

Creating a Harmonious Age-Friendly Ecosystem that Delivers

Workshop Hosted by Trust for America's Health

As part of the Age-Friendly Public Health Systems Movement

Funded by The John A. Hartford Foundation

April 3-4, 2024

Arlington, VA

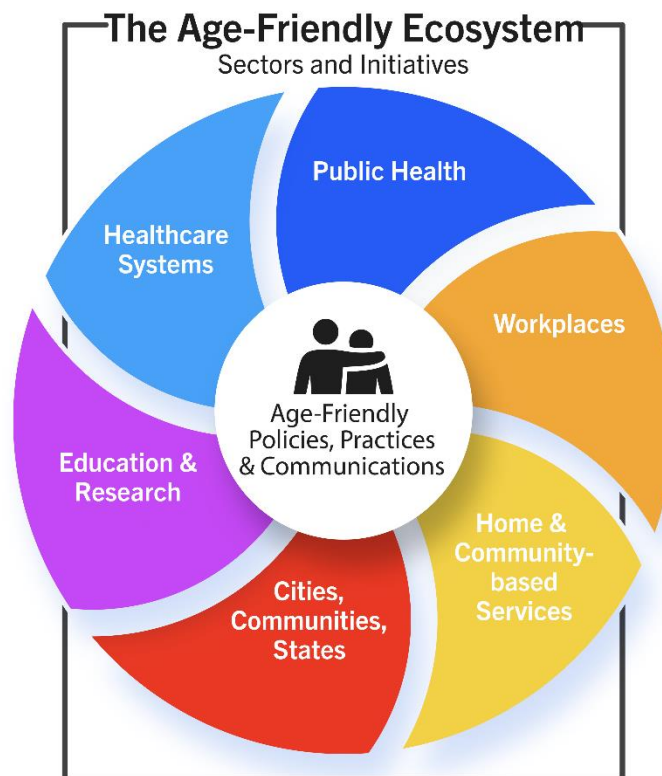


Table of Contents	
Executive Summary	4
Workshop Objectives and Goals	4
Themes	4
Introduction: The Vision of an Age-Friendly Ecosystem	6
Building Relationships and Trust: An Essential Ingredient	6
The Promise of Multi-Sector Collaboration	6
Day 1 Sessions:	
Case Studies: Learnings from the Field	8
Case Study 1: Collaboration Led by Aging Services	9
Case Study 2: Collaboration Led by Hospital System	10
Case Study 3: Collaboration Led by Community	10
Case Study 4: Collaboration Led by Public Health	11
Day 1 Key Learnings	12
Day 2 Sessions:	
"Let's Talk about Rural America"	14
Ecosystem Mapping and Building Collaborative Teams	14
Ecosystem Alignment with Multi-Sector Plans for Aging	15
Brainstorm Working Groups: Social Isolation	17
Workshop Conclusion	24
A Path Forward	24
Appendix	25

Event Details

Host: Trust for America’s Health
Sponsor: The John A. Hartford Foundation
Location: Association of State and Local Health Officials Headquarters,
Arlington, Virginia
Date: April 3-4, 2024

Thank you to Trust for America’s Health President and CEO J. Nadine Gracia, and The John A. Hartford Foundation President Terry Fulmer for their leadership and support. Thanks also to the event planning committee members who worked diligently with the organizers to develop goals and objectives for this two-day gathering, provided invaluable feedback and insights, and offered on-site leadership during the event.

Bill Armbruster
AARP

Karon Phillips
Trust for America’s Health

Alice Bonner
Institute for Healthcare Improvement

Marisa Scala-Foley
USAging

Jane Carmody
The John A. Hartford Foundation

Jody Shue
Event Facilitator

Aaron Guest
Arizona State University

Nancy Wexler
The John A. Hartford Foundation

Laura Howell Nelson
Institute for Healthcare Improvement

Megan Wolfe
Trust for America’s Health

Nancy Myers
American Hospital Association

Special Acknowledgement:
Junyue Liao, Intern

Cheryl Phillips
The John A. Hartford Foundation

The John A. Hartford Foundation

Executive Summary

On April 3-4, 2024, Trust for America's Health hosted a workshop titled "Creating a Harmonious Age-Friendly Ecosystem that Delivers" in Arlington, Virginia. The workshop provided a forum to explore strategies for multi-sectoral collaboration to improve conditions for older adults to live more healthfully, independently, and productively. Sponsored by The John A. Hartford Foundation and held at the headquarters of the Association of State and Local Health Officials (ASTHO), this event convened leaders from 30 organizations representing perspectives from across the Age-Friendly Ecosystem. The full participant list can be found in the Appendix.

