

AFPHS 6Cs Training and Implementation Guide

Module 5: Capacity Building Strategies for “Communicating Important Public Health Information”

The structure for Module 5 follows Module 4 and is intended to expand understanding and build capacity around communicating public information about older adult health and well-being, and to older adults and their families.

Definition: 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 the essential roles of public health is to inform, educate, and empower the public. Public health practitioners can mobilize key partnerships and engage appropriate channels of communication to promote healthy behaviors among older adults and their caregivers to create healthy communities.

Module 5 Learning Objectives:

1. Define “Communicating Important Public Health Information”
2. Be able to identify examples of communication techniques, strategies, and channels that could be considered to engage agency leadership and partners in healthy aging projects, and policy and systems change.
3. Be able to identify examples of communication techniques, strategies and partners to inform older adults and caregivers and promote healthy behaviors and communities, including methods for detecting and combating disinformation.
4. Describe how to make communication more accessible and culturally relevant.
5. Have a better understanding of ageism and identify communication strategies to mitigate the effects of ageism.
6. Gain practical experience in creating an outward-facing resource on older adult health.

Capacity Building Activities

The activities listed below have been compiled based on current communication practices among state, local, tribal, and territorial health departments that are building age-friendly public health systems. Practitioners should walk through each of the activities listed below to prepare for the application portion of this Module, with a view towards existing communications expertise, consideration of partners who might enhance strategic communication practices, and the value of raising awareness of ageism in all communications.

Actions/Activities	Resources and Notes	Completed
Review the communication strategies in the Mississippi AFPHS Statewide Plan. Which of these strategies do you believe are feasible in your jurisdiction? Which of these strategies would you like to see implemented in your jurisdiction?	◇ Mississippi AFPHS Statewide Plan	
Explore public health communication strategies that are currently being used in your jurisdiction. Add links where available.	◇ Communications-Planning-Guide.pdf ◇ Building Trust in Public Health Communications	
Identify key department of health personnel to target for communication about adopting and implementing AFPHS policies and practices.	◇ State health officials/Commissioner of health ◇ Chronic disease program directors ◇ DEI/Health Equity personnel ◇ Health in All Policies Evaluation Tool for State and Local Health Departments	
Identify existing and potential partners you might engage to develop communication goals.	◇ AARP.org/Livable - Inspiration and Information for Local Leaders ◇ SDOH-Partnership-Evaluation-Guide-V4-FINAL.pdf	
Explore resources and opportunities for communicating about ageism and how to combat it.	◇ National Center to Reframe Aging ◇ AFPHS Podcast Episode on Ageism	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Addressing Equity by Mitigating Effects of Ageism ◇ Experiences of Everyday Ageism and the Health of Older Adults (JAMA) ◇ Ageism First Aid (GSA) 	
Explore public health communication tools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Public Health Communications Collaborative ◇ Public Health Communicators Guide to Misinformation ◇ ASTHO Public Health Communications Hub ◇ Framing the Foundation of Community Health FrameWorks Institute ◇ Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Center for Health Communication Resources ◇ Plain Language for Public Health ◇ Health Communication Strategies and Resources National Prevention Information Network ◇ Health Communication: Effective Strategies Tulane University ◇ WHO Strategic Communications Framework 	
Explore example websites and webpages on healthy aging.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ Tennessee Department of Health - Healthy Aging Website ◇ Mississippi State Department of Health – Health Aging Webpage ◇ National Rural Health Association – National Rural Age-Friendly Initiative 	
Review the section in the brief linked in the next column on how communication about and for older adults aligns with the 10 Essential Public Health Services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◇ How the 10 Essential Public Health Services Align with the ACPHS 6Cs Framework 	

Module 5 Application Component

Develop a communications strategy or plan based on one of these approaches (use the template below, or develop your own):

1. Engage potential partners to elicit support for AFPHS work.
2. Improve access to services and information for older adults and caregivers.
3. Educate internal partners/staff on the importance of public health engagement in AFPHS.
4. Educate partners (internal and external) on communicating about ageism and adopting positive aging communication strategies.

Considerations:

1. What goals and strategies would you like to see accomplished?
2. Which of these goals and strategies are most feasible in the short term, and which would require more long-term planning.

Communicating important public health information to promote and support older adult health and well-being

Strategy	Action Steps	Timeline	Key Indicators
Strategy #1:	Action A:		
	Action B:		
	Action C:		

	Action D:		
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