Health Promotion for Older Adults and People with Disabilities

Overview
Oregon’s Aging & Disabilities Resource Connection (ADRCs) provide a critical role in linking Oregonians to preventive services and effective community programs that support health and independence. As a core partner of the ADRCs, Oregon’s 17 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) have a long history of supporting health promotion using Older Americans Act Title III/D/health promotion funds, as well as other grants and partnerships. Area Agencies on Aging work with public health, health systems, senior centers, faith communities, and other community partners to support and promote programs to older adults in their communities. The Oregon State Legislature approved a special allocation of $1.25 million in the spring of 2014 to expand the availability of effective programs to help older adults maintain health, safety, and independence in their communities.

Evidence-Based Community Programs
ADRCs refer older adults to preventive health services, provide community and home-delivered meals, and assist with transportation to needed services. In addition, Oregon AAAs support evidence-based health promotion programs that have been demonstrated through research and published evaluation to have a positive impact on the health of older adult participants. Programs include:

- Physical activity and falls prevention
- Chronic disease self-management
- Care transitions
- Medication management
- Support for family caregivers
- Depression and mental health

Program Reach
For the fiscal year starting July 1, 2014 through March 31, 2015, over 2,180 older adults have successfully completed at least one evidence-based program – attending programs to a level where research indicates a significant impact on health.
Impact

AAAs support healthy aging programs that have been carefully evaluated with published results, so Oregon’s programs can be expected to have similar impacts and results. Some example of impact:

- **Living Well/Stanford Self-Management Programs** (398 completers as of 3/31/15). Participants who complete these 6-week workshops have been shown to spend fewer days in the hospital, have fewer outpatient and emergency room visits, and experience improvements in their overall health, quality of life, energy level and ability to participate in life activities.

- **Tai Chi: Moving for Better Balance** (677 completers as of 3/31/15). Participants who regularly attend classes over several months have a 55% reduced risk of falls, and significant improvements in balance.

- **Powerful Tools for Caregivers** (144 completers as of 3/31/15). Participants in this 6-week workshop have significant improvements in emotional well-being, self-care behaviors, self-efficacy, and use of community services.

- **Coleman Care Transitions** (400 completers as of 3/31/15). Participants in this program which includes hospital and home visits to help people transitioning out of the hospital have a significantly decreased risk of readmission.

Participant Feedback

Toni reported that she no longer needed in-home services, thanks to skills and steps she’d taken as a result of the **Living Well workshop**. After two years of services, Toni is now living independently, and looking for work with the local in-home agency that once provided her with a homecare worker. (Lincoln County)

“I started my first **Tai Chi** class 12 weeks ago. I was bent over with pain in my back and legs. Tai Chi has improved my posture, balance and pain in my back. The more I practice, the better I feel.” (Marion County)

“I always felt no one could take care of my mom the way I could. [In the **Powerful Tools for Caregivers** class] I learned to let that thought process go and ask for help, then step back and allow them to help without micro-managing.” (Malheur County)

A male participant in the **SAIL** falls prevention and exercise class reports that the program “is so worth it” that it got him walking again. He now walks from his house to the senior center which is nearly one mile. Something he was unable to do before. (Klamath County)

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**Information on Program Participants**

**Geographic area**
- 50% rural

**Gender**
- 70% female; 30% male

**Race**
- 91% White
- 2% Asian
- 1% American Indian
- <1% African-American
- 5% Multiple Races or Unknown

**More information**

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This document can be provided upon request in an alternate format for individuals with disabilities or in a language other than English for people with limited English skills. To request this publication in another format or language, contact the State Unit on Aging at Oregon DHS – Aging & People with Disabilities - 866-535-8493.