Workshop Goal and Objectives

The goal of the workshop was to provide an intensive in-person forum for discussing multi-sectoral impact across the Age-Friendly Ecosystem that leads to actions and better outcomes for older adults. The agenda was developed with the following objectives in mind:

- Examine best practices that promote healthy aging at the national, state, and local levels
- Identify shared priorities and strategies that deliver better outcomes for older adults and their friend and family caregivers
- Explore opportunities for multi-sectoral collaboration and mitigate challenges and barriers
- Develop strategies for improving multi-sectoral collaboration
- Advance innovative tools and resources to facilitate collaboration, including needed policy, systems, and environmental improvements

Five Actionable Themes

This report includes an analysis of the pre-event survey that helped to inform the workshop design, a review of the workshop sessions, and analysis of the post-workshop survey results. The session review and post-workshop analysis confirmed attendee enthusiasm for an intentional approach to collaboration across various age-friendly sectors and revealed a strong desire for action and strategic pathways for effective coordination. Five themes surfaced that may inform future action.

1. Building Relationships and Trust: The significance of building relationships and trust among partners from different sectors was emphasized as essential for fostering collaboration and achieving common goals. This must include partners increasing their knowledge of all sectors to enhance collaborative goals.
2. Fostering Leadership Engagement: Effective and engaged leadership was recognized as crucial for promoting age-friendly collaborations and navigating complex power dynamics within and across sectors.

3. Exploring Opportunities for Collaboration and Addressing Challenges and Barriers: Participants identified various challenges and barriers, including the "implementation gap" between planning (multisector plans for aging/MPAs) and action (age-friendly champions) and the need for dedicated resources to support this work (in terms of resources, staff and dedicated focus).
4. Identifying or Developing Innovative Tools and Resources: Attendees discussed the need for innovative tools and resources (including but not limited to technology) to support age-friendly initiatives and improve the integration of services (and data and best practices exchange) across sectors.
5. Considering Advocacy Opportunities: Attendees referred repeatedly to the pivotal role of governments at all levels in supporting aging-related initiatives through policy and funding. The need for strategic funding, policy influence, and advocacy to support age-friendly initiatives was emphasized, though there was concern about the feasibility of narrowing down shared priorities. Participants discussed the importance of integrating aging services into broader state and federal budgets, notably Medicaid, and the role of advocacy in ensuring that age-friendly initiatives receive necessary support and funding.

Conclusion

Multiple sectors can and are working to support older adult health and well-being through a wide variety of frameworks and strategies. There exists a strong desire and need for the facilitation and promotion of the why and how of multisectoral collaboration that advances an Age-Friendly Ecosystem that Delivers.

Workshop Review

Day 1

Introduction: The Vision of an Age-Friendly Ecosystem

J. Nadine Gracia, MD, MSCE, President and CEO of Trust for America's Health (TFAH), welcomed attendees to the two-day workshop. She emphasized cross-sector collaboration, equity, and addressing ageism as necessary themes to guide our conversations.

Terry Fulmer, PhD, RN, President of The John A. Hartford Foundation (JAHF), emphasized the importance of harmonizing and synthesizing the diverse work represented by attendees to enhance collective impact and improve quality of life for older adults. She acknowledged the challenge of turning this vision into reality, but encouraged the group to keep trying new approaches, learning from what works (and what doesn't), and letting this be the jumpstart for renewed efforts among multi-sectoral partnerships.

Megan Wolfe, JD, Senior Policy Development Manager at TFAH, shared the workshop goals of generating energy, excitement, engagement, and empowerment around the possibility of building a harmonious Age-Friendly Ecosystem that delivers results for older adults.

Building Relationships and Trust: An Essential Ingredient

An introductory ice breaker activity was designed to foster relationship building and celebrate the experience and accumulated professional expertise and wisdom in the room. Attendees were asked to partner with someone at their table and spend five minutes answering three questions about each other: *1) What is your name, what organization do you represent? 2) What sector do you represent or what is your role in the Age-Friendly Ecosystem? 3) What is your unique contribution to the Ecosystem work?* Teams were given one minute to report back to the full group, sharing something unique or surprising about their partner that others may not know. This exercise set a tone of collegiality, curiosity, and respect that carried throughout the two days together. It was intentionally designed to foster the development of new relationships and collaborative thinking.

The Promise of Multi-Sector Collaboration

The workshop began with a panel discussion moderated by event facilitator Jody Shue, featuring Kathy Black, PhD, and Emily Greenfield, PhD. They spoke about their work on multi-sectoral collaboration and the challenges and opportunities of working across different sectors.

Kathy Black shared learnings from the *Safe Mobility for Life* coalition in Florida, a 15-year-old endeavor that brings together over 60 members from diverse sectors including transportation, law enforcement, universities, AARP, and aging service providers to improve mobility options for older adults. She pointed to the collaboration's longevity and multidisciplinary nature as keys to its success in addressing the complex challenge of safe mobility for an aging population. Black also highlighted Community Health Improvement practice and processes as a promising model for driving multi-sector collaboration around age-friendly community initiatives. Community Health Improvement efforts often involve dozens of stakeholders and a strong backbone organization, usually the local health department, providing dedicated resources (including staff) and expertise. While the process is primarily focused on health, it aligns well with the broader age-friendly framework and can serve as a foundation for more comprehensive age friendly work.

