

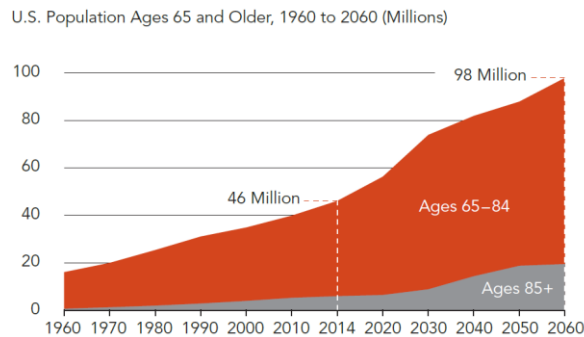


**Age-Friendly Public Health Systems
National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
FY 2025 Labor HHS Appropriations Bill**

	FY 2025 TFAH Recommendation
Age-Friendly Public Health Systems	\$50,000,000

Background: U.S. public health efforts have importantly contributed to the significant increase in longevity and health over the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, 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. Unfortunately, among adults aged 45-64, 33% have multiple chronic conditions, which rises to 64% among those aged 65+. This raises quality of life concerns for our nation’s older adults and contributes to already rising health care costs. Health disparities among older adults also persist -- Black Americans and American Indian/Alaska Native populations have shorter life expectancies. Despite public health’s role in improving health across the lifespan, there have been limited collaborations across the public health and aging services sectors and little funding to ensure public health capacity and capability to address the unique needs of older adults, such as social isolation and loneliness and access to healthy food and transportation. TFAH recommends funding for a CDC Healthy Aging program to promote the health and well-being of older adults (aged 50+), advance health equity, and reduce healthcare and caregiver 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 complements individual-level services provided by the aging services sector with community-wide solutions that improve health policies and social environments and lead to better outcomes for older adults. These could include improving community access to clinical services, expanding age- and ability-friendly physical activity opportunities, incorporating the needs of older adults into emergency preparedness plans, and supporting informal caregivers with resources for their own health and well-being.

AFPHS interventions can optimize the health, well-being, and quality of life of adults 50 and older, prolong independence, reduce disparities and advance equity, and help reduce the nation's healthcare and caregiving spending. Elevating healthy aging as a core function of public health departments is necessary to foster multi-sector collaboration and advance implementation of effective solutions to improve the lives of older Americans.

TFAH has helped build the evidence base for these interventions. Working in partnership with the departments of health in Florida, Mississippi, Washington, and other states, TFAH guided the adoption of crucial age-friendly policies and programs. These states expanded data collection on older adults and caregivers, enhanced collaborations between the public health and aging sectors, explored healthy aging within tribal communities, and supported state and community planning and prevention efforts to elevate health equity for older adults. 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 and sustain our collective progress in ensuring an age-friendly infrastructure for health.

Examples from state Age-Friendly Public Health System efforts include:

- The Mississippi State Department of Health developed a Healthy Aging Data Report and county data profiles with over 120 indicators; partnered with AARP MS and the Mississippi Public Health Association on several endeavors, including the development of a champion program for older adult volunteers to encourage their communities to be age-friendly and promote intergenerational activities.
- The Sarasota County, FL Department of Health developed a county wide multi-agency program to provide food to residents during the pandemic, developed a multi-year Community Health Improvement Plan, and recently completed their fifth-year cycle as a member of AARP's Network of Age-Friendly States, Cities, and Communities.
- In Michigan, the Branch Hillsdale St. Joseph Health Agency partners with the local Area Agency on Aging on emergency preparedness planning to ensure the needs of older adults and caregivers are included.
- In partnership with the Washington State Department of Health, the Northwest Washington Indian Health Board is conducting surveys of Tribal elders in six federally recognized tribes to assess their health status and needs to better coordinate services and interventions.

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.

- The Health Department in Orange County, NY is working with public libraries, senior centers, and other community organizations to increase awareness of educational programs targeted toward older adults to improve health literacy.
- In Summit County, Ohio, the local health department provides fall prevention outreach and education at 12 Health Fairs and through older adult community events and has secured a grant to implement the Gatekeeper Senior Reach program that identifies at-risk, isolated older adults in need of support services so that they can age-in-place safely.

Recommendation: TFAH recommends \$50 million in FY 2025 to CDC to expand its healthy aging work to include coordinating healthy aging efforts across CDC and other federal agencies, collecting and disseminating data for public health decision-making, funding applied research and translation for implementation into 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.