Module 3: Capacity Building Strategies for "Coordinating Existing Supports & Services"

Module 3 is intended to expand understanding and build public health connections and networks to promote healthy aging. After completing the steps outlined below, public health practitioners should be able to identify programs, practices, and services that could be considered for expansion and inclusion into a broader system of support for older adults.

Definition: 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.

Module 3 Learning Objectives:

1. Define "Coordinating Existing Supports and Services"
2. Identify at least three strategies that demonstrate "Coordinating Existing Supports and Services"
3. Describe how to operationalize health equity approaches across service areas
4. Identify challenges to and opportunities for public health coordinating efforts
5. Identify potential partners that can contribute to coordination of supports and services

Policy and Practice Strategies

The strategies listed below have been compiled based on current activities of state, local, tribal, and territorial health departments that are building age-friendly public health systems. Some are very practical and may be easier to adopt and implement (Tier One) and some will be more challenging, requiring more time, resources and potentially funding (Tier Two). No policy or practice change is too large or small for consideration and should be considered in the context of department leadership, existing partnerships, and appetite for change. Also, consider working on a part of a strategy that can be built into a longer-term approach.

The steps below are intended to guide exploration of healthy aging with a view toward full adoption of healthy aging as a core public health function. Practitioners are encouraged to consider additional strategies based on the healthy aging work already underway, the structure of the public health agency, and the unique needs of older adults and caregivers in their own jurisdictions.

Steps:

1. Identify at least two strategies to explore.

2. Answer all questions and identify the next steps for that strategy. If working with a committee, discuss the feasibility of the strategies.
3. Select the tools and resources you can use to better understand how to move toward completion of that strategy.
4. Identify other healthy aging strategies that are achievable and sustainable within this tenet.

Strategies	Questions to Consider: These are meant to expand your thinking around the strategies and prompt further exploration of other approaches.	Resources to Explore These resources may or may not be directly related to the questions on the left, but will help to increase awareness of additional approaches to various aspects of this work.	Selected Strategies
Example: Mississippi AFPHS Statewide Plan: Identify and inventory information sources and materials on resources, programs, and services.	*-Consider other state-wide agencies to collaborate with to maintain an updated hub of resources and services.*	◊ Denver Regional Council of Governments— Boomer Bond Assessment tool	
Tier One			
Identify existing programs and services that already serve older adults in your jurisdiction.	*-What opportunities exist to leverage these programs or services to engage agency leadership or serve as a model for coordination?* *-Are there partners in your agency or other state or community agencies with whom you might engage to coordinate programs and services?*	◊ Denver Regional Council of Governments— Boomer Bond Assessment tool ◊ Asset Mapping - Age-Friendly World (who.int)	
Connect existing public health education or counseling programs for older adults with those provided through the aging services network or other state or community programs (e.g., provide blood pressure tests, biometric health	*- What partnerships exist that could be helpful in planning, executing, and expanding these programs and classes?* *- Are there existing resources from partner organizations that can be used*	◊ Communicating with Older Adults ◊ Health Risk Assessments ◊ Screening for Alzheimer's Disease	

screenings, Alzheimer's screenings, and fall risk assessments)	*to identify health screenings and individualized health counseling? For example, through the Y, local libraries or senior centers. If not, what resources are needed?*	◊ CDC's Fall Risk Assessment tool ◊ Fall Risk Assessment: Univ of North Dakota	
Coordinate with organizations that administer chronic disease support groups (e.g. diabetes) to expand service areas and add new areas of focus within the focus group structure.	*- What existing partnerships could be leveraged to begin this process? What new partners should be invited?* *- What resources or relationships may be needed to address social isolation among older adults?* *- How can my health department or agency include the voices of older adults in these efforts?*	◊ Healthy Brain Initiative Strategists (local health departments) ◊ Addressing social isolation ◊ Guide to Building Community Coalitions	
Offer vaccine administration for older adults (flu, COVID-19, shingles, pneumonia) by engaging partners that distribute food to senior centers.	*- Does your jurisdiction/organization have an existing relationship with food distribution services and/or senior centers?* *- What existing resources, such as communication channels or physical convening spaces, do your partners already have that could be used for this purpose?* *- What steps need to be taken to promote this initiative to partners and older adults themselves?*	◊ Meals on Wheels America ◊ Feeding America	
Explore whether there are walking groups in 55+ communities that could also be leveraged with a focus on reducing social isolation among older people.	*- Does this program already exist in your jurisdiction? If not, what steps need to be taken to create it?* *- What resources or relationships would be helpful to reduce social*	◊ AARP Guide to Starting a Walking Group ◊ Healthy Places by Design ◊ AARP Walk Audit Toolkit ◊	

