

September 15, 2023

AFPHS News



News:

Age-Friendly Public Health: The Podcast

Hosted by TFAH CEO and President Dr. J. Nadine Gracia, [the first episode, "Where It All Began"](#) features The John A. Hartford Foundation's president Dr. Terry Fulmer who shares her journey to becoming a healthy aging champion and the origins of the Age-Friendly Public Health Systems movement.

TFAH Launches AFPHS Phase III with the Selection of 10 Public Health Institutes

Trust for America's Health, in partnership with the National Network of Public Health Institutes, is pleased to announce the [selection of 10 public health institutes](#) that will participate in Phase III of the Age-Friendly Public Health Systems movement, building expertise and AFPHS adoption in their states.

Events and Opportunities:

Age-Friendly Public Health Systems (AFPHS) Monthly Trainings

TFAH's 2023 AFPHS training series provides guidance on implementing each of the AFPHS 6Cs (based on [the 6Cs Framework](#)). Each session highlights specific examples of public health programs, policies, and other activities that align with the 6Cs and advance healthy aging as a core function.

Most older adults wish to age-in-place with access to appropriate services and programs to support their needs. However, older adults living in rural settings (about 1 in 5 nationally) have limited access to necessary resources to support aging-in-place. The September AFPHS Training will focus on TFAH's new brief, [Ensuring Age-Friendly Public Health in Rural Communities: Challenges, Opportunities, and Model Programs](#). The training will highlight recommendations in the brief on public health roles in promoting healthy aging and supporting older adults and caregivers in rural settings. Dr. Aaron Guest, primary author of the brief and Assistant Professor of Aging at Arizona State University, will provide an overview of the recommendations and highlight opportunities for public health to coordinate with existing services and supports.

This session will be held on **September 21 at 3 pm ET**. Register [here](#). You can also view a recording of our [August training](#) – Creating and Leading Change – and read our August blog post [What's Public Health Got to Do with...Assessing Community Health?](#)

Build your expertise and healthy aging knowledge! Individuals who attend 6 or more

AFPHS monthly trainings will be designated as AFPHS Champions. More than 80 people across the country have been recognized as Champions to date. Visit the [AFPHS Recognition Program page](#) for more information.

Joint Meeting of RAISE Family Caregiving Advisory Council & Advisory Council to Support Grandparents Raising Grandchildren – *Tuesday, September 19, 2023 12:30 pm ET*. The Administration for Community Living is hosting a virtual joint meeting of the RAISE Family Caregiving Advisory Council and the Advisory Council to Support Grandparents Raising Grandchildren. This virtual meeting will focus on analyzing public comments on the 2022 National Strategy to Support Family Caregivers and will provide updates from federal agencies on the progress of implementing this strategy. Registration is not required. [Click here](#) for the public meeting access link. For questions, please email cheryl.thompson@acl.hhs.gov.

Expanding Dementia Capability in Indian Country: A case example from Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. – *Wednesday, September 20, 2023, 3:00 pm – 4:00 pm ET*. The National Alzheimer's and Dementia Resource Center is hosting a webinar to share how the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. (ITCA) Alzheimer's Disease Program Initiative is empowering Tribal staff and community members to become involved in providing dementia education and awareness in their communities. The Banner Alzheimer's Institute, a collaborative partner to ITCA, will also share information about the *Walk with Me* music program and how it can be used to increase the quality of life for individuals living with dementia. The Banner Alzheimer's Institute will explain how the *Walk with Me* CD was adapted to create education that is both experiential and impactful, and how music can be used as an important connection for people living with dementia and their caregivers. Register [here](#).

Culturally Driven Strategies: Tailoring Health Communications to Build Understanding and Trust – *Thursday, September 21, 2023, 1:00 pm – 2:30 pm ET*. Industry experts will discuss the principles of culturally driven communications and share their experiences using culturally driven strategies to communicate about public health in an upcoming Public Health Communications Collaborative webinar. This session will provide information on actionable insights and techniques to effectively communicate across cultures, build trust within a community, and help advance public health outcomes for all. Register [here](#).

