

March 11, 2021

Age-Friendly Public Health Systems Learning and Action Network News



News:

In partnership with The John A. Hartford Foundation and Cambia Health Foundation, Trust for America's Health (TFAH) is working to identify and disseminate best practices and policy recommendations to ensure COVID-19 vaccine access for older adults and people with disabilities who need to receive the vaccine at home. There are up to 15 million of these individuals in the U.S. who struggle with transportation, access to technology and who may be socially and geographically isolated. As part of this project, TFAH is 30 minute bi-weekly "Huddles" to share what we're learning across the country and provide an opportunity to discuss ideas and challenges related to distributing the vaccine to older adults and people with disabilities who cannot leave their homes.

If you are interested in attending **you must sign up separately for both the Wednesday and Friday calls**. Once registered, you will receive a calendar invite for the four-week series. Calls will be held on Wednesdays at 4:00 pm ET and Fridays at 12:30 pm ET.

[Wednesday Huddle Registration](#)

[Friday Huddle Registration](#)

In addition to the huddles, TFAH is hosting a webinar to explore the challenges and policy barriers to vaccine access and highlight innovative vaccine distribution practices. Participants will also learn about the complexities of vaccine distribution to those who are challenged to receive the vaccine outside the home, as well as the crucial partnerships among public health departments, aging services and other community stakeholders that are key to expanding vaccine access.

[Webinar Registration](#)

Thank you to everyone that has shared their thoughts and ideas. **[Please continue to share any best practices and policy solutions that are being implemented to ensure vaccine access to this vulnerable population.](#)**

Events and Opportunities:

Age-Friendly Public Health Systems Monthly Trainings-Social Isolation
Due to significantly reduced access to programs and services during the COVID-19

pandemic, many older adults have limited opportunities for social engagement. Addressing social isolation has become a high priority in many communities across the country. TFAH's March AFPHS training session will focus on the impact of social isolation on older adults, and how communities have pivoted to create social engagement opportunities. In addition, successful and innovative approaches from two public health departments will be presented.

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

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

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

Complex Care Management for People Living with Dementia - *March 11, 2021, 2:00 pm to 3:00 pm ET.* This presentation from ADvancing States will highlight case studies that present complex chronic care management bridges between medical and social care services for at risk populations. Presenters will share practical resources and strategies that help people living with dementia remain in their community. Register [here](#).

Equity for Seniors: Using Data to Guide COVID-19 Pandemic Recovery – *March 11, 2021, 11:00 am – 12:00 pm ET.* This Avalere Health webinar will highlight the results of a COVID-19 survey focused on seniors. Information presented will include detailed progress to date on vaccine administration, including challenges in rollout specifically impacting older adults; data-driven tactics for engaging seniors in pandemic recovery and beyond; and policy implications following survey results. Register [here](#).

Thursday at Three Webinar Series. This Administration for Community Living webinar series includes a look at the Older Americans Act, nutrition, socialization, and health and well-being.

- Food, Insecurity, and Malnutrition - March 11th, 2021 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm ET. Register [here](#).
- Socialization - March 18th, 2021 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm ET. Register [here](#).
- Health and Well-Being - March 25th, 2021 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm ET. Register [here](#).

Ageing Well for All: 2021 Public Policy Priorities for Older Adults – *March 18, 2021, 2:00 pm ET.* National Council on Aging President and CEO Ramsey Alwin is hosting a discussion with top policy leaders about what must change to ensure every American can age with health and financial security. Register [here](#).

Special Event for Health Officials: A Conversation with Dr. Walensky, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director – *March 30, 2021 1:00 pm ET.* The Public Health Communications Collaborative is hosting a conversation with Dr. Rochelle Walensky, CDC Director, about COVID-19 communications and the important partnership between the CDC and local health departments. Dr. Walensky will respond to questions submitted in advance. Register [here](#).

Prioritizing Equity in Public Health Leadership - This webinar series from the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials is designed to inspire public health leaders, partners, and stakeholders to create innovative policy and practice solutions to reduce structural racism and eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities. The summit concludes with a virtual meeting on April 21st.

- Transforming Public Health Through Leadership, Justice, and Racial Healing – *March 12, 2021, 1:00 pm – 2:15 pm ET.* Register [here](#).
- Institutionalizing Equity: Public Health Leaders Advance Organizational Change - *March 19, 2021, 1:00 pm - 2:15 pm ET.* Register [here](#).
- Shifting Power Workshop: Collaborations to Confront the Root Causes of Health Inequities - *March 26, 2021, 1:00 pm - 2:15 pm ET.* Register [here](#).

