

Age-Friendly

PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEMS

Every day, 10,000 Americans turn 65. The public health sector’s focus on prevention has had a profound impact on longevity in the U.S., and yet, historically and pre-pandemic, public health has not embraced efforts to improve the health and well-being of older adults. As the demographics of our population continue to shift, public health should elevate healthy aging as a core public health function, with a foundational focus on equity.

6Cs Framework: To facilitate this transformation, Trust for America’s Health (TFAH), in partnership with The John A. Hartford Foundation, developed the Framework for Creating Age-Friendly Public Health Systems (AFPHS). This Framework is based on 6Cs that outline six areas of age-friendly public health activities:

<i>Creating and leading</i> policy, systems, and environmental changes to improve older adult health and well-being.	To address social determinants of health across the life course, public health needs to engage in or lead policy, systems, and/or environmental change.
<i>Connecting and convening</i> 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 and bring a focus of prevention and community-wide improvements to new and existing partnerships.
<i>Coordinating</i> 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.	Public health can address the barriers to effective community offerings by identifying gaps, increasing access to services, and coordinating to reduce duplication of efforts.
<i>Collecting, analyzing, and translating</i> 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 and target efforts to those most in need.
<i>Communicating</i> 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.	An essential role of public health 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.
<i>Complementing</i> existing health promoting programs to ensure they are adequately meeting the needs of older adults.	Aligning public health with the broader healthcare system can aid in addressing the needs of aging adults. Existing programs that meet the needs of this population can be promoted by public health leaders, while others can be assessed and modified.

In the States: TFAH successfully completed an AFPHS pilot in Florida and has worked with many other state and local health departments to expand their roles in healthy aging, including Michigan, Mississippi, New York, and Washington. Additional information on the accomplishments of the health departments engaged in the AFPHS initiative can be found on the AFPHS website under “Our Network”.

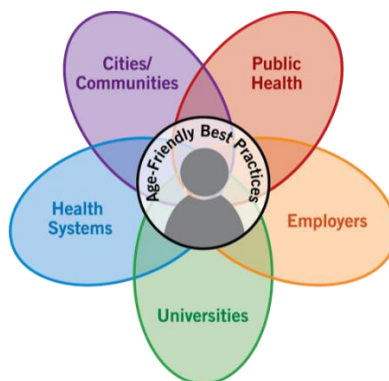
Resources: As part of the AFPHS work, TFAH serves as a national content expert, hosts an [AFPHS Website](#), and offers monthly [AFPHS trainings](#) to build the capacity of public health practitioners and others. (www.afphs.org)

Recognizing Engagement: To further incentivize the adoption of healthy aging as a core public health function, TFAH developed an [AFPHS Recognition Program](#) that aims to honor engagement in healthy aging at both the individual and departmental levels. TFAH welcomes all state, territorial, Tribal, and local health departments to enroll.



AFPHS Champion Individual	AFPHS Recognition Departmental	AFPHS Advanced Departmental
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creates leadership Supports capacity building Requirements: attend 6 AFPHS trainings (current and/or previous) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Honors engagement Requires commitment Requirement: submit action plan listing activities in each of the 6Cs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognizes policy, systems, environmental change Requirements: complete all steps in action plan within 2 years of Recognition

Age-Friendly Ecosystem: TFAH engages with numerous age-friendly initiatives and is working to better align and coordinate these efforts, including Age-Friendly Health Systems, Age-Friendly States and Communities, Dementia Friendly Communities, and the many facets of the aging services network. Each of these national efforts operates independently, but we’re all working to improve the health and well-being of older people across the country. Public health departments can serve as a convener to identify common objectives and develop multi-sector partnerships to meet these objectives.



Contact us: For more information or technical assistance, please contact the AFPHS team at afphs@tfah.org.