Suicide Prevention and the Aging Population – *Thursday, September 21, 2023, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm ET*. Loss of social contact, loss of loved ones, body betrayal, and increased isolation are common experiences for older adults and can result in depression and suicidal ideation. This session, hosted by the Addiction Technology Transfer Center Network, will provide support to social service providers in contemplating the risk factors and support options for caring for an older adult who may be experiencing suicidality. From assessing threats, to addressing means, and engaging the older person in a safety plan, this course will offer both considerations and strategies to increase hope in this population and keep them safe. Register [here](#).

Reducing the Risk of Cognitive Decline

UsAgainstAlzheimers is offering new classes through their Brain Health Academy. These virtual classes are designed to equip healthcare providers and wellness professionals with the knowledge and resources to help people reduce their risk of Alzheimer's and related dementias. The remaining schedule for 2023 is:

- Depression and Dementia- September 20, 2023
- Smoking and Dementia- October 18, 2023,
- Alcohol Use and Dementia- November 15, 2023

All courses are from 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm ET. Learn more [here](#).

The GW Center for Aging, Health and Humanities 2023 Age-Friendly Ecosystem Summit

The George Washington University's Center for Aging, Health and Humanities is hosting their third annual Age-Friendly Ecosystem Summit virtually this fall. This event will be held in partnership with Age-Friendly Alexandria, Arlington, DC, Howard County, Hyattsville, Montgomery County, and the Georgetown University Aging & Health Program. The summit will occur over four two-hour blocks across four days. The events will be grouped by four themes that cross-cut age-friendly initiatives: ageism, inclusivity, communications, and creativity.

- Ageism, September 26th from 1-3pm ET
- Inclusivity, September 27th from 1-3pm ET
- Communications, October 3rd from 1-3pm ET
- Creativity, October 4th from 1-3pm ET

Register for the sessions [here](#).

Call for Content 2024 Accelerating Health Equity Conference

The [**call for submissions to present at the 2024 Accelerating Health Equity Conference**](#) is open until **Friday, September 22, 2023**. The content areas for this conference are:

- Building authentic and sustained community engagement and partnership
- Understanding and meeting individuals' health and social needs
- Establishing systematic and shared accountability and building diverse leadership and governance
- Creating equitable and inclusive workplaces

In addition, innovative projects and ideas that are relevant to the conference theme but do not fall under one of the content areas outlined above may be submitted under “other emerging topics.” These submissions may highlight issues in the digital health equity; maternal and infant health; assuring equitable outcomes for the LGBTQIA+ population, persons with disabilities and the aging population; partnerships with faith-based organizations from Black, brown and other communities of color; climate equity; and community-based approaches to violence prevention.

Resources:

September Observances

Healthy Aging Month Resources

September is Healthy Aging Month and the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (ODPHP) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) offers a variety of [**resources to support organizations with their healthy aging work**](#). [**Use Healthy People 2030 for Healthy Aging Work**](#) to get an overview of resources to support older adults: Explore [**Healthy People 2030 objectives**](#) on the Older Adults page, browse the [**Healthy Aging Custom List**](#), and find [**evidence-based resources**](#) to support healthy aging work.

ODPHP Director RDML Paul Reed, MD spoke with Patricia D’Antonio, Executive Director for the [**National Center to Reframe Aging**](#) on addressing ageism. She shared the myriad ways we encounter, and even perpetuate ageism in our everyday lives, and the [**importance of dispelling negative public perceptions of older adulthood**](#) and revisiting aging as not something that we “arrive at”, but rather a continuous process that we experience throughout our lifecycle.

Get Ready Day is Sept. 19

September 19th is Get Ready Day. This is a day to focus on being prepared for natural disasters. The American Public Health Association (APHA) has prepared [**materials for Get Ready Day**](#) to help people learn how to be prepared, this month and beyond. APHA's Get Ready campaign helps Americans prepare themselves, their families, and their communities for all disasters and hazards, including pandemic flu, infectious diseases, natural disasters, and other emergencies.

Falls Prevention Awareness Week 2023

Falls Prevention Awareness Week is September 18-22. The National Council on Aging has developed [**a collection of informative handouts for older adults**](#) with tips on finding suitable exercise programs, making home modifications, initiating conversations with family and friends about falls, and accessing additional valuable resources.

COVID -19 & Vaccination

New Communication Toolkit

The Public Health Communications Collaborative has developed new resources to help prepare for the [**uptick in COVID-19 hospitalizations**](#) and the upcoming flu and respiratory virus season. This [**new resource will help people communicate timely, effective, and consistent vaccine information**](#).

