

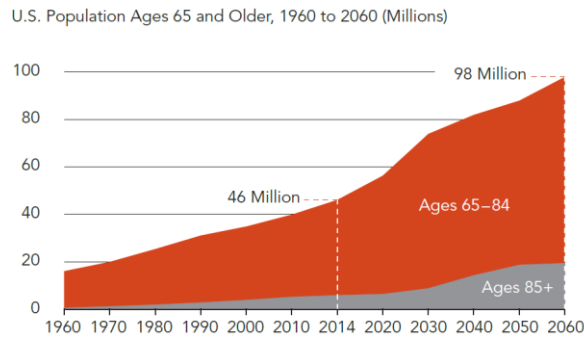


**Age-Friendly Public Health Systems
National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
FY 2024 Labor HHS Appropriations Bill**

	FY2024 President's Budget	FY2024 TFAH Recommendation
Age-Friendly Public Health Systems	\$0	\$50,000,000

Background: The COVID-19 pandemic has illustrated the need for public health to increase its focus on both the health and social needs of older adults to help this population remain healthy and independent. U.S. public health efforts have importantly contributed to the significant increase in longevity and health over the twentieth century, including the remarkable achievement that an individual reaching age 65 today can expect to live nearly 20 more years, which promotes greater opportunity and productivity of our society as a whole. Every day, 10,000 more Americans turn 65. Yet, historically, there have been limited collaborations across the public health and aging services sectors and little funding to ensure public health has the capacity and capability to address the unique public health needs of older adults. TFAH recommends funding for a CDC Healthy Aging unit to promote the health and well-being of older adults, advance health equity and reduce healthcare costs by developing Age-Friendly Public Health Systems (AFPHS) at state, local, territorial, and tribal health departments.

The Number of Americans Ages 65 and Older Will More Than Double by 2060.



Source: PRB analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Impact: Isolation and loneliness, financial hardship, and limited access to transportation, healthy food, and affordable housing are challenges many older adults face. Social isolation increases the risk of heart disease, infections, depression, cognitive decline and death among older adults and accounts for \$6.7 billion in additional Medicare spending annually.¹ A public health approach to healthy aging would

¹ Flowers, Lynda, et al. Medicare Spends More on Socially Isolated Older Adults. AARP, 2017, Medicare Spends More on Socially Isolated Older Adults, www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/ppi/2017/10/medicare-spends-more-on-socially-isolated-older-adults.pdf.

complement individual-level services provided by the aging services sector with population- or community-wide solutions that promote healthier aging and improve the quality of life for older adults. Inequities amongst older adults persist -- Black Americans and American Indian/Alaska Native populations have shorter life expectancies. While life expectancies decreased across the board during COVID-19, steeper declines in life expectancy occurred for these groups than the non-Hispanic white population since the beginning of the pandemic, only worsening existing disparities.²

AFPHS interventions can optimize the health and well-being of adults 65 and over, prolong their independence, help reduce disparities and advance equity, and help reduce the nation's healthcare spending. Elevating healthy aging as a core function of public health departments is necessary to foster multi-sector collaboration and develop effective solutions to improve the lives of older Americans.

TFAH has helped build the evidence base for these interventions. In partnership with the Florida Departments of Health and Elder Affairs, TFAH facilitated an Age-Friendly Public Health Systems pilot program, resulting in 50 of Florida's 67 county health departments adopting age-friendly policies and practices. This effort has included creating and supporting collaborations between the public health and aging sectors, collecting, and disseminating data on the state's older adult population, and ensuring all planning and programming is done with an aging lens. Since this initiative's launch, TFAH has expanded AFPHS efforts into Michigan, Mississippi, and Washington State. While this initiative has proven value to the communities it serves, sustained federal funding for public health to address the needs of older adults is necessary to be impactful nationwide.

Examples from state's Age-Friendly Public Health System efforts:

- The Mississippi State Department of Health is implementing an Age-Friendly Public Health Systems department-wide action plan that includes collecting data on older adult health and developing intergenerational education opportunities.
- The Department of Health in St. Johns County, FL targeted the 2020 Census for accuracy to ensure the county has the appropriate level of support and resources for the older adult population.
- In Michigan, the Branch Hillsdale St. Joseph Health Agency partnered with the local Area Agency on Aging to review and revise emergency preparedness policies to ensure the needs of older adults and caregivers are included.
- The Health Department in Indian River County, FL engages with housing non-profit organizations and builders to educate on the benefits of universal design to increase access for older adults.
- Several local health jurisdictions in Washington are collaborating with Area Agencies on Aging to improve assessment and planning to better meet the needs of older adults in their communities.
- The Northwest Washington Indian Health Board is conducting a survey of Tribal elders to assess their health status and needs to better coordinate services and interventions.

Recommendation: TFAH recommends \$50 million in FY 2024 to CDC to expand its healthy aging work to include coordinating healthy aging efforts across the agency, funding applied research and translation for public health practice, and awarding cooperative agreements to build capacity in state, local, tribal, and territorial public health departments to promote the health of older adults within an Age-Friendly Public Health System.

² Arias, Elizabeth, et al. Provisional Life Expectancy Estimates for January through June, 2020. Atlanta, GA: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, US Dept of Health and Human Services. 2021.
<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/vsrr/VSRR10-508.pdf>