In her remarks, Emily Greenfield noted the importance of human relationships as they develop over time in multi-sectoral collaboration. Using her work on Age-Friendly Communities in Northern New Jersey as an example, she highlighted the necessity of perseverance and patience in developing and leading successful collaborations, especially when aiming for systemic change. Greenfield has been leading a developmental evaluation of philanthropically supported Age-Friendly Community initiatives in suburban New Jersey starting from their inception in 2016, providing a unique opportunity to understand how cross-sectoral work emerges over years of effort. She illustrated a case where seven-plus years of effort finally led to a new city administrator incorporating aging into all department plans. Despite challenges like turnover and political issues, the long-term commitment of community leaders eventually yielded desired results.

Three frameworks for undertaking multi-sectoral collaboration were introduced as models for consideration:

- *Collective Impact* is an approach that promotes effective collaboration among diverse stakeholders to achieve meaningful and sustainable change. It relies on five core principles: Common Agenda, Shared Measurement, Mutually Reinforcing Activities, Continuous Communication, and Backbone Support.
- *The Water of Systems Change* is a systems-focused theory that emphasizes the environment in which individuals and organizations operate, and how its quality affects outcomes. The framework identifies the interconnectedness of several components (Policy, Relationships, Mental Models, Practices, Resource, and Power Dynamics), and the need to consider them holistically when driving systemic change.

- *Strategic Doing* is an actionable approach for practice leaders. It involves taking action without waiting for external factors to change, bringing together willing participants to identify feasible projects that can be accomplished in a short timeframe. The emphasis is on building relationships and momentum through tangible collaboration rather than emphasis on system-wide planning.

Key Insights

1. Establishing a strong backbone organization and securing professional and volunteer resources are vital for sustaining multi-sector collaborations.
2. This work takes time and trust. Overcoming the "implementation gap" between planning and action requires continuous evaluation and adaptation, as well as time, perseverance and relationship-driven trust.
3. Effective and engaged leadership is crucial for promoting age-friendly collaborations and navigating complex power dynamics.
4. Governments at all levels play pivotal roles in fostering collaboration and unifying communities through aging-related initiatives, but innovating in local government may require building proof of concept in the private sector before engaging public leadership.
5. Higher education can advance age-friendly initiatives through teaching, research, and community service partnerships.
6. Multi-sectoral collaboration has the potential to bridge political divisions by framing aging initiatives as beneficial for all age groups.
7. In a review of frameworks for collaboration, it was suggested that building relationships and momentum through tangible collaboration may be more impactful than spending excessive time on planning.
8. The Age-Friendly Ecosystem and multi-sector plans for aging (MPAs) are important vehicles for coordinating state and community leaders, allocating resources, and enhancing programs and systems to support older adults. The Age-Friendly Ecosystem and its champions may be the engine for implementation of these plans. This theme surfaced again in day 2 during a panel on alignment between MPAs and the Age-Friendly Ecosystem.
9. Partners should work together to develop and disseminate shared messaging about how to communicate about aging, including finding common themes and language that are positive and solutions oriented.

Case Studies: Learnings from the Field

A series of case study presentations was designed to showcase how different sectors lead collaborative endeavors within the Age-Friendly Ecosystem, what conditions are necessary for success, and the challenges that may exist in advancing these efforts. Representatives from four sectors within the ecosystem were invited to describe an example of a successful multi-sector collaboration led by their organization, including the specific problem they wanted to address and what outcome for older adults they wanted to achieve. Case study presenters were asked to specifically discuss partnerships and value that each partner brought to their collaborative effort. Finally, they were asked about any unintended consequences experienced in the process.

Case Study 1: Collaboration Led by Aging Services Network

Tauhric Brown, President and CEO of CICOA Aging & In-Home Solutions (the largest Area Agency on Aging in Indiana), showcased CICOA's successful partnership with major Indiana health systems to address health related social needs for patients needing in-home services, stressing that addressing social determinants of health requires a joint effort leveraging the expertise of both medical systems and community organizations.

- By embedding staff on-site at hospitals to work alongside discharge planners, CICOA enables seamless referrals and care coordination, significantly improving outcomes and quality of life for many seniors.
- Recognizing that not all facilities can support this approach (this model requires the Health System partner to cover the cost of the CICOA staff person embedded on site), CICOA also developed Twain Health, a B2B "Software as a Service platform that facilitates collaborations between health and social care organizations.
- The tech platform allows healthcare providers to refer patients to Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) or community groups, who can then assess needs, develop care plans, and connect patients with appropriate services. It enables both sides to track progress and work together to improve patients' overall well-being and is especially relevant for smaller health systems and physician groups lacking the resources for this coordination.

