MAGIC Meeting: Age-Friendly Housing and Transportation

James Fuccione – MHAC Senior Director
March 2021
Age and Dementia Friendly Communities

- Transportation
- Communication, Information, & Technology
- Housing
- Access, Equity, Inclusion
- Outdoor Spaces & Buildings
- Social Inclusion & Participation
- Services (Community, Health, Business)
- Civic Participation & Employment
- Public Safety
- Age & Dementia Friendly
Age- and Dementia Friendly Communities

Massachusetts Age- and Dementia Friendly Integration Toolkit

Resources for integrating age- and dementia friendly activities in your community.
2018 Massachusetts Healthy Aging Data Report
Older Adult Health in Every Community

Massachusetts is getting older
- About 13% of people in Massachusetts are age 65+, an increase of about 120,000 people since last report.

Massachusetts is the 7th healthiest state for older people in the U.S., according to America's Health Rankings Senior Report. Still, there is room to improve!

Health challenges are shifting

Mental health is overlooked
- Mental health is important at every stage of life. It includes emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It influences how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.

3 out of every 10 older residents have been diagnosed with depression, the most commonly diagnosed mental health issue among older people.

Where you live matters
- Many rural communities have higher percentages of people 65+ and limited access to care and transportation options.
- Most Gateway Cities - urban hubs historically known for their mills and industry - face economic and social challenges, including the health of older residents.

Significant challenges in population health:
- Significant challenges in population health
- Best population health
- Other Gateway Cities

Significant challenges in population health:
- Serious chronic disease rates among older people are highest in cities and towns where people have lower education and income.
- Serious chronic disease rates among older people are lowest in cities and towns where people have more education and higher incomes.

Understand.
- Download your Community Profile at healthyagingdatareports.org.
- Educate yourself and others about the older people who live in your city or town.
- Compare your city or town to state averages.

Engage.
- Start a conversation.
- Bring older people, community organizations together.

Act.
- Join the age-friendly movement.
- Prioritize community needs and resources.
- Collaborate with diverse partners and funders.

The 2018 data above reflect health for adults age 60+ in Massachusetts.
Visit healthyagingdatareports.org for more.
Acton (Middlesex)

Acton is a suburban town northwest of Boston with 2,956 residents aged 65 or older. The transit score suggests that there is minimal transit available (1/10). Compared to state averages, older residents of Acton have lower rates of depression, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders, substance use disorder, tobacco use disorder, diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, asthma, hypertension, heart attack, ischemic heart disease, congestive heart failure, peripheral vascular disease, lung cancer, osteoporosis, benign prostatic hyperplasia, hypothyroidism, anemia, chronic kidney disease, and glaucoma. They have a greater likelihood than the state rate of having hearing impairment, visual impairment, or a mobility impairment. Health promotion is strong with higher rates of shingle vaccines, physical activity, annual dental exams, and not smoking. Community resources to promote healthy aging include one memory cafe and the Council on Aging. Acton has been designated an Age-Friendly Community.

| POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS | BETTER / WORSE
| STATE RATE | COMMUNITY
| ESTIMATE | STATE
| ESTIMATE |
|---|---|---|---|
| Total population all ages | 23,209 | 6,742,143 |
| Population 60 years or older as % of total population | 18.0% | 21.2% |
| Total population 60 years or older | 4,171 | 1,428,144 |
| