



Age-Friendly Public Health Systems

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Trust for America's Health

Independent, non-partisan, public health and prevention focus

- Advancing evidence-based policy and advocacy with an equity focus
- Improving the health of every community
- Making disease prevention a national priority



What Is an Ideal Age-Friendly Health Department?

- Leadership and dedicated staffing
- Dedicated funding for broad healthy aging programs
- State Health Improvement Plan prioritizes healthy aging
- Formal collaboration required across all agencies
- Data dashboard includes older adults
- Emergency preparedness planning includes older adults

2024-2026 Tennessee State Health Plan 

5 Older Adults

Goal 5.1. Support and empower formal and informal caregivers of older adults.

					
Increase access to, awareness and use of evidence-informed interventions, services, support groups and peer-driven support for caregivers to enhance their health and well-being.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Educate providers and health professionals on the importance of identifying informal caregivers and methods for addressing caregiver burden (physical, mental and financial strain) including referral to supports such as respite services.	✓	✓			✓
Recruit and retain direct support professionals and community health workers.	✓	✓			

 government  healthcare  faith-based  nonprofit and community  school and education

 **TN** Department of Health

For more information on the State Health Plan, visit <http://health.tn.gov/shp>

Age-Friendly Public Health Systems (AFPHS)

- Explore & expand public health roles in healthy aging
- Incentivize state and local health departments to adopt healthy aging as a **core public health function**
- Build knowledge, expertise, and capacity
- Advance partnerships



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Framework for Creating Age-Friendly Public Health Systems

The broad public health roles outlined in the *Framework* are:

- Connecting and convening multiple sectors and professions that provide the supports, services, and infrastructure to promote healthy aging.
- Coordinating existing supports and services to avoid duplication of efforts, identify gaps, and increase access to services and supports.
- Collecting data to assess community health status (including inequities) and aging population needs to inform the development of interventions.
- Communicating and disseminating research findings and best practices to support healthy aging.
- Complementing and supplementing existing supports and services, particularly in terms of integrating clinical and population health approaches.



AFPHS Tools and Resources

- **AFPHS Recognition Program**
- **AFPHS 6Cs Training and Implementation Guide**
- **Elder Mistreatment Prevention Toolkit for Public Health**
- **Age-Friendly Ecosystem Collaboration**
 - Map
 - State Snapshots
 - Collaboration Toolkit



AFPHS Recognition Program

- **Why:** Incentivize and celebrate state and local health department's healthy aging practice
- **Value:** Develop departmental and individual expertise in public health strategies and policies that support older adults & caregivers
- **Benefits:** Receive technical assistance, and gain access to networking and resources including policy briefs, trainings, webinars, and toolkits



AFPHS Recognition Opportunities



Department of Health Recognition

- Leading policy and systems change
- Enhancing data collection on older adults
- Coordinating healthy aging activities across sectors
- Coordinating efforts to improve health equity among older adults

Public Health Organization Recognition

- Leading policy and systems change
- Collaborating with state and local health departments
- Implementing healthy aging strategies
- Coordinating with other age-friendly initiatives to advance healthy aging policies

Individual Recognition

- Becoming a healthy aging expert
- Engaging in partnerships to advance healthy aging
- Sharing opportunities for supporting older adult health and well-being
- Communicating the importance of addressing ageism

AFPHS 6Cs Training & Implementation Guide

Purpose: Increase expertise in public health practice to improve and support older adult health and well-being

Goals: Develop and adopt state AFPHS plans; build a cadre of public health practitioners who are AFPHS experts

Methodology: Developed in partnership with ASTHO, NACCHO, NNPHI; piloted with 10 state public health institutes

Professional Development

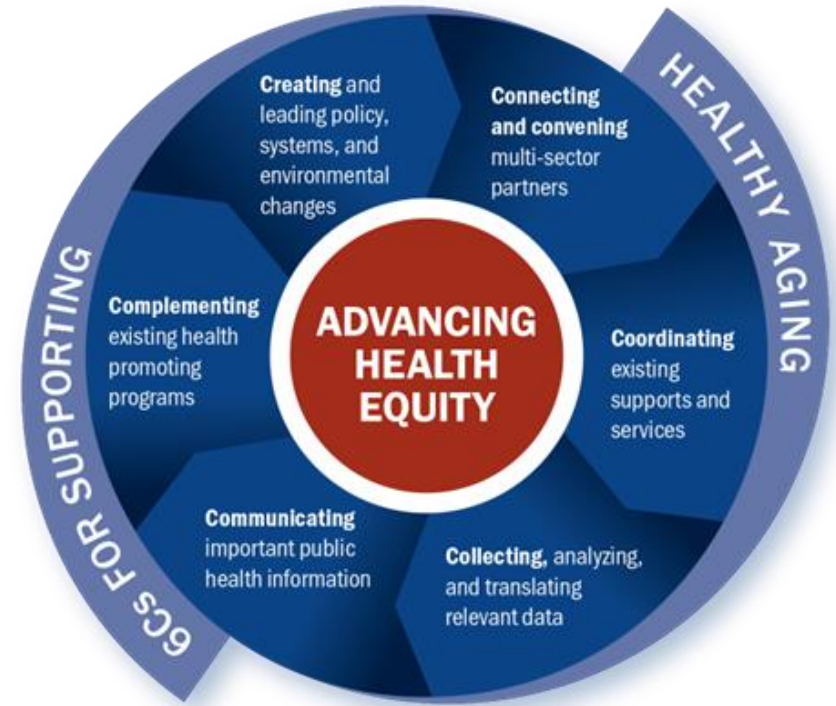
Organizational Capacity

Systems Change



AFPHS 6Cs Training and Implementation Guide

- Background: making the case for AFPHS
- Alignment with the 10 Essential Public Health Services
- Foundational steps: Advisory Committee, Internal Team
- How to Use the Guide
- Operationalizing Equity Supplement



Module 1: Creating & Leading Change



AFPHS 6Cs Training and Implementation Guide

various aspects of this work.

Module 1: Capacity Building S

This module is designed to expand i
outlined below, public health practi
as well as toward the adoption of h

Definition: Creating and leading pol
that there is an established person i
within the public health system.

Module 1 Learning Objectives:

1. Define "Creating & Leading"
2. Identify at least three strate
3. Describe how to operational
4. Identify challenges to and o
5. Identify potential partners tl

Policy and Practice S

The strategies listed below have b
that are building age-friendly pub
some will be more challenging, re
large or small for consideration ar
for change.

The steps below are intended to g
health function. Practitioners are e
structure of the public health ager

Tier One

Join, create, or expand a state or community coalition or task force on healthy aging that engages multi-sector agencies and organizations working to improve the health and well-being of older adults and caregivers.

-Is the state engaged in developing or implementing a multi-sector plan for aging? If so, who are the leaders and partners in the effort? (Note these for further partnership development.)
-If a healthy aging task force or coalition already exists, who are its members? (Same as above.)
-If it doesn't exist, which partners should be invited? (Consider the partner's capacity to perform the work.)
-What existing healthy aging initiatives can be leveraged to expand the coalition's focus to include public health?

- ◇ [Developing a Multi-Sector Plan for Aging](#)
- ◇ [Collective Impact](#)
- ◇ [The Waters of Systems Change](#)
- ◇ [Guide to Building Community Coalitions](#)
- ◇ [Three Keys to Cross-Sector Age-Friendly Care](#)



Elder Mistreatment Prevention Toolkit for Public Health



The
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Foundation



National Collaboratory to Address
Elder Mistreatment



EDC.ORG



NATIONAL ALLIANCE
FOR CAREGIVING

About the Toolkit



The purpose of this toolkit is to equip public health practitioners and their partners with strategies and resources to prevent and address elder mistreatment in their communities and states.