Key Insights

1. It is important to be able to speak the language of your partners so you can add value and gain trust, and It is necessary to be able to communicate effectively in different contexts to different audiences, including speaking about social good and economic impact.

2. Identifying opportunities and overcoming data-sharing barriers is crucial for creating a transformative, holistic Age-Friendly Ecosystem.
3. Research and data are essential for informing partnerships, tailoring programming to meet the needs of older individuals, and engaging the donor community.

Case Study 2: Collaboration Led by Hospital Systems

Matt Lentz, from the Nebraska Hospital Association, shared insights on his work growing Age-Friendly Health Systems in rural communities and applying the 4Ms framework (what matters, medication, mentation, mobility) beyond traditional medical settings, emphasizing the importance of community partnerships and resource optimization.

- The Nebraska Age-Friendly Health Community concept (currently a three-facility pilot within the state, begun in January of 2023) is built on the principles of coordination and communication between health partners and families involved in all aspects of the older adult patient.
- By using evidence-based practice, streamlined processes, and opportunity identification, Nebraska Age-Friendly Health Communities improve the holistic care provided to the older adult population and help drive change to lead to a more inclusive and complete approach to community care.
- The model focuses on collaborative communication and building relationships to ensure effective resource utilization and address healthcare disparities, with plans for annual conferences and legislative advocacy to further support the organization's initiatives.

Key Insights

1. The Nebraska Age-Friendly Health Community concept applies the 4Ms framework outside medical settings and broadens its applicability in all places throughout the community.
2. Consider that community is where health is happening. Ask questions and uncover what's important to older adults and what is already available.
3. Getting older adults and community leaders to the table is the first step to get the conversation going.

Case study 3: Collaboration led by Community

Laura Poskin, representing Age Friendly Greater Pittsburgh, shared insights about initiatives aimed at making the Pittsburgh region more inclusive and respectful of all ages. She highlighted their approach to community engagement, emphasizing the importance of understanding and

addressing the needs of diverse age groups by listening to community partners' feedback and implementing action plans.

- Poskin discussed the importance of collaboration with various partners (they work with more than 120 partners), both within and outside the aging sector, to bring their action plan to life. Age Friendly Greater Pittsburgh aims to translate research into action and prioritize community-driven projects.
- Examples include empowering residents to lead neighborhood improvement projects and advocating for accessible public transportation. She acknowledged the disparities in aging experiences, particularly regarding race and socioeconomic status, and emphasized the need for equity-focused approaches.
- Poskin underscores the importance of valuing and celebrating longer life while combating ageism. The initiative's leadership comprises a diverse group of stakeholders, including funders, community leaders, and advocacy organizations.

Key Insights

1. Genuine community engagement is paramount.
2. Listening to older adults' perspectives is crucial and empowering residents to lead is critical to success.
3. Advocating for policy changes to address age-related biases is essential.

Case Study 4: Collaboration Led by Public Health

Chuck Henry, Health Officer for the Department of Health in Sarasota, Florida, showcased the Healthy Brain Initiative, a collaborative endeavor involving numerous partners. Henry reminded listeners of the three big functions of public health: community assessment to identify challenges, policy development to address those challenges, and engagement of community partners to drive interventions.

- Henry highlighted the strategic role of partnerships in achieving public health goals, including organizations like the Alzheimer's Association, the Sarasota County government, and Sarasota Memorial Health Care Health System, as well as many others involved across the community.
- Emphasis was placed on the importance of data-driven approaches and collaboration with various stakeholders to more effectively address health disparities.
- The challenge of resource allocation was addressed, particularly in hiring additional staff to support community partners (sometimes hiring full time staffs can be challenging even when funding is available)

Key Insights

1. Strategic planning, community engagement, and collaboration are crucial for tackling public health issues like Alzheimer's Disease and related dementias.
2. Community partners play a vital role; leaders must strategize with them to align goals.

3. Data should drive the work and track progress over time. Patience and perseverance are essential for sustained impact.

Day 1 Key Learnings

Prior to closing the Day 1 sessions, attendees were asked to summarize some key learnings or insights about multi-sectoral collaboration that emerged from the first day of the workshop. Responses (paraphrased here) include:

1. **Funding Flexibility**

It is not just about the amount of funding, but also how it is allocated, with the need for flexibility to address changing priorities and urgent needs within communities, including funding flexibility for trusted community organizations like the YMCA.

2. **Time and Perseverance**

Success in community initiatives requires patience and persistence, as building relationships and achieving goals may take time but can yield significant results.

3. **Understanding Partners' Needs**

Recognizing the motivations and interests of potential partners and demonstrating the return on investment for their involvement is key to garnering support and participation.

4. **Building Diverse Partnerships**

Identifying and engaging partners beyond traditional networks is crucial for effective collaboration and resource mobilization.

5. **Relational Approach**

Building strong relationships and trust among partners is essential for cross-sector collaboration and achieving common goals.

