COVID-19 and Age-Friendly Public Health Systems
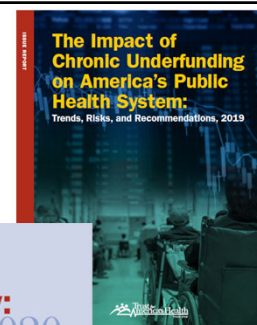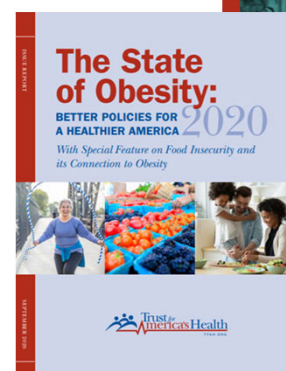
Megan Wolfe, JD
Senior Policy Development Manager

Age-Friendly PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEMS

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Trust for America's Health

Independent, non-partisan, public health & prevention focus, including:

- Non-profit, non-partisan
- Evidence-based policy & advocacy
- Dedicated to improving the health of every community and making disease prevention a national priority

The Impact of Chronic Underfunding on America's Public Health System:
Trends, Risks, and Recommendations, 2019

The State of Obesity:
BETTER POLICIES FOR A HEALTHIER AMERICA 2020
With Special Feature on Food Insecurity and its Connection to Obesity

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Presentation Objectives

Age-Friendly PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEMS

➢ Describe the Age-Friendly Public Health Systems framework and the five categories of public health roles in healthy aging.
➢ Identify the connections between public health and other sectors in the COVID-19 response efforts.
➢ Increase understanding of the value of Age-Friendly Public Health collaboration with other sectors to improve older adult health outcomes.
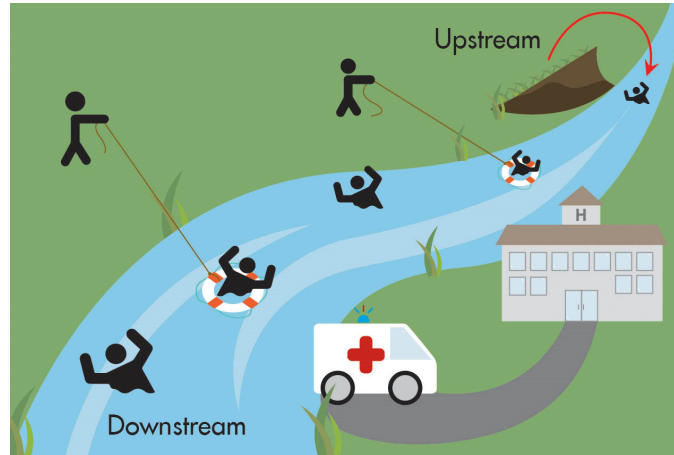
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What is Public Health?

"Public health is what we, as a society, do collectively to assure the conditions in which (all) people can be healthy."

Institute of Medicine (1988), Future of Public Health

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Public Health is "Upstream"

Roles of Public Health
(policy, systems, environmental change)

- ❑ Gathering and analyzing data
- ❑ Building systems of care and support
- ❑ Deploying strategies of disease prevention and control
- ❑ Establishing model policies
- ❑ Demonstrating viability of new approaches
- ❑ Disseminating information and health education
- ❑ Convening allies and partners in dialogue and collaborative initiatives
- ❑ Community engagement
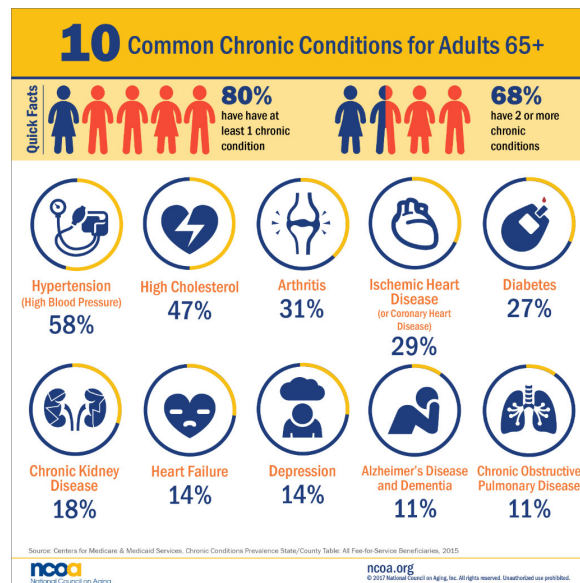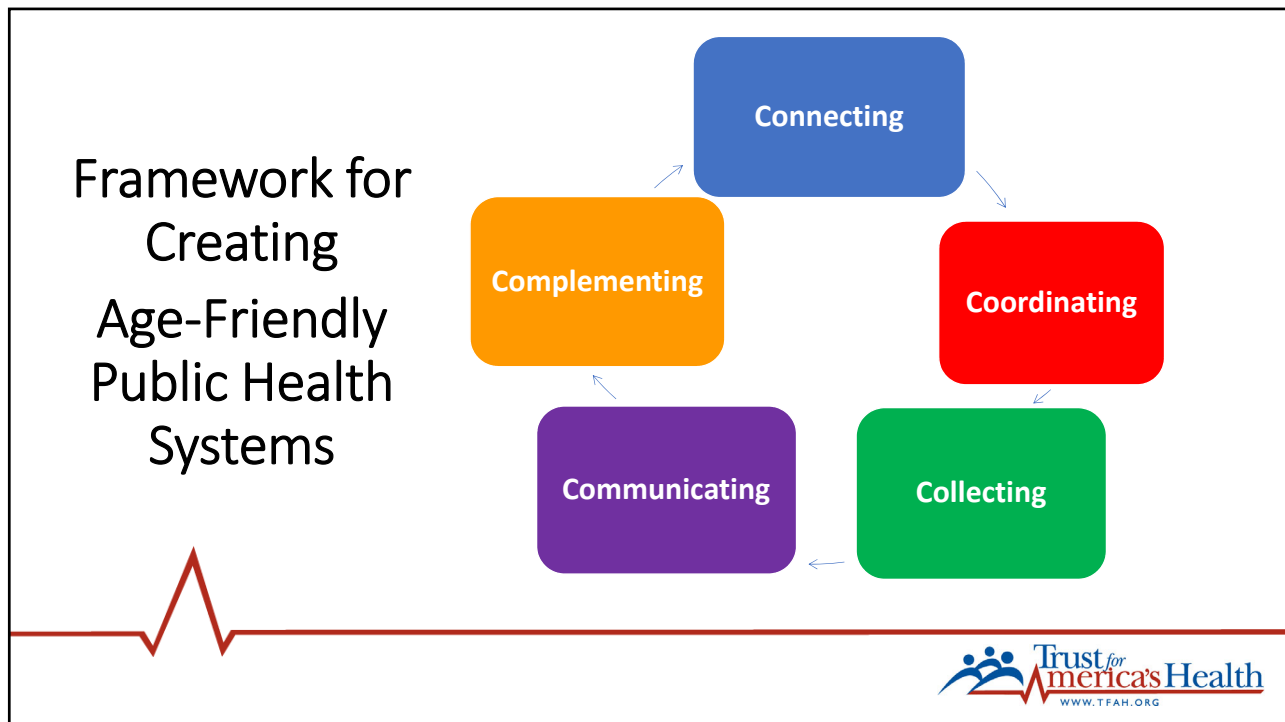- ❑ Safety net and gap-filling services

Public Health's Focus on Older Adults

- Federal: No CDC healthy aging unit
- State/local: Lack of funding and expertise
- Current PH aging work is limited: falls prevention, vaccinations, dementias

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Prevalence of Preventable Chronic Diseases

10 Common Chronic Conditions for Adults 65+

Quick Facts

80% have have at least 1 chronic condition

68% have 2 or more chronic conditions

Hypertension (High Blood Pressure) 58%

High Cholesterol 47%

Arthritis 31%

Ischemic Heart Disease (or Coronary Heart Disease) 29%

Diabetes 27%

Chronic Kidney Disease 18%

Heart Failure 14%

Depression 14%

Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia 11%

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease 11%

Source: Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. Chronic Conditions Prevalence State/County Table: All Fee-for-Service Beneficiaries, 2015

ncoa
National Council on Aging

ncoa.org
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Slide 1

Framework for Creating Age-Friendly Public Health Systems

- Connecting
- Coordinating
- Collecting
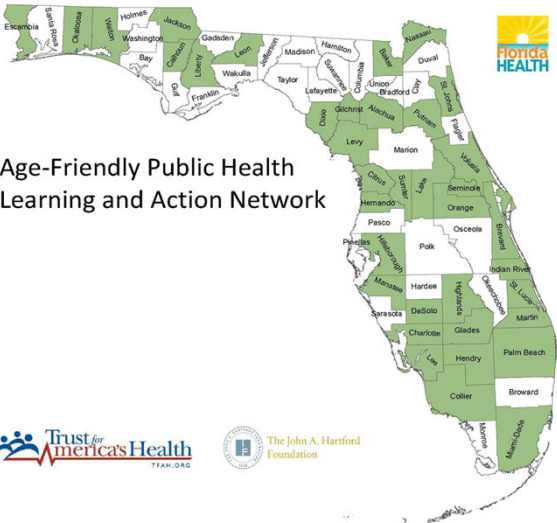- Communicating
- Complementing

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Slide 2

TFAH'S AFPHS Florida Pilot

- FL Depts. of Health & Elder Affairs
- 37 counties – 2/3 of state population
- Policy, systems, environmental changes (data, collaborations, emergency prep, programs)
- Links to AARP Age-Friendly network, Dementia Friendly Communities, AFHS

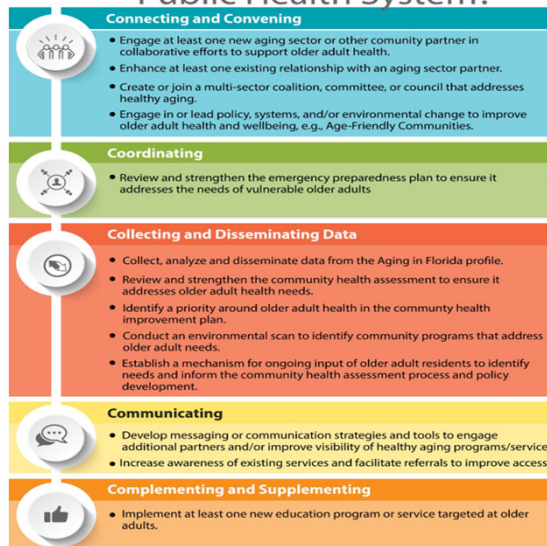Age-Friendly Public Health Learning and Action Network

Florida HEALTH

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Framework for Creating
Age-Friendly Public Health Systems

5 What are the Cs of an Age-Friendly Public Health System?

Connecting and Convening
- Engage at least one new aging sector or other comunity partner in collaborative efforts to support older adult health.
- Enhance at least one existing relationship with an aging sector partner.
- Create or join a multi-sector coalition, committee, or council that addresses healthy aging.
- Engage in or lead policy, systems, and/or environmental change to improve older adult health and wellbeing, e.g., Age-Friendly Communities.

