

# Healthy Aging Grants: Health Promotion & Disease Prevention

Improving health and reducing costs

## Core Member Organizations

- Aging and Disability Professionals Association of Wisconsin (ADPAW)
- Alzheimer's Association SE Wisconsin Chapter
- Wisconsin Adult Day Services Association (WADSA)
- Wisconsin Association of Area Agencies on Aging (W4A)
- Wisconsin Association of Benefit Specialists (WABS)
- Wisconsin Association of Nutrition Directors (WAND)
- Wisconsin Association of Senior Centers (WASC)
- Wisconsin Institute for Healthy Aging (WIHA)

The Wisconsin Aging Advocacy Network is a collaborative group of individuals and associations working with and for Wisconsin's older adults to shape public policy to improve their quality of life.

**WAAN State Issue Brief**  
July 2016

**WAAN's Position: Make permanent and expand funding for healthy aging grants to support a statewide clearinghouse and support center on evidence-based health promotion programs and provide funding and program support to counties and tribes to expand local healthy aging programs.**

WAAN seeks a \$600,000 annual state budget appropriation for a statewide clearinghouse and support center in healthy aging to support its core services:

- Maintain statewide program licenses.
- Research, develop, and maintain the infrastructure for coordination of the programs.
- Support county and tribal aging units, public health, and other local partners in developing and training leaders and recruiting participants.
- Provide data collection and analysis.

## Proven Outcomes That Improve Health, Reduce Costs, Prevent or Delay Long-Term Care

The old saying is still true: An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of care—or more specifically—long-term care.

Wisconsin is home to many evidence-based (research-proven) programs that can improve health and prevent or delay disease and disability. These programs delay or prevent entirely the need for expensive long-term care. The programs address critical public health issues including:

**Falls.** One of every three older adults in Wisconsin experiences a fall every year. Hospital and emergency department visits cost Wisconsin \$800 million annually—70% of which is paid for by public funds.

## Stepping On Falls Prevention Program is shown to:

- Reduce falls by up to 50%.
- Reduce emergency department visits for falls by up to 70%.

Falls-related injuries exceed car crashes as the leading cause of injury-related deaths in Wisconsin. Forty percent of those admitted to a nursing home had a fall in the 30 days prior to admission.

**Chronic Diseases.** More than 80% of older adults in Wisconsin have at least one chronic condition such as arthritis, diabetes, or heart disease; 50% have at least two. Ninety-five percent of health care dollars spent on older adults are related to chronic conditions and 2/3 of all deaths in the U.S. are attributable to heart disease, stroke, cancer, and diabetes.

**Diabetes.** In Wisconsin 475,000 adults have diabetes and 1.45 million have pre-diabetes. One in four Wisconsin residents over age 65 has diabetes—which is the leading cause of blindness, heart disease, and stroke—as well as lower extremity amputations. It is also very expensive to treat, with an annual cost to Wisconsin of over \$4 billion in direct health costs and \$2.7 billion in indirect costs.

**Caregiving.** With the growing population of older adults and adults with disabilities, the need for family caregivers will continue to increase. Because caregiving is often stressful, caregivers are at a high risk for depression and stress-related illnesses that often force them to end their caregiving role and place their loved one in an expensive facility. The economic value of unpaid family caregivers is estimated at \$7 billion annually in Wisconsin and represents the largest source of long-term care services.

### **Partners Depend on Statewide Training, Coordination, and Support**

These and other public health issues can be addressed through researched and proven cost-effective programs delivered in community partner (non-clinical) settings. Hundreds of local partner agencies deliver these programs; they need statewide training, coordination, and support to do so.

Wisconsin needs permanent, expanded funding to support statewide training, coordination, and support for programs that promote healthy aging and prevent disease.

## *Both Living Well with Chronic Conditions and Healthy Living with Diabetes*

*are shown to:*

- *Reduce hospital visits by 22%.*
- *Reduce ED visits by 27%.*
- *Generate a program cost to health care savings ratio of 1:4.*



### **Contact WAAN**

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