6. **Leadership Continuity**

Ensuring continuity in leadership roles and having backups in place to avoid disruption in initiatives when key leaders transition out is vital.

7. **Adaptability and Creativity**

Being able to adapt to changing political landscapes and finding creative solutions to overcome challenges are important aspects of community work.

8. **Integration of Multi-Sectoral Work into Job Responsibilities**

There's a need to shift multi-sectoral work from being seen as extracurricular to being recognized as an essential part of job responsibilities, fostering genuine engagement and commitment. How do we address this?

9. Challenges with Funding and Evaluation

Limited funding presents challenges, especially regarding evaluation requirements from funders. Breaking the cycle of needing evaluation but lacking resources to conduct it is a pressing concern.

10. Intended Audience Consideration

Who is the intended audience with this work? Certainly, older adults, but also the need to recognize that practitioners are integral to the ecosystem. This underscores the importance of addressing practitioner needs alongside community concerns.

11. What is the role of advocacy in the Age-Friendly Ecosystem effort?

Advocating for policies and resources that support community-based organizations in delivering services and addressing challenges is an important consideration. Should this group consider advocacy? Is a shared agenda for advocacy possible?

Day 2

Rural Health

Kathy Greenlee, Senior Director of Elder Justice Initiatives for ADvancing States, addressed rural aging in remarks to open Day 2 of the workshop.

Rural communities often face issues like higher rates of chronic diseases, poverty, and limited access to healthcare. Despite these challenges, older people in rural areas should not be considered “left behind”; many intentionally “choose rural” and are valuable assets to their communities. Social isolation remains a concern, but there are also strong social connections within rural communities that serve as protective factors for older individuals. Greenlee discussed the complexities of providing care and support in rural settings, including the shortage of healthcare providers, transportation challenges, and housing issues. Caregivers, both formal and informal, play a crucial role in supporting older adults in rural areas. Addressing equity in rural communities is essential, recognizing the diversity within these populations and the need for culturally appropriate services. Multi-sector plans offer an opportunity to address rural aging issues, but it is crucial to ensure that rural perspectives are included in these plans through both in-person outreach and virtual engagement.

Key Insights:

1. Rural is a setting, not a subcategory.
2. Ensure that framing about older people in rural settings is not about being left behind. The young people may leave. Older people choose to stay. This is their home. They are the “elders” of community.
3. Multi-sector plans offer an opportunity to address rural aging issues, but it is crucial to ensure that rural perspectives are included in these plans through both in-person outreach and virtual engagement.

Ecosystem Mapping and Building Collaborative Teams

A session on Age Friendly Ecosystem Mapping (also known as Partner Mapping) was led by Aaron Guest, PhD, MPH of Arizona State University. This exercise was designed to help attendees begin to visualize and analyze relationships and connections within social networks, particularly in the context of work and organizational partnerships. The goals of the session were to help participants identify and map out their partners and the contributions they make, categorize the types of support these partners provide, and create a visual representation of the network connections. Participants were asked to:

- List all the partners they engage with in their work and the contributions these partners make. This could include specific organizations or individuals.
- Identify the support provided by those partners among five categories (or domains): infrastructure, human capital, strategic operational support, community engagement

and insights, and financial support. Participants were encouraged to think about the primary type of support they receive from each partner.

- Create 'nodes', which represent the connections in their network. They used color-coordinated sticky notes to represent different types of support and then mapped out how these nodes are connected to each other and to themselves.

Key Insights

1. **Complexity and Interconnectivity of Networks:** The exercise illuminated the intricate nature of professional networks, where each entity or 'node' is connected to others, forming a complex and multi-layered web. This understanding is crucial for recognizing the broader impact of one's work and the potential for collaboration and influence across different sectors and organizations.
2. **Network Cohesiveness and Communication:** Participants were encouraged to assess the cohesiveness of their networks by examining the primary roles of their partners and identifying any unexpected overlaps or gaps. *The discussion emphasized the importance of effective communication within the network, including the establishment of a common language to ensure mutual understanding.* Additionally, the need to periodically reevaluate relationships was highlighted, acknowledging that some may need to be strengthened, while others might be better concluded to manage the network more effectively.
3. **Strategic Importance and Return on Investment:** The session prompted participants to reflect on the strategic value of their connections, considering the benefits and costs associated with maintaining certain relationships. This strategic approach to network management involves evaluating the return on investment for each partnership and being open to the formation of new alliances.

Ecosystem Alignment with Multi-Sector Plans for Aging

A wide-ranging discussion moderated by Alice Bonner focused on the alignment of Age-Friendly Ecosystems with MPAs, featuring panelists Narda Ipachki (SCAN Foundation), Ken Genewick (Health Foundation of Western and Central NY) and Lindsey Sand (LeadingAge MN Foundation). Several themes and concrete recommendations emerged:

1. Integration of the Age-Friendly Ecosystem and the Multi-Sector Plans for Aging

The panelists discussed the interconnectedness of Age-Friendly Ecosystems and the state-level plans. While some suggested that we can't wait for MPAs to get the ecosystem work moving forward, there was a consensus that these concepts, while often defined separately, can blend in practice.

2. Age-Friendly Ecosystem as foundational structure

Lindsey Sand discussed the importance of creating an ecosystem as a foundational structure that can be utilized when a comprehensive state plan or initiative is developed. She suggested that having an ecosystem in place is essential for true change.

3. Challenge of politicization and resource allocation:

Panelists acknowledged the challenges in creating and implementing multi-sector plans, such as potential politicization and varying resource allocation. However, they also pointed out the opportunities that arise from bringing together organizations that work on age-friendly initiatives. The conversation included the idea that while having a state-level plan is beneficial, it is not strictly necessary for progress, and that building a functioning ecosystem can provide a ready-made framework for future planning.

4. MPA Collaborative Process

Narda Ipakchi emphasized that the real value of a multi-sector plan on aging lies not just in the plan itself but in the relationships and collaborative processes it fosters. These processes bring together stakeholders who might not typically interact, facilitating comprehensive conversations about aging.

5. Inclusivity

The importance of inclusivity through collaboration was highlighted, with a focus on bringing together diverse stakeholders from outside the healthcare ecosystem, such as transportation, business, and social services. The panelists pointed out that successful plans involve a wide range of participants, including those at the grassroots level, to ensure that all voices are heard and that the planning is reflective of the community's needs. Terry Fulmer (The John A. Hartford Foundation, JAHF) noted that *"it isn't until we come at this every vector of change, then there'll be powerful change."*

6. The Role of Advocacy

The role of advocacy groups was noted as crucial, particularly in influencing policy and maintaining funding for aging services even when budgets are under pressure at the state level. The example of California's multi-sector plan was cited, where advocacy networks played a significant role in its development and in preventing budget cuts to aging services. John Auerbach (ICF) noted the importance of investing in advocacy and organizations skilled in this area to mobilize support and influence policy. Alice Bonner (Institute for Healthcare Improvement) and Terry Fulmer discussed the need for advocacy organizations to be involved from the start, with Dr. Fulmer urging engagement with powerful entities like hospital associations and public health offices to drive change.

7. Sector-Specific Value Propositions

Katie Adamson (YMCA) called for the development of clear value propositions (elevator pitches) for different sectors to clarify their strength and impact in the AFE. This point was reinforced multiple times, with the recommendation not to assume that people understand how these different systems fit together, or even have a common understanding of what the age-friendly ecosystem is.

8. Strategic Funding and Policy Influence

Attendees addressed the need to consider not only philanthropic funding but also state and federal sources (notably Medicaid), suggesting ways to integrate aging services into these financial structures and to empower state leaders to bring siloed leaders to the table.

9. Mapping and Strategic Expansion

Alice Bonner proposed creating a visual map to identify states with existing master plans on aging and AFEs, using this as a strategic tool to expand efforts state by state and to pick a state where this work has not begun and define it from the start.

10. Role of Foundations and Policy Leaders

The panel included representatives from various foundations who discussed their roles in supporting age-friendly initiatives. They emphasized the need for foundations to provide support and for policy leaders to be involved in the planning process from the beginning.

Case Study: Social Isolation/Social Engagement

The final session of the workshop focused on the challenge of social isolation among older adults and opportunities for engagement. Participants were assigned to facilitator-led small groups (comprising diverse representatives from across sectors in the Ecosystem). Groups were given a poster worksheet (shown below) that was designed to elicit feedback in a structured fashion on the following elements:

- A shared stated aim to address social isolation among older adults that would be decided upon by each of the respective small groups.
- Feedback about the roles of different sectors in addressing that aim.
- Information about the unique strengths and activities each sector could (or does) contribute.
- Thoughts on which group or sector might be best suited to leadership of a collaboration to address the group's aim.
- Potential partners to pull into the work.
- Challenges to collaboration.

- Strategies to accomplish goals.

The session was designed to be dynamic and interactive, with a time limit of one hour to encourage focused and efficient discussion.

Creating a Harmonious Age-Friendly Ecosystem that Delivers

Collaborative Aim

Necessary Conditions

SECTOR INPUTS			
Sector	Strengths	Existing Activities	Who Should Lead & Why?
Health Care			
Public Health			
Education/ Research			
Communities/ Cities/States			
Home & Community Based Svcs.			
Other: Who is missing?			

Other Partners

Challenges

Strategies

After the workshop, event facilitators transcribed results from the poster boards and then created word clouds that visually showcase themes frequently mentioned by respondents across groups.

