Health Promotion for Older Adults and People with Disabilities (2017-2018)

Overview
Oregon’s Aging & Disabilities Resource Connection (ADRC) provides a critical role in linking Oregonians to preventive services and effective community programs that support health and independence. As a core partner of the ADRC, 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 $1.25 million for the 2017-19 biennium to expand the availability of these effective programs that help older adults maintain health, safety, and independence in their communities.

Evidence-Based Health Promotion 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 address:

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

Program Reach
Between July 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018, 3,249 older adults across the state successfully completed evidence-based programs – attending programs to a level where research indicates a significant impact on health. Two-thirds of participants were female, 40% reported living alone, and 28% were at or below the poverty level.

“I came to the Tai Chi class after suffering a back injury…I have osteoarthritis in my right knee and get dizzy when I bend over or turn too quickly. After attending the Tai Chi class for 12 weeks, I have seen improvements in my balance. This has given me more confidence in my walking…I have been able to be more active daily.” (Linn County)

Nancy, age 72, had difficulties with her balance, strength, and overall endurance. Within six months of participating in Enhance Fitness, Nancy has lost 25 pounds and has been confident enough to return to her beloved sport of bowling. (Douglas County)

“I’m 74 years old and in pain most of the time. The Living Well classes taught me so many things…most of all I learned that if we goof up, we can always start again. Now I feel confident to never stop trying. Thanks for giving the class here in Lakeview.” (Lake County)

As part of a Care Transitions home visit, we realized the individual had been discharged without one of his new prescriptions. We called his doctor, clarified the dosage, and arranged for the medications to be picked up by a neighbor. We also noticed that his older manufactured home was a fall risk.
Program Impact

AAAs support healthy aging programs that have undergone extensive evaluation and have published results. State funds are used to support availability of these already-proven approaches. Based on existing research, program impacts for older Oregonians who completed programs this past year include:

- **Chronic Disease Self-Management Programs.** (563 completed) Individuals who complete these 6-week workshops developed at Stanford University 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.** (649 completed) Developed and researched in Oregon, this program has demonstrated a 55% reduced risk of falls, and significant improvements in balance.

- **Coleman Care Transitions.** (1,162 completed) This program includes hospital and home visits to significantly decrease the risk of readmission for older adults transitioning out of the hospital.

- **Walk with Ease, Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program, Better Bones & Balance, StrongWomen, Enhance Fitness.** (483 completed) These walking and exercise programs have been shown to reduce arthritis-related pain; increase balance and strength; and improve overall health.

- **Powerful Tools for Caregivers.** (160 completed) Participants in these 6-week workshops have significant improvements in emotional well-being, self-care behaviors, self-efficacy, and use of community services.

- **Otago.** (80 completed) This in-home falls prevention program has been shown to reduce falls and fall-related injuries by 35% among frail older adults at high risk for falling.

Find a Program in Your Community

Community providers, older adults, and people with disabilities can find locally available, effective and nationally-recognized programs through the ADRC website – [www.ADRCofOregon.org](http://www.ADRCofOregon.org) - or statewide toll-free number: 1-855-ORE-ADRC (1-855-673-2372).

For more information, contact:
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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.