Coordinating
- Review and strengthen the emergency preparedness plan to ensure it addresses the needs of vulnerable older adults

Collecting and Disseminating Data
- Collect, analyze and disseminate data from the Aging in Florida profile.
- Review and strengthen the community health assessment to ensure it addresses older adult health needs.
- Identify a priority around older adult health in the community health improvement plan.
- Conduct an environmental scan to identify community programs that address older adult needs.
- Establish a mechanism for ongoing input of older adult residents to identify needs and inform the community health assessment process and policy development.

Communicating
- Develop messaging or communication strategies and tools to engage additional partners and/or improve visibility of healthy aging programs/services.
- Increase awareness of existing services and facilitate referrals to improve access.

Complementing and Supplementing
- Implement at least one new education program or service targeted at older adults.

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Older Adults and COVID-19

- 8 out of 10 COVID deaths are in people 65 and older
- 50% of deaths occur in long-term care facilities
- Greater vulnerability due to multiple chronic health conditions
- Congregate settings increase risk

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Public Health's Focus on Older Adults During COVID-19

- Communications
- Data tracking, analysis
- Contact tracing
- Nursing home safety
- Social isolation
- Support for aging services

Engaging with and supporting other sectors during COVID-19

Florida -- Seminole County Health Department:

➤ Engagement with aging sector through AFPHS Learning and Action Network
➤ Messaging and communication efficiency
➤ Capture information on older adult needs
➤ Assist with meal delivery, social isolation

Engaging with and supporting other sectors during COVID-19

Florida -- Nassau County Health Department:
➢ Engagement with faith-based community organizations through AFPHS Network
➢ Became trusted partner and source of information
➢ Able to quickly share hygiene and testing information and resources

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Engaging with and supporting other sectors during COVID-19

Public Health in Seattle-King County:
➢ Assigned to address C19 in LTC facilities
➢ Data dashboard
➢ Increased testing (EMS, CHW, college and univ volunteers)

COVID-19 Data Dashboards

Daily Summary Dashboard
UPDATED DAILY, 3:00-5:00 PM
This data dashboard shows total cases, deaths and demographics.

Key indicators of COVID-19 activity
UPDATED ON WEDNESDAYS
This dashboard displays data on key indicators that track COVID-19 activity.

Economic, Social and Overall Health Impacts Dashboard
UPDATED WEEKLY
This dashboard shows changes in key economic, social, and other health indicators resulting from strategies to slow the spread of COVID-19.

AFPHS Collaboration Can Improve
Older Adult Health Outcomes

➢ **Change the "social determinants":** Join transportation, housing, public safety, etc. efforts to adopt health/well-being policies

➢ **Social isolation**: Create programs to promote meaningful connections

➢ **Home/community focus**: Develop home-neighborhood programs

➢ **Strengthen Partnerships:** Engage and align with Age-Friendly Communities, Age-Friendly Health Systems

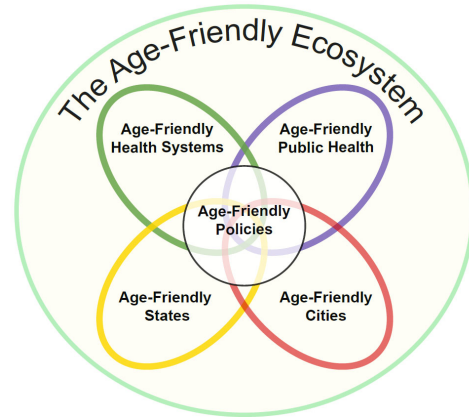➢ **Promote equity**: Reach sub-populations with limited resources and improve access to needed services

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Age-Friendly PUBLIC HEALTH SYSTEMS Recognition Program

➢ Incentivize EVERY state & local health dept. to address older adult health

➢ Build capacity through guidance and training

➢ Develop learning network within/across states

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Value of Becoming an AFPHS

➢ Implementation within current resources
➢ Build expertise and competency in aging
➢ Leverage public and private funding
➢ Opportunity to better serve all populations

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THANK YOU!

Megan Wolfe
mwolfe@tfah.org

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