	isolation and increase physical activity in older adults in your jurisdiction? *- How can my organization include the voices of older adults in this program?*		
Explore state, regional, and community social services programs (e.g., the YMCA) to integrate healthy aging into their offerings.	*-Does your organization have an existing relationship or partnership with social services organizations?* *-What other partners should be invited into this process?*	◊ YMCA of the USA ◊ USAging (Area Agencies on Aging) ◊ Age-Friendly Ecosystem map	
Coordinate Older Adult Health Fairs with partners, including the Office for the Aging, Department of Social Services, local law enforcement, departments of parks and recreation, senior centers, and senior housing. Activities may include presentations on safety, tai chi classes, nutrition information, COVID vaccines and vaccine education, and referrals to resources.	*- What relationships exist that could be helpful in planning and executing these initiatives?* *- What resources or relationships are required to successfully execute Health Fairs?* *- What existing partnerships exist that could be engaged as part of this process? What new partnerships should be considered to enhance the event?* *-What would funding look like for these events? Are new streams of funding needed or do partners have funding that could be leveraged?*	◊ How to Hold a Health Fair ◊ Examples of Braiding and Blending Funding to Support Community Health	
Partner with the aging services network, area agencies on aging, and/or other community organizations to coordinate transportation services for older adults.	*-What existing relationships with these types of organizations already exist?* *-Explore transportation offerings in your jurisdiction and connect with transportation agency to engage in healthy aging activities.*	◊ Age-Friendly Ecosystem in Your State (identify aging services network potential partners)	

Tier Two			
Adapt existing tools to assess agency programs that support older adult health and use the results to engage leaders in healthy aging efforts (e.g., Age-Friendly Communities).	*- What tools already exist that could be used in this process?* *- Does your organization have existing relationships with leaders that could be used to promote healthy aging efforts?* *- What other partners should be engaged to prioritize healthy aging?*	◊ AARP survey tool ◊ American Hospital Association Community Health Assessment toolkit ◊ NACCHO: MAPP 2.0	
Engage health systems in your state or community to provide care coordination for older adults. Activities may include hospital discharge counseling, fall awareness and prevention, fall risk assessment, medication management review, hearing assessment, and diabetes screening.	*- Does your jurisdiction/organization have an existing relationship with healthcare systems, clinics, an Aging and Disability Resource Center or other facility?* *- What resources or relationships are needed to successfully provide care coordination for older adults?*	◊ Three Keys to Cross-sector Age-Friendly Care ◊ Age-Friendly Health Systems	
Lead a workgroup to develop a "No Wrong Door" program, building a coordinated system for older adults and caregivers who need assistance navigating and accessing services and supports.	*- Has my jurisdiction/organization begun this process?* *- If not, which partners should be invited?* *- What resources or relationships are needed to successfully develop a No Wrong Door system?*	◊ No Wrong Door: A Guide for Community Organizations	
Create a coordinated community response to elder mistreatment by partnering with other state agencies. Ensure that data is shared appropriately within the partnership so that the response minimizes the number of unnecessary "touch points", and referrals are as efficient as possible.	*- Has your jurisdiction/organization begun this process? If not, what steps need to be taken to start?* *- What additional organizations or institutions should be considered for new partnerships?*	◊ EDC Elder Mistreatment Emergency Department Toolkit ◊ Framing Elder Abuse as a Public Health Problem ◊ Elder Abuse definitions	

	- What local data is available on the occurrence of and response to elder mistreatment in your jurisdiction?		
Form an Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias (ADRD) Advisory Council or Dementia Action Collaborative to assess the impact of the disease in your state or community and develop strategies to address current and future needs of those living with dementia and their caregivers.	*- Does my state have a BOLD grant? If so, can these funds be used to help coordinate other services for older adults?* *- Identify the ADRD lead at the state level and engage to learn what the state provides.* *-Has anyone in my state or jurisdiction participated in the Healthy Brain Initiative? How can other activities be better coordinated?* *- What tools or data exist to assess and address the needs of older adults with dementia and their caregivers?*	◊ [BOLD grant recipients](#) ◊ [Dementia Friendly America toolkit](#) ◊ [Public Health Center of Excellence on Dementia Caregiving](#) ◊ [HBI Roadmap](#) ◊ [HBI Roadmap for Indian Country](#)	
Expand your organization's website to improve navigation and access to healthy aging resources and services, as well as programs for caregivers.	*- What resources already exist? What resources need to be created to promote healthy aging?* *- What resources, such as communication channels or physical convening spaces, do your partners already have and would be willing to share?* *- How can your organization leverage partnerships to have the largest reach possible?*	◊ [TN State Department of Health—Healthy Aging Hub](#) ◊ [Spokane Regional Department of Health resources for older adults](#) ◊ [Benton Franklin Health District Healthy Aging Hub](#) ◊ [Northwest Washington Indian Health Board Healthy Aging](#)	
Engage community health workers to build a cadre of volunteers to enhance engagement with older adults.	*-What programs currently exist that could be expanded?*	◊ [National Association of Community Health Workers](#) ◊ [Potential funding opportunities for CHWs](#)	

