

Age-Friendly Public Health Systems

Coordinating

Coordinating existing supports and services is a key role of public health within the age-friendly ecosystem. Building an integrated system of care for older adults can minimize duplication of efforts, increase access to resources, and mitigate gaps in support.



Supports and services for older adults are offered through a variety of providers, including senior centers, mobile clinics, community-based organizations, and health care providers, with differing eligibility requirements and accessibility. Understanding how to navigate the array of services can be challenging for older adults, their caregivers, and other professionals who support them. Public health departments can help coordinate these programs and supports to avoid duplication, identify gaps in services, and increase access to promote an integrated system of care.

During the initial COVID-19 vaccination campaign in 2021, people who were homebound were particularly difficult to reach through traditional vaccine delivery systems. Using the public health department's role as a coordinator of services, officials in San Antonio leveraged their partnerships with the city's housing authority, fire department, and Meals on Wheels program to successfully vaccinate homebound individuals. The local Meals on Wheels program in San Antonio already retained a registry of their homebound participants, and the city's housing authority kept a similar list. This information was shared with the public health department, which then sent trained staff from the fire department to participants' homes provide vaccinations. By collaborating with entities that already served the homebound population in San Antonio, public health services were successfully provided without duplication of efforts and in coordination with existing supports.

Trust for America's Health's 6Cs Framework for Creating Age-Friendly Public Health Systems (AFPHS) organizes public health roles in aging services. Public health can enhance healthy aging outcomes by:

- ✓ Creating and leading policy, systems, and environmental changes to build an integrated system of care for all older adults.
- ✓ Connecting and convening multi-sector partners to collaborate in providing services and ensure that efforts and resources are not unnecessarily duplicated.
- ✓ Collecting, analyzing, and translating data with a focus on equity to confirm that supports and services are being adequately provided to older adult populations that are most in need.
- ✓ Coordinating existing services to help older adults and caregivers navigate and access support, avoid duplication, and promote an integrated system of care.
- ✓ Communicating important public health information to promote access to services, supports, and resources for older adults and their caregivers.
- ✓ Complementing existing health promoting programs to develop a comprehensive system of resources and supportive services for older adults and caregivers.



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