

January 15, 2024

AFPHS News



News:

Happy New Year! We are looking forward to another great year of sharing information and resources on healthy aging. Please share any news, events or resources with us at afphsnews@tfah.org.

Preparing for the Growing Needs of Older Adults

The January edition of *The Nation's Health*, the American Public Health Association newsletter, contains a feature on how public health is preparing for the growing needs of older adults. The article describes how the Mississippi State Department of Health and the Washington State Department of Health have worked with key partners in their communities to make healthy aging a core priority. The article also includes insights from TFAH's Senior Policy Development Manager Megan Wolfe on the origins and importance of age-friendly public health systems and implications for the spread of the age-friendly ecosystem.

Did You Know...?

New Tool to Help Public Health Professionals Serve American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) Communities

The Alzheimer's Association and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have recently launched the **second edition of the Healthy Brain Initiative (HBI): Road Map for American Indian and Alaska Native Peoples**. It includes public health strategies and actions to improve brain health. The Road Map uses a strengths-based approach and honors diverse American Indian and Alaska Native cultures in promoting brain health, addressing dementia-related challenges and better meeting the needs of caregivers. Chief diversity, equity and inclusion officer of the Alzheimer's Association Dr. Carl Hill says "The Road Map reflects robust input from those living in and working with American Indian and Alaska Native communities. It provides tribal leaders and health professionals with actions to build on the community's strengths to improve brain health and the public health response to Alzheimer's and dementia."

Events and Opportunities:

Age-Friendly Public Health Systems (AFPHS) Monthly Trainings

The first training of 2025 will be the annual training on ageism, to be held **tomorrow, January 16, 2025 at 3:00 pm ET**. Our partners from the National Center to Reframe Aging will share new strategies and tools to promote positive views on aging.

You can register for one or all of the 2025 trainings [here](#).

Build your expertise and healthy aging knowledge! Individuals who attend 6 or more AFPHS monthly trainings will be designated as AFPHS Champions. Over 150 people in 24 states across the country have been recognized as Champions to date. Visit the [AFPHS Recognition Program page](#) for more information.

New Disability Data Dashboard – Thursday, January 16, 2025, 3:00 pm ET.

The Community Living Equity Center (CLEC) will present features of its new interactive data dashboard in an upcoming webinar. The dashboard contains three main sections that demonstrate: who needs Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS), who receives Medicaid LTSS, and disparities that exist in accessing home and community-based services (HCBS). View the dashboard and register [here](#).

Elder Abuse Representation 101: Case and Client Management –Tuesday, January 21, 2025, 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm ET.

The National Center on Law & Elder Rights is hosting a three-part series designed to provide legal and elder rights practitioners with the basic tools and civil legal strategies needed to help older adults who have experienced maltreatment. The first webinar in this series will focus on case and client management, including intake screening, preparing for the initial client meeting, maintaining client access and communication throughout the case, and the value of goal-setting and collaboration with social workers to help guide representation. Register [here](#).

Living Vibrantly as We Age - Peer Led Workshop – Tuesday, January 28, 2025, 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm ET. The AIDS Community Research Initiative of America Center is hosting a workshop on aging vibrantly while living with HIV. Led by a peer educator, health, wellness, and strategies to continue to flourish into older ages will be discussed. Register [here](#).

Innovation in the Direct Care Workforce: Unlocking Success Through Peer Learning – Wednesday, January 29, 2025, 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm ET The National Council on Aging is hosting a webinar where national and state leaders and leading subject matter experts from 14 states will share how they are transforming their direct care workforces to support the provision of Home and Community Based Services through the Direct Care Workforce Strategies Center's Peer Learning Collaboratives. The panelist for this discussion will share successes, lessons learned, and strategies for initiating, scaling, and sustaining change amid shifting policies and budgets. States will also share the benefits of the peer-to-peer learning process. Register [here](#).

Social Capital and the Societal Benefits of Healthy Aging – Wednesday, January 29, 2025, 11:30 am – 1:00 pm ET. The Columbia Aging Center's Spring 2025 Seminar series will begin with a session on how elevating healthy aging as a public health priority could provide a significant societal benefit. Speakers will describe factors that contribute to healthy aging, share the changing needs and abilities that occur with aging, and discuss how rethinking the potential capacity of older adults can lead to social benefits. Register [here](#).

Protecting Medicaid for Older Adults: What's at Risk & What Advocates Can Do – Tuesday, February 4, 2025, 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm ET The impact of cutting Medicaid benefits for older adults will be the focus of an upcoming webinar from Justice in Aging. This session will cover what is at risk, how Congress may fast-track these cuts, and recommended advocacy strategies that attendees can use. Register [here](#).

Seeking Submissions: Caregiver Services and Supports Innovations Hub USAging's Caregiver Services and Supports Innovations Hub is seeking examples of innovative caregiver programs, services, or interventions to include on the hub site. The Innovations Hub functions as an online clearinghouse to support the exchange of programs and the development of new caregiver services and supports. Some examples of programs that may be submitted include caregiver peer support and counseling programs, respite alternatives, technology and assistive devices to support caregivers, and training courses. Examples from for-profit entities are not eligible for submission. Questions can be sent to USAging's caregiving team at caregiving@usaging.org. [Click here](#) for more information.