	-*What training may be needed for community health workers to build expertise in older adult engagement?* -*Can older adults themselves be engaged to enhance engagement?*		
Create public-private partnerships to better support the coordination of community services.	-*What areas can you target to enlist partners or create new partnerships to improve health equity for older adults? Consider areas like technology integration, healthcare infrastructure, and community health initiatives.* - *Consider partnering on health education and awareness campaigns to amplify your reach and effectiveness.*	◊ [Best Practices to Leverage Partnerships to Support Health Equity (ASTHO)](#)	

Strategies to Address Barriers and Opportunities

Public health professionals are strategic leaders and planners and well positioned to coordinate existing supports to help older adults, families, and caregivers navigate and access resources, avoid duplication, and promote an integrated system of care. Public health professionals should assess what barriers exist within their jurisdiction that may prevent them from effective coordination. In this section we list specific actions that public health professionals can take to address barriers that they may experience in their efforts to improve healthy aging.

Steps:

1. Identify which challenges you may face in your efforts to advance healthy aging and the related strategy.
2. Answer all questions and identify the next steps for that strategy.
3. Select the tools and resources you can use to better understand how to move toward completion of this strategy.
4. Identify other healthy aging strategies that are achievable and sustainable within this tenet.

Strategies	Questions to Consider	Resources to Explore	Selected Strategies
Address coordination challenges among partners and the public that depend on effective communication.	*Partners* ◊ *What partnerships already exist? What additional organizations or institutions should be considered for new partnerships?* ◊ *Who are the key interested parties to involve?* ◊ *How can we ensure effective communication between different service providers to ensure effective coordination?* ◊ *Are there existing forums or networks that can be utilized for better collaboration?* *Public* ◊ *What opportunities exist to meet with older adults and caregivers to better understand their concerns and needs?* ◊ *What formats or languages should be explored to make the information more accessible?* ◊ *How can we bring in voices of community members to inform coordination?* *Combination* ◊ *What existing communication channels can be leveraged or improved?*	◊ [Providing Care to a Diverse Older Adult Population | National Institute on Aging (nih.gov)](#) ◊ [The Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership](#)	

	◊ *Are there communication skills that I can build to enhance partnerships for this work?* ◊ *What types of information are most needed by families, caregivers, aging communities, healthcare providers, etc.?* ◊ *What tools or platforms can facilitate better information sharing?* ◊ *What are the diverse needs within the jurisdiction that should inform culturally aware resources?*		
Improve access to transportation services and other health-related social needs.	◊ *How can existing transportation programs (public, private, and community-led) be expanded to improve transportation access for older people?* ◊ *How can transportation systems be better integrated with healthcare services to ensure aging populations have accessible healthcare?* ◊ *How can transportation services be more accessible and affordable to align with the needs and primary destinations of older adults?* ◊ *What are the barriers to transportation for underserved populations, including those in rural areas and persons with disabilities?*	◊ [Social Determinants of Health and Older Adults	health.gov](#) ◊ [The Role of Transportation Systems Management & Operations in Supporting Livability and Sustainability: A Primer - Planning for Operations - Home (dot.gov)](#) ◊ [Transportation: A Community Driver of Health (apha.org)](#) ◊ [Transportation Supports Integration into the Community - National Center for Mobility Management](#)	

	◊ *What feedback mechanisms can be implemented to continually access and improve transportation services?* ◊ *What infrastructure improvements or initiatives could make neighborhoods more walkable and accessible?* ◊ *How can digital literacy of existing technology (e.g. ride share apps, public transportation tracker platforms, scheduling platforms) be improved to ensure aging populations can use these services?*		
Enhance caregiver support.	◊ *What support is currently available for caregivers in your jurisdiction?* ◊ *How can care and other support services be improved?* ◊ *Can more education and training be provided for caregivers?* ◊ *What financial or emotional support systems can be put in place for caregivers?*	◊ MDHS Caregiver Programs Provide Support for Aging and Vulnerable Mississippians - Mississippi Department of Human Services ◊ Talking With Your Older Patients	National Institute on Aging (nih.gov) - Families and caregivers as part of the health care team	