among older adults and adults with disabilities. Applicants must implement appropriate evidence-based self-management education and self-management support programs. Awards can be up to \$300,000 for the three-year project period. **The due date for applications is February 2, 2021.** These cooperative agreements have an anticipated start date of May 1, 2021. More information can be found [here](#).

Funding Opportunity: 2021 Integrated Networks to Deliver and Sustain Evidence-Based Chronic Disease Self-Management Education Programs

To strengthen networks that address the behavioral and social determinants of health of older adults and adults with disabilities, AoA is offering up to three cooperative agreements to public or private non-profits. This opportunity also focuses on increasing the number of these individuals who participate in evidence-based chronic disease self-management education and self-management support programs. Applicants may request up to a maximum of \$1,400,000 for the three-year project period. **Applications are due February 2, 2021.** These cooperative agreements have an anticipated start date of May 1, 2021. More information can be found [here](#).

Resources:

New Guidance from CMS to Address Social Determinants of Health

To help states improve health outcomes among Medicaid beneficiaries and to lower costs, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services has released [new guidance](#) that describes how states may use flexibilities under current law to address social determinants of health. Suggestions include housing-related services and supports, non-medical transportation, home-delivered meals, educational services, employment, community integration and social supports, and case management.

Race and Ethnicity Equity Measures

Under its Age-Friendly Health Systems (AFHS) initiative, the Institute for Healthcare Improvement is [using race and ethnicity data](#) to determine how equitable care is. The overall goal is for hospitals and hospital systems to consider these measures as they implement the 4Ms framework - What Matters, Medication, Mentation and Mobility – to older adults.

2020 Census May Reveal Increase in Number of Adults Over 55

Preliminary results from the 2020 US Census are likely to show [a more pronounced population of older adults](#). According to William Frey, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, the population of adults age 55 and older increased 27%, compared to a 1.3% increase in the population under age 55.

COVID-19 Health Disparities and Social Determinants of Health

Institutional racism and social determinants of health have fueled COVID-19 health disparities. According to [a study from the Rutgers New Jersey Medical School](#), adverse social determinants of health, such as higher poverty rates and densely populated housing, are associated with COVID-19 mortality rates at the county level. The results from this study also highlight that Black people are disproportionately impacted.

Aging is the “New New”

[This article](#) from Media Village recognizes the valuable contributions of older adults to our society. Attributes that are associated with age – experience, perspective, judgment and wisdom – are increasing in social and cultural value. Baby boomers are being credited with leading the end of the ageism movement and the retirement of retirement.

Older Adults Need Help Accessing Information about the COVID-19 Vaccine

[A recent study from the Kaiser Family Foundation](#) noted that 6 in 10 adults age 65 and older did not have enough information on where or when they could receive a COVID-19 vaccine. In addition, older adults, Black and Hispanic adults, and individuals from low-income households had challenges finding information about the vaccine.

COVID-19 Pandemic Linked to Increased Food Insecurity

[According to a study published in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine](#), there has been a rise in “food insufficiency” due to the pandemic. Food insecurity means the inability to afford or access nutritionally adequate food. Food insufficiency, the most severe form of food insecurity, generally describes whether households actually have enough food for families to eat. and is associated with poor mental health. From March of 2020 to June 2020, food insufficiency increased from 8.1% to 10%. Because of the impact of food insufficiency on mental health, health workers and providers are encouraged to regularly screen patients for food insufficiency and mental health outcomes as well as provide support in accessing appropriate resources.

Patient Portal Use May Limit COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution

Approximately 45 percent of patients age 50 and older do not have a patient portal account, a tool being used across the country to communicate with patients about the COVID-19 vaccine and sign them up for appointments. This [new data from the University of Michigan’s Institute for Healthcare Policy and Innovation](#) also notes that just under half of older Black people and a total of 53 percent of older Hispanic people did not have a patient portal account when the poll was administered.

National Statistics Highlighting COVID's Impact on Long-Term Care

A [new brief](#), prepared by a multi-agency collaboration within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, highlights the data and literature available on the cross-national impact of COVID-19 in long-term care settings as of October 2020. The brief also includes data on the changes in reported death rates since June 2020.

Georgia Addressing the Needs of Seniors during COVID-19

A recent [case study](#) highlights how the Georgia Department of Human Services' Division of Aging Services (DAS) has been supporting older adults during the pandemic. Through its Continuous Quality Improvement Model, the DAS quickly pivoted services and funding and streamlined decision-making processes to prioritize services and ensure older adults' needs were met.

New COVID-19 Resources from Advancing States

Expanding on the [COVID-19 section](#) of their website, Advancing States has added the following new resources include:

- [Advancing States Resources](#) - includes ideas for addressing social isolation.
- [Federal guidance](#) from partners which includes a list of FEMA approved Major Disaster Declarations.
- A live version of the [CDC's Microsite](#).
- [State Materials](#) produced by health departments and agencies, including contact numbers for public information hotlines.
- [Business solutions](#) to help state agencies during COVID-19.

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