(A) Necessary conditions for multi-sectoral collaboration:



This word cloud (A) presents a view of the necessary conditions that breakout group participants identified as contributing to successful multi-sectoral collaboration:

1. Funding and Resources: the central term "funding" indicates that securing adequate funding is seen as a foundational element for multi-sectoral initiatives.
2. Trust and Leadership: the terms "trust" and "leadership" highlight the need for reliable relationships and strong leadership to guide the collaborative efforts.
3. Programs and Interventions: the presence of "programs" and "interventions" suggests that structured approaches and specific actions are necessary for collaboration to be successful.
4. Needs Assessment: the term "needs assessment" implies that understanding the requirements and challenges of the involved sectors is crucial for tailoring collaborative efforts to actual needs.
5. Willingness to Collaborate: this indicates that the parties involved must be open and ready to work together.
6. Communication and Networking: "Communications" and "informal social networks" point to the importance of clear and open communication channels and the role of networking in fostering collaboration.
7. Operational and Strategic Concepts: terms like "public transportation," "marketing," "innovation," "creativity," "current data," "disaster planning," and "common definitions"

suggest that multi-sectoral collaboration requires a blend of operational know-how and strategic thinking, with an emphasis on innovation and data-driven decision-making.

8. Collaboration and Partnership: the phrase "multi-sectoral collaboration" and related terms like "willingness to collaborate" and "activities" underscore the importance of partnership and joint action across different sectors.

(B) Challenges to collaboration:

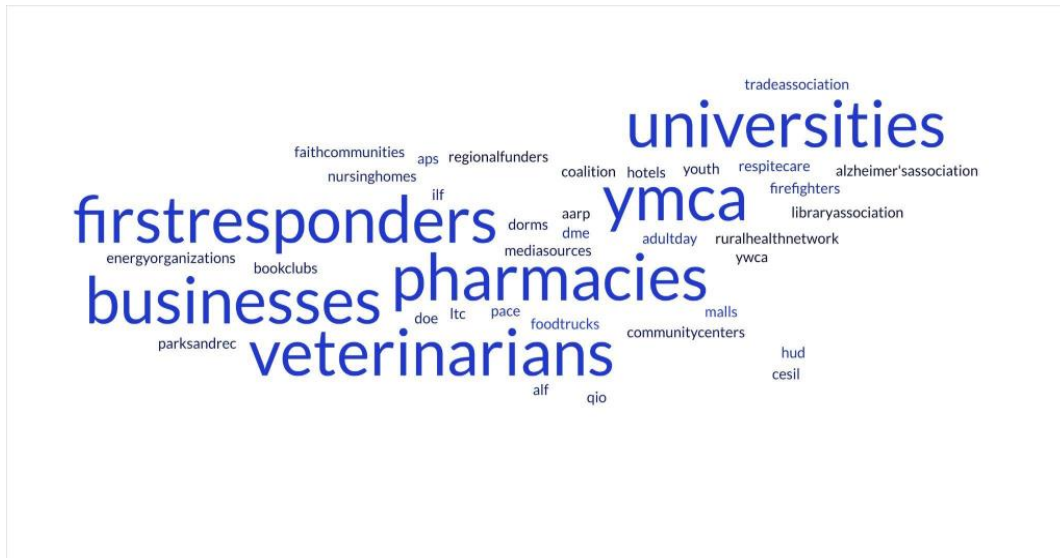


This word cloud titled "Challenges to Collaboration" (B) presents a visual summary of attendee responses when asked about challenges that can arise in collaborative efforts. Overall, the word cloud suggests that successful collaboration requires careful consideration of communication, resource allocation, cultural understanding, and structural challenges. It emphasizes the need for aligning priorities, accommodating diverse needs, and fostering an inclusive environment to overcome these challenges.

1. **Priorities:** successful collaborative efforts require aligning and balancing sector priorities and needs.
2. **Unique Needs:** recognizing and accommodating the specific requirements and circumstances of individual participants is important for inclusive and effective collaboration.
3. **Culture:** cultural sensitivity is crucial to avoid misunderstandings or conflicts that could hinder collaboration.
4. **Funding:** securing adequate and appropriate funding is a common challenge that can impact the scope and sustainability of collaborative projects
5. **Leadership:** effective leadership is needed to navigate the complexities of collaboration, including organizing, directing, and motivating participants

6. Regulations: navigating regulatory environments can be a challenge, especially when collaborations span different jurisdictions
7. Transportation: logistical challenges such as transportation can affect the ability of participants (or older adults) to meet and work together
8. Segmenting: collaborative leaders need to carefully assign or divide tasks and responsibilities among participants to ensure effective coordination.

(C) Partnerships to consider (“think outside the box”)



(Terms: “aps”, Adult Protective Services; “ilf”, independent living facility; “alf”, assisted living facilities; “lrc”, long term care; “cesil”, coalition to end social isolation and loneliness; “qio”, quality improvement organization; “dme”, durable medical equipment provider)

This word cloud (C) shows a variety of entities and organizations that attendees suggested could be considered for partnerships. Because the organizers encouraged considering unconventional and cross-sector partnerships, responses varied widely, including:

1. Emergency and Health Services: the prominence of "first responders" in the center of the cloud, along with "pharmacies" and "veterinarians," suggests a focus on entities involved in emergency, health, and medical services.
2. Education and Youth Services: the inclusion of "universities" and "dorms" points to the potential for educational institutions to play a role in partnerships to address social isolation, possibly for research, training, or as a resource for volunteers.
3. Community and Social Services: words like "YMCA," "faith communities," "nursing homes," "community centers," and "YWCA" highlight the role of community and social service organizations.