Long COVID Trends

Long COVID has impacted about 11% of Americans, according to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data from August, which is down almost 19% from June 2022 to June 2023. This decrease indicates that some adults are “pulling out” of the syndrome as time passes. [**Adults age 60 and older are less likely to have long COVID compared to 30 to 59 year olds**](#). This could be related to older adults having higher vaccination and booster rates, wearing masks, and avoiding crowds. While older adults are not more prone to long COVID overall, they are more at risk for four particular clusters of symptoms after having COVID: metabolic disorders, including new-onset diabetes and high cholesterol; cardiovascular problems, including heart disease, heart attacks and arrhythmias like atrial fibrillation; gastrointestinal problems like diarrhea and

constipation, pancreatitis and liver disease; strokes, cognitive decline and other neurological symptoms.

Brain Health

Strenuous Physical Activity and Brain Health

Older adults that engage in regular, **intensive exercise tend to have “younger” brains compared to those that are not as active**. Investigators at the Center for Vital Longevity at the University of Texas at Dallas shared how strenuous exercise and good cardiorespiratory fitness allow older adult brains to make up for age-related decline by bolstering their ability to handle complex cognitive tasks. Described in the journal *Neuroscience*, Dr. Chandramallika Basak, associate professor of psychology in the School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences shared that the “findings suggest that a lifestyle involving moderate to strenuous physical activity may help maintain cognitive processing in the prefrontal cortex of older adults that matches that of younger adults.”

New App Supports Patients with Dementia and Caregivers

University of Texas at Arlington assistant professor in the School of Social Work Kathy Lee is helping to **develop an app that uses music to ease the burdens for people living with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias**. Patients with advanced-stage dementia respond to music. Lee shared that “there is evidence that music-based interventions benefit older adults living with dementia. But we are expecting that it will also ease the burdens of caregivers providing informal care to loved ones at home.” With funding from a grant from the National Institute on Aging, Lee will work with Kendra Ray, assistant research professor and music therapist at New York University and a founder of AutoTune Me LLC, to create SoundMind. This app will help to combat the neuropsychiatric symptoms of Alzheimer’s disease and related dementias.

Additional Resources

National Rural Health Association Age-Friendly Care Initiative

With funding from The John A. Hartford Foundation, the National Rural Health Association (NRHA) has established **National Rural Age-Friendly Initiative**, aimed at enhancing comprehensive health care for older adults in rural areas. The initiative seeks to address the unique needs of rural populations and will work on the following objectives:

- Create and convene a national rural age-friendly interest group to determine priorities and best practices for aging rural communities.
- Disseminate rural age-friendly information, including resources and best practices.
- Integrate dedicated rural age-friendly health tracks within educational events and provide technical assistance to state rural health associations to create statewide strategies addressing aging issues.
- Develop an age-friendly community health worker training curriculum that builds upon NRHA’s established rural community health worker trainings, facilitates evidence-based modules for rural communities, and develops an implementation plan for an intervention pilot project.

Impact of Maui Fires on Older Adults

Natural disasters such as fires have a significant impact on older adults who are often limited in their capacity to flee quickly during times of emergency. The **fires in Lahaina on the island of Maui in Hawaii took a disproportionate toll on older adults**, with 21 of 27 of the deaths reported being people older than age 65. Nancy LeaMond, executive vice president at AARP, commented that “state and local leaders and emergency officials must be better equipped and prepared to ensure that older adults are kept safe and their needs are met when a disaster strikes.”

Benefits of Wearable Devices for Older Adults

Physical activity among older adults can be boosted by wearable devices. Older adults with that wear devices are more likely to meet national standards of weekly physical activity and resistance strength training. Adoption of wearable technology, however, is low among older adults compared to the general population. Additional research is needed to understand what influences adoption and use of wearable devices among adults age 65 and older.

Services to Address Social Isolation: Findings and Recommendations

ADvancing States has developed a **new resource to help address social isolation**. This report contains a comprehensive list of assessment tools for social isolation, surveyed state Medicaid and Aging staff on assessments and services, and interviewed managed care organizations and states about their strategies to address social isolation.

Created with support from The
John A. Hartford Foundation



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