



Descriptions and Examples of Recognition Program Activities:

1. Creating and leading policy, systems, and environmental changes to improve older adult health and well-being.

To address social determinates of health across the life course, public health needs to engage in or lead policy, systems, and/or environmental change. As the aging population grows, leaders should plan and work towards long-term sustainability of an infrastructure in support of the age-friendly public health system.

Suggested Activities:

- a. Use the 2020 Census to assess whether the community has the appropriate level of support and resources for the fast-growing older adult population and invest in prevention for adults ages 50-64
- b. Support neighborhood improvement and incorporate sidewalks, paths, and recreation areas to include older adults into community design and streets policy
- c. Assess State or Community Health Improvement Plan to ensure it addresses older adult health and increases older adults' ability to remain in a non-institutionalized setting by receiving in-home community-based services
- d. Include healthy aging language within health department's health and racial equity approach to organizational processes and procedures

Examples:

- [California Master Plan for Aging](#)
- [New York State Prevention Agenda](#)

2. Connecting and convening multi-sector stakeholders to address the health and social needs of older adults through collective impact approaches focused on the social determinants of health.

Public health can leverage its skills in connecting and convening stakeholders and leaders from the various sectors of our vast yet disjointed system. Public health leaders also bring a focus of prevention and community-wide improvements to new and existing partnerships.

Suggested Activities:

- a. Create multi-sector coalitions that meet monthly to identify and meet the needs of the community's older adults
- b. Partner with community organizations like area agencies on aging, housing non-profits, and transportation providers to provide education and elicit support from healthcare centers
- c. Focus on diverse communities to initiate age- and dementia-friendly efforts, including rural and unrepresented communities

- d. Consider the need to balance stakeholder organizations that represent the aging populations with community members who are part of the aging population and their caregivers

Examples:

- [Consortium for a Healthy Miami-Dade](#)
- [Florida Department of Health-Walton County Community Health Improvement Partnership](#)

3. ***Coordinating*** existing supports and services to help older adults, families, and caregivers navigate and access services and supports, avoid duplication, and promote an integrated system of care.

Navigating existing services and resources can create confusion among aging adults or caregivers. Public health can address the barriers to effective community offerings by identifying gaps, increasing access to services, and coordinating to reduce duplication of efforts.

Suggested Activities:

- a. Create information “hubs” for easy access to health aging resources and services
- b. Work with health care providers to educate their workforce about healthy aging best practices and evidence aimed at eliminating practices that overtly or implicitly discriminate based on social class, language, gender identity, race and ethnicity, disability, etc
- c. Adapt existing tools to assess agency programs across the county that address older adults
- d. Support walking groups in 55+ communities to reduce social isolation and increase activity

Examples:

- [Virginia No Wrong Door](#)
- [Denver Regional Council of Governments Boomer Bond Assessment Tool](#)

4. ***Collecting, analyzing, and translating*** relevant and robust data on older adults to identify the needs and assets of a community and inform the development of interventions through community-wide assessment.

Collection and dissemination of relevant data can call attention to the needs of aging adults to inform the development of interventions. Synthesizing data provides stakeholders and participating parties with the information they need to monitor risk factors, and target efforts to those most in need.

Suggested Activities:

- a. Use data from local community health assessment resources to engage Department of Health senior leadership on the need to address older adult health
- b. Expand the State or Community Health Assessment indicators to include older adult health issues.

- c. Conduct gap analyses of the aging data sources to determine what may be missing with core socio-demographic characteristics (race, ethnicity, male/female, LGBT, marital status, living alone, English-speaking, income and poverty status).
- d. Conduct citizen surveys targeted at the aging adult population to ensure their needs are being met in their community

Examples:

- [Florida Department of Health Aging in Florida Profiles](#)
- [Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative Community Profiles](#)

5. ***Communicating*** important public health information to promote and support older adult health and well-being, including conducting and disseminating research findings, and emerging and best practices to support healthy aging.

One of public health's essential roles is to inform, educate, and empower the public that can then mobilize key partnerships. Proper channels of communication can aid in promoting healthy behaviors among aging adults and their caregivers to create healthy aging communities.

Suggested Activities:

- a. Develop messaging and communication strategies and tools to improve the visibility of healthy aging programs and services
- b. Disseminate information on Facebook, local radio, or tv news programs
- c. Develop handouts for older adults focused on older adult population mental health and suicide prevention
- d. Educate media, thought leaders, policy makers and community influencers on healthy aging, dementia friendly policies, equity, and ageism

Examples:

- [Florida Department of Health—Seminole County Healthy Seminole Video](#)

6. ***Complementing*** existing health promoting programs to ensure they are adequately meeting the needs of older adults.

Communities have many existing public health programs that address a wide range of health issues. Aligning public health with the broader healthcare system can aid in addressing the needs of aging adults. Existing programs that meet the needs of aging adults can be promoted by public health leaders, while others can be assessed and modified to better meeting the needs of aging adults.

Suggested Activities:

- a. Work with local food banks to distribute healthy foods and messaging on SNAP benefits
- b. Work with county health services to expand access to mental health screenings and referrals to clinical services
- c. Create an inventory of health promoting programs and share those resources with older adults through local websites, newsletters, or other methods

- d. Create ongoing learning opportunities for staff on age-related conditions, syndromes and evidence-based practices that incorporates disparities and works towards equity

Examples:

- [Live Healthy Fairfax \(VA\)](#)