4. Recreation and Lifestyle: "Parksandrec" and "food trucks" were both mentioned as possible "out of the box" entities to engage in a collaborative effort.
5. Government and Infrastructure: government-related words like "hud" (Housing and Urban Development) and "DOE" (Department of Energy) imply the importance of involving governmental agencies that can provide infrastructure support and possibly funding.
6. Funding and Resource Management: the presence of "regional funders" and "coalition" points to the need to include organizations that can offer financial support or the ability to coordinate resources among various partners.
7. Diverse Partners: the variety of entities, including "trade association," "library association," and "rural health network," reflects the idea of thinking outside the box by engaging a wide range of entities who can offer different perspectives and resources.

(D) Strategies for collaboration:



The final word cloud (D) explores strategies for collaboration and visually highlights several key themes and strategies related to collaboration and engagement that surfaced in breakout groups and at other times during the workshop.

1. **Multi-Sector Collaboration:** this is the most prominent phrase in the word cloud, indicating the importance of collaboration across different sectors to address challenges effectively.
2. **Opportunities for Engagement:** this phrase suggests a focus on identifying and leveraging various opportunities for engaging partners and community members.
3. **Messaging and Communication:** terms like "messaging campaign" and "social media campaign" emphasize the role of strategic communication and the use of social media to disseminate messages and engage audiences.
4. **Inclusive Approaches:** the inclusion of "inclusive strategies" and "neighbor force" points to the value of incorporating diverse perspectives and fostering community-driven initiatives.
5. **Funding and Partnerships:** highlights the need for financial support and the creation of partnerships to sustain collaborative efforts.
6. **Empowerment and Resilience:** concepts such as "empowerment," "strengths-based approach," and "community resiliency hubs" indicate a focus on empowering individuals and communities to be resilient in the face of challenges.
7. **Accountability and Civic Engagement:** the presence of "accountability" and "civic engagement" suggests that responsible practices and active participation from the public are key components of successful collaboration strategies.

8. Creative Solutions and Innovation: the term "creative solutions" implies the importance of innovative thinking in developing strategies for collaboration and engagement.

Workshop Conclusion

The workshop concluded with a call to action, urging attendees to not to lose momentum, and a request to continue to consider the following as they return to their home states and workplaces:

- What is the change needed after having spent the last two days exploring these vital issues?
- What will progress look like? How will it be measured? How do we think about it?
- Is it time to be creatively disruptive, radically collaborative?
- Why and how can this be done?
- What can be done right away in states, communities, organizations, and networks?

A Path Forward

Multiple sectors are working to support older adult health and well-being through a wide variety of frameworks and strategies. Despite common goals, however, these efforts are often siloed, a sentiment echoed by participants at the workshop. There exists a strong desire for the facilitation and promotion of multisectoral collaboration, as evidenced in our workshop case studies and post event survey.

The workshop provided a forum for considering how we may, as a group, capitalize on the momentum and enthusiasm created and move this work forward. In its role as convener of the workshop, TFAH is beginning to take on a leadership role in this regard, transforming its regular AFPHS National Learning Collaborative meetings into a forum for ongoing discussion of the Age-Friendly Ecosystem. Further engagement (funding and other resources) from across all sectors of the AFE is recommended to advance these efforts through a cohesive and comprehensive initiative.

Appendices

Agenda

Attendee list

Glossary

Brainstorm poster

List of Resources Shared with Participants

Article	Theories of Community Collaboration to Advance Age-Friendly Community Change, <i>The Gerontologist</i> , Volume 62, Issue 1, February 2022, Pages 36–45, https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/gnab136
Report	Improving Public Health and Health Care for Older Adults: The Three Keys to Cross-Sector Age-Friendly Care <i>Implementation Guide and Workbook</i> Version 1.0, March 2023, ihi.org
Resource	Developed by The John A. Hartford Foundation, a brief description of elements of the Age-Friendly Ecosystem that enables workshop participants to familiarize themselves with all sectors in advance of the gathering
Resource	A document created by TFAH to showcase the efforts made in Michigan to create an Age-Friendly Public Health System by developing alliances with aging sector partners, coordinating efforts to implement evidence-based programs with community organizations, and aligning efforts with age friendly communities and systems movement.
Pre-Event Survey	A pre-event survey designed to elicit participant perspectives about multi-sectoral collaboration and the Age-Friendly Ecosystem. Results from the survey were shared in Introductory remarks as noted below.