Seeking Resources: SNAP-Ed Connection

The Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) is now accepting material that can be included in [SNAP-Ed Connection](#). This resource includes non-intervention resources that help administer, develop, implement, and showcase SNAP-Ed programs. Some of the resources included are SNAP-Ed staff training, social media guides, toolkit/guides, webinars, or other materials. Submitted resources will be reviewed by FNS and those approved will be shared publicly on the SNAP-Ed Library.

Resources:

Brain Health

Updated Guidelines for Alzheimer's, Dementia Diagnoses

The Alzheimer's Association has updated their guidelines for diagnosing dementia and Alzheimer's disease, the first updates in over 20 years. The new guidelines use three general criteria: the patient's overall level of cognitive impairment, specific symptoms they are experiencing, and the brain diseases most likely to be causing these symptoms. As science and technology evolve, the details of the guidelines will need modification, and new measures can be added to the criteria as they are developed.

Exercise and Deep Sleep Give the Brain a 24-hour Boost

New research from University College London shows that **exercise-related cognitive improvement may last for 24 hours**. These findings show a much longer impact on brain function than previous research which showed a 10 to 20 minute "brain boost" after exercising. Researchers also found that getting six or more hours of sleep improved memory test scores the next day.

Additional Resources

New Artificial Intelligence Strategic Plan

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has released **a new strategic plan** that outlines the department's commitment to trustworthy, ethical, and equitable use of artificial intelligence (AI). This framework also sets the vision for how AI can revolutionize health care, human services, and public health. Some of the key highlights in the plan are: "promoting trustworthy AI development and ethical and responsible use to avoid potential harm" and "cultivating AI-empowered workforces and organization cultures to effectively and safely use AI."

Two New Resources for Tribal Elders

Justice in Aging has recently released two new resources about services for tribal elders. **Supporting Tribal Elders Through the Older Americans Act (OAA)** is an issue brief that highlights the services available to American Indian and Alaska Native older adults. The brief also provides an overview to advocates and policymakers on tribally run services (Title VI) and state-run services (Title III).

The second resource is a blog, **Traditional Health Care for Tribal Elders Through Special Medicaid Waivers**, that provides an overview of four new Medicaid demonstration waivers that allow Medicaid beneficiaries in Arizona, California, New Mexico, and Oregon to receive traditional health care services. Having access to traditional health care, including holistic medical and spiritual practices, has been shown to improve health outcomes for American Indian and Alaska Native older adults.

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Vaccine Protects Older Adults from Severe Disease

A new retrospective study shows that the **RSV vaccine significantly reduced severe RSV-related diseases in older adults**. The vaccine prevented severe lower respiratory tract disease-related hospitalizations and emergency department visits with an estimated 89% efficacy.

U.S. Sees Rise in Life Expectancy After Pandemic Decline

New **life expectancy data** from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention shows that people born in 2023 are predicted to live to age 78.4, almost a full year longer than people born in 2022. COVID-19 dropped from the fourth leading cause of death in 2022 to the 10th leading cause of death in 2023. Death rates for all 10 leading causes of death declined in 2023 compared to 2022, except for cancer deaths.

Caregivers Face High Stress Levels Amid Lack of Support

A new survey conducted by OneAmerica Financial and Hanover Research sought to understand the challenges informal caregivers face daily. Among the informal caregivers surveyed, 63% were family members and 27% were spouses of the care recipient. The **most common challenges caregivers** cited were balancing caregiving with other responsibilities (51%), emotional burnout (47%), and a lack of time for self-care (32%).

Workers Over 40 Experience Ageism

A new study from MyPerfectResume found that **almost all workers over the age of 40 believe there is some degree of ageism in the workplace** from stereotypes to subtle cultural pressures to conceal their age. The study showed that 88% of workers over 40 years old adapt their behavior to fit in with their younger coworkers and 86% reported age-related bullying.

Overcoming Obstacles to Eating Healthy for Older Adults

Older adults face unique [challenges to maintaining a healthy diet](#), including age-related changes in the body, mobility problems, and having reduced access to healthy food. In addition to physiological and medical challenges, older adults may also face transportation, accessibility, and financial challenges to accessing nutritious food. Experts say that it is increasingly important for all people to learn or relearn how to shop for and prepare healthy foods that will nourish our bodies as we age.

Resources are Expanding for Older Adults Living on Their Own

Until recently, few resources were available for older adults aging alone in their own homes. Now, [organizations and social media](#) have created places for older adults to connect online and prepare for a future when they may need more assistance. One program, "Aging Alone Together" has created weekly sessions that focus on seniors' key concerns (such as community-building, housing, advance care directives, and financial affairs) while overcoming fears about the future.

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CONTACT

TRUST FOR AMERICA'S HEALTH
1730 M ST NW
SUITE 900
WASHINGTON, DC 20036

P (202) 223-9870

F (202) 223-9871

E AFPHS@TFAH.ORG



Trust for America's Health | 1730 M Street NW Suite 900 | Washington, DC 20036 US

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