4th Annual Older Adult Mental Health Awareness Day Symposium – *May 6, 2021, 10:00 am – 5:00 pm ET.* Hosted by the National Council on Aging, U.S. Administration for Community Living, and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, this symposium will include sessions that focus on a diverse array of topics addressing the most pressing older adult mental health needs. Registration is free

and will open in March. More information [here](#).

Resources:

COVID-19

Progress Across the Country Vaccinating Older Adults

[An updated report from the Kaiser Family Foundation](#) revealed that one third of adults age 65 and older in 22 states and the District of Columbia have received the COVID-19 vaccine as of February 23, 2021. Two thirds of the states are recording and reporting data on whether or not older adults are being vaccinated.

Vaccine Hesitancy among Older Adults

[A new report from the AARP Public Policy Institute](#) highlights the results from a recent survey which asked adults age 50 and older the extent to which they get the vaccines recommended to them by their health care provider. Responses from the survey note 44 percent get all the recommended vaccines; 11 percent get none; 29 percent get most; and 15 percent get only a few. There is variation by race, ethnicity, and levels of income and education.

Vaccine Fraud Warnings

Federal officials are warning the public, especially older adults, to be aware of fraud schemes related to the COVID-19 vaccines. Scams include charging a fee for early access to a vaccine or supposedly adding a person's name to a vaccine waiting list. [This article](#) from the Association of Health Care Journalists, reports that older adults who live alone and may be isolated are often more susceptible to phone scams.

Lifting Visitation Restrictions to Save Lives

Residents of long-term care facilities (LTC) may be more likely to die from the effects of social isolation and neglect than from the COVID-19 virus itself. [This article](#) from Navigating Aging author Judith Graham documents the growing chorus of long-term care experts, caregivers, consumer groups and physicians who are now calling for the reopening of these facilities to combat social isolation and improve residents' health and well-being. The National Consumer Voice for Quality Long-Term Care is circulating a petition calling on federal health authorities to relax visitation restrictions in long-term care institutions, replacing guidance that's been in place since September of 2020.

Green House Model Homes Fairing Well During COVID-19 Pandemic

The Green House Cottages of Wentworth in Magnolia, AR experienced significantly fewer COVID-19 deaths when compared to another local facility that has a more typical nursing home model. A Green House is typically a small cottage with private rooms laid out around the large cooking, dining, and living area that serves as the center of life in the home. Traditional nursing homes have more shared spaces and many of the staff work multiple jobs, increasing the opportunity for exposure to the virus. [This recent Health Affairs research article](#) highlights the value of the unique Green House structure in preventing transmission of the virus.

Social Isolation

Building Communities to Improve Engagement

A new report from Healthy Places by Design, [Socially Connected Communities: Solutions for Social Isolation](#), provides 5 recommendations for building socially connected communities. The recommendations are focused on public spaces, transportation, housing, inclusive practices, and community norms.

Social Isolation Toolkit

To support efforts to reduce social isolation and loneliness, the National Institute on Aging (NIA) has developed an [outreach toolkit](#) to support older adults, caregivers, and health care providers. Additional resources include animated graphics to educate older adults and their caregivers, and social media images focused on encouraging grandchildren to stay connected with their grandparents.

[Additional Resources](#)

Lack of Connectivity is a Public Health and Equity Crisis

A [new report](#) from Older Adults Technology Services (OATS) quantifies for the first time the size and degree of impact of “digital isolation” on older adults. At a time when it’s crucial to be connected socially and for access to health care services, this is becoming a public health crisis. According to the report, nearly 22 million older Americans lack broadband access at home; Medicaid enrollees are 2.7 times more likely to be offline and those with functional impairments are twice as likely to lack access; and Black and Latino older adults are more than 2.5 and 3.3 times more likely, respectively, to be offline.

Public Health Strategies to Support Older Adult Mental Health During Emergencies

With support from the CDC Foundation, NORC at the University of Chicago and several partners (including AARP and The SCAN Foundation) conducted [a study](#) to examine the physical and mental well-being of older adult and their caregivers during who live in the community during a public health emergency. The findings could be used to support this population during future crises. The study identifies sources of information for both older adults and their caregivers, and the specific types of information that they seek during emergencies.

A Celebration of the National Senior Nutrition Program

The second annual "Celebrate Our Senior Nutrition Program" kicked off earlier this month. A recent webinar hosted by the Administration for Community Living highlighted the Older Americans Act's focus on nutrition, socialization, and health and well-being. The [Celebrating the National Senior Nutrition Program](#) and [Community Toolkit](#) landing pages contain resources to promote engaging programs and activities.

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