The toolkit includes guidance on:

Creating and leading change around older adult wellbeing	Collecting and translating public health data about older adult outcomes
Connecting and convening partners to support elder mistreatment prevention	Communicating information to prevent and address elder mistreatment
Coordinating existing services to support older adults and caregivers	Complementing existing public health programs with elder mistreatment screening and prevention



Elder Mistreatment is a Public Health Issue

- Elder mistreatment is not an inevitable consequence of aging
- Up to 90% of cases go unreported: ageism, stigma, embarrassment
- Health impacts
 - Impedes progress toward optimal health
 - Source of injury, disability, dysfunction
 - Exacerbates existing health conditions
 - Prevent self-care



Preventing Elder Mistreatment

Risk Factors

- Cognitive and physical decline
- Financial strain
- Caregiver strain
- Social Isolation
- Financial gain
- Evolving scams
- Ageism

Protective Factors

- Emotional intelligence and resilience
- Good physical and mental health
- Financial literacy
- Coping skills
- Strong social network
- Caregiver training, respite, support
- Legal and advocacy programs



C1: Creating and Leading Change

Strategies

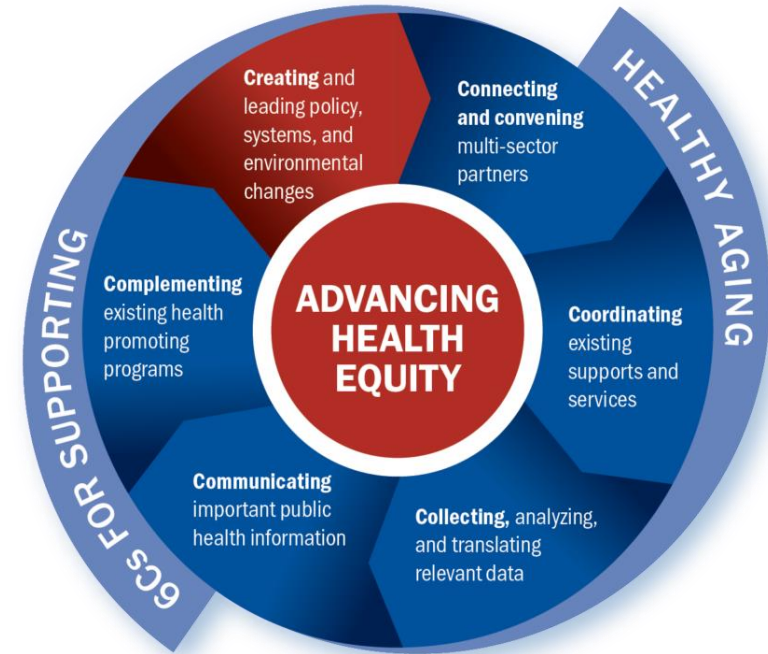
Examples/Resources

Ensure that public health agencies and practitioners have the authority and resources to address elder mistreatment, promote interagency collaboration, and incorporate elder mistreatment awareness and prevention into existing aging and health promotion programs.

- [CDC: About Abuse of Older Persons](#) 
- [Multisector Plans for Aging](#) 
- [Elder Abuse in Indian Country](#) 
- [Financial Exploitation in Indian Country](#) 

Identify research needs around EM and work with researchers (universities and other public health-focused organizations) to identify and develop programmatic changes that support elder mistreatment prevention.

- [National Center on Elder Abuse Research](#) 
- [Building the Evidence Base for Adult Protective Services](#) 



Examples and Resources

Prevention

Example of C1: Some states are prioritizing ageism awareness and creating leadership opportunities to reframe the narrative around older adults and the value of age in society. Maine's Council on Aging sponsors the [Leadership Exchange on Ageism](#) , designed to educate business, policy, and community leaders on their roles in ending ageism including elder mistreatment.

Violence against older adults can be prevented. [Certain factors may increase or decrease the risk](#) of perpetrating or experiencing abuse. Preventing violence requires understanding and addressing the factors that put people at risk for or protect them violence.

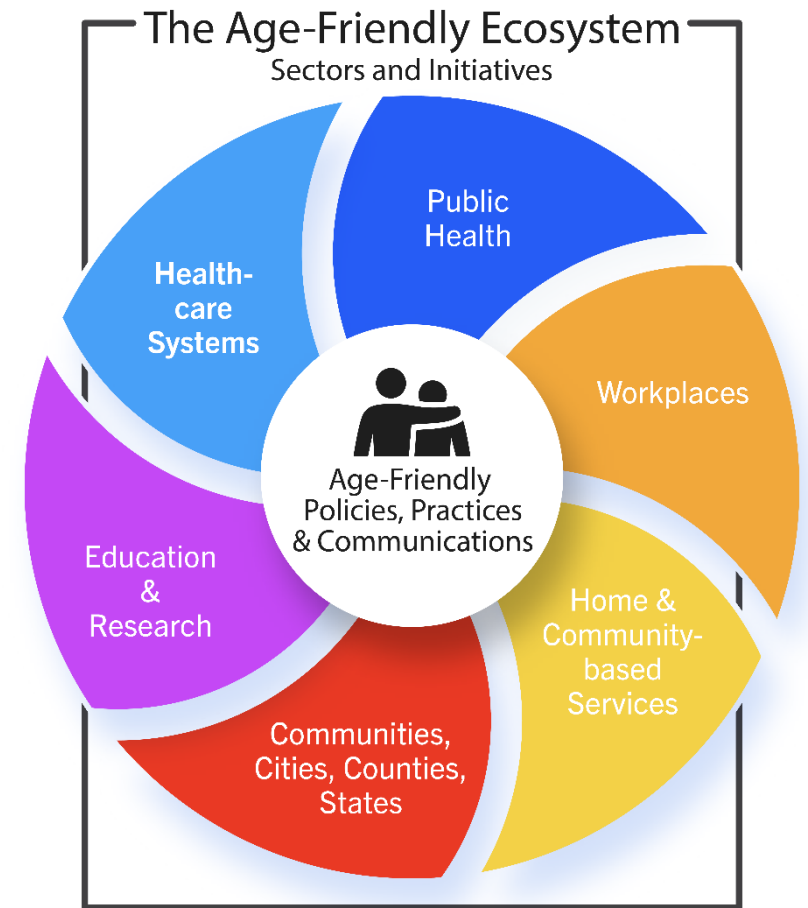
We can all help prevent violence against older adults: [\[9\]](#)

- Listen to older adults to understand their challenges and provide support.
- Educate yourself and others about how to recognize and report abuse.
- Learn how the signs of abuse differ from the normal aging process.
- Check-in on older adults who may have few friends and family members.
- Encourage or assist persons (caregivers or older adults) who have problems with drugs or alcohol in getting help.

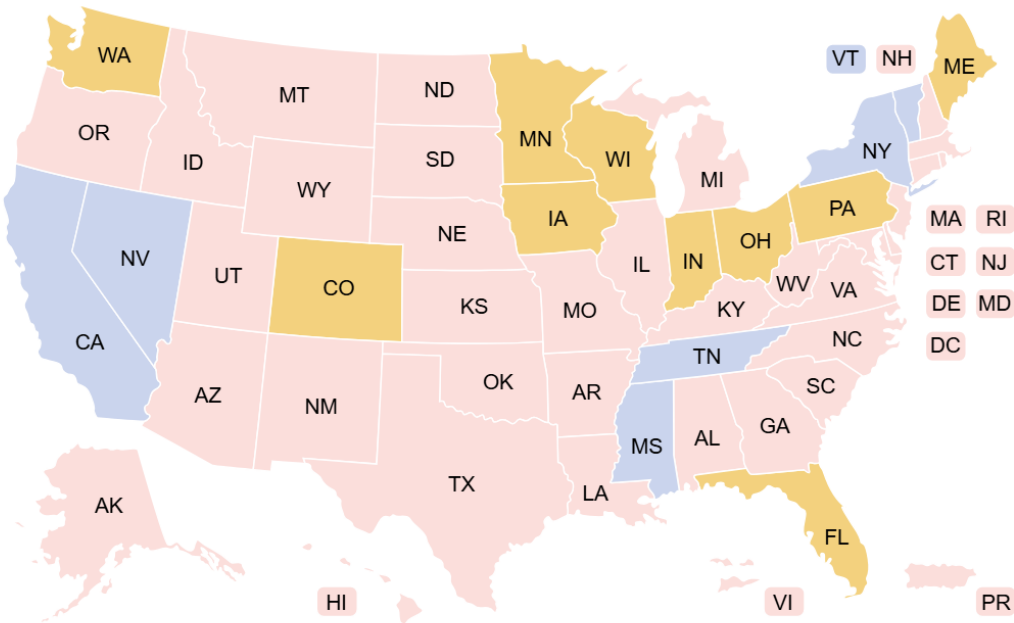


Age-Friendly Ecosystem

- *The Age-Friendly Ecosystem is a multi-sectoral network of practitioners, providers and organizations that prioritize improved quality of life for older adults, their families, caregivers, and communities through collaborative impact*
- *Actively engaged sectors currently include health care systems, public health departments, the aging services sector, academia, businesses, and communities where age-friendly practices are being implemented*



Age-Friendly Ecosystem Map & State Pages



New Jersey

Select a different state

Back to States

What percentage of the state population is adults 65 and over?



17.72%

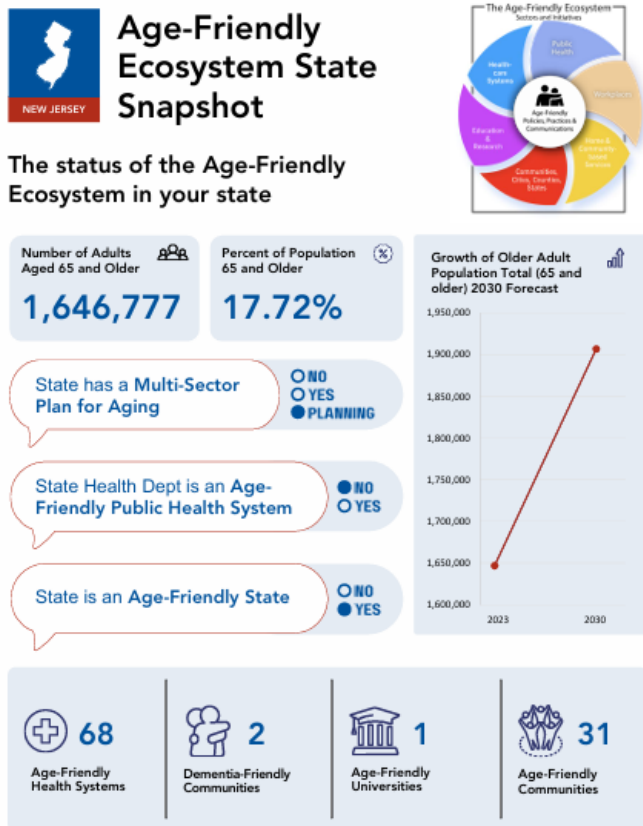
Is the New Jersey state health department recognized as an AFPHS?



Are any local departments in New Jersey AFPHS recognized?



Age-Friendly Ecosystem Collaboration



The Age-Friendly Ecosystem project is supported by The John A. Hartford Foundation in partnership with Trust for America's Health.

Getting Started

A Build a Core Planning Team

This pre-workshop phase should focus on building relationships across as many Age-Friendly Ecosystem sectors as possible and engaging other partners whose collaboration will be essential for implementing community-driven solutions. Bringing together leaders from different sectors and perspectives will be crucial to the process of turning workshop ideas into real community solutions. These team members will work together to:

Set goals for the workshop

- Encourage and invite partner participants
- Secure funding to support the event
- Design an effective gathering and post-event follow up
- Share results and next steps with the community

Consider including representatives from:

- Local public health departments
- Area Agencies on Aging
- Disability services agencies
- Health care systems or local clinicians
- Local universities
- Local businesses or chambers of commerce
- Community-based organizations (like the YMCA)
- Faith-based organizations

SUGGESTION!

Include one or more older adults on your planning team. Their perspective is essential.

B Define Workshop Objectives

The first task of the core planning team is to identify the intended focus or issue area and desired outcomes of the workshop. These guiding questions will help shape the workshop's design and ensure that it meets local needs:

- Will the Workshop build upon existing initiatives such as your State's Master (or Multisector) Plan for Aging, Age-Friendly Community (or State) plans, public health improvement strategies, health system transformation efforts, housing or transportation plans, or other community development efforts?
- Will the Workshop explore the broader community landscape, or will it focus more narrowly on a specific neighborhood, agency, organization, sector, or campus—deepening collaboration within one area of the local Age-Friendly Ecosystem?
- What are the most pressing needs in your community?
- What areas are your partners already working on that you could enhance or expand upon?

C Identify a Topic for the Workshop

Once the core planning team is established and workshop objectives defined, the next important strategic activity is to work with the planning team to identify an issue to address: a challenge or focus that will guide the group's collaboration. Some groups may refer to this as a main area of interest or social impact goal.

This focus should reflect the issue or opportunity the group most wants to address. It serves as a unifying call to action and helps ensure that everyone's actions and ideas connect toward a common purpose. Use the [Goals and Objectives Worksheet](#) to help guide this discussion.

AFPHS Resources



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[Resources](#)
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[Topics](#)
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[Our Network](#)
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Age-Friendly Public Health: The Podcast




Ensuring Age-Friendly Public Health in Rural Communities: Challenges, Opportunities, and Model Programs

M. Aaron Quest, Ph.D., Arizona State University, Megan Wolfe, Trust for America's Health, Aaron Phillips, Ph.D., Trust for America's Health, Jane Hook, Arizona State University

Background

The Age-Friendly Ecosystem originated from the World Health Organization's (WHO) efforts to develop Age-Friendly Communities. The WHO identified eight "Domains of Livability" that enhance the experience of individuals across the life course. These domains span the built, social, and service-related factors that influence the health of all ages, including 1) housing; 2) transportation; 3) outdoor spaces and buildings; 4) civic participation and employment; 5) social participation; 6) respect and social inclusion; 7) communication and information; and 8) community supports and health services.

Based on the concepts of universal design, i.e., that our environment and systems should be accessible and used by individuals regardless of age or ability, age-friendly programs focus on creating better environments and systems for all.¹ While concentrating on older adulthood, age-friendly works to create a better world for everyone.

Age-Friendly Communities were the first of the components of what is now the Age-Friendly Ecosystem which also includes Age-Friendly Universities, Age-Friendly Health Systems, and Age-Friendly Public Health Systems.² This issue brief identifies opportunities for public health professionals to engage, collaborate, and lead age-friendly efforts in rural communities.

Since 2017, with partnership and funding from The John A. Hartford Foundation, Trust for America's Health (TFAH) has been working with state and local health departments to expand their roles in improving the health and well-being of older adults. The Age-Friendly Public Health System (AFPHS) framework identifies public health professionals' core roles in promoting older adult health and well-being. This 6Cs framework organizes these roles as follows:

1. **Creating** leading policy, systems, and environmental changes to improve older adult health and well-being.
2. **Connecting and convening** multi-sector stakeholders to address the health and social needs of older adults through collective impact approaches focused on the social determinants of health.
3. **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.
4. **Collecting, analyzing, and translating** relevant and robust data on older adults to identify the needs and assets of a community and inform the development of interventions through communitywide assessment.
5. **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.
6. **Complementing** existing health promoting programs to ensure they are adequately meeting the needs of older adults.

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AFPHS March 2026 Training - Caring for Caregivers
Trust for America's Health • 16 views • 10 days ago
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AFPHS February 2026 Training - Elder Mistreatment Toolkit
Trust for America's Health • 76 views • 1 month ago
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Cheers to the 250 AFPHS Champions!
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Addressing the Impacts of Ageism - An AFPHS Training
Trust for America's Health • 108 views • 2 months ago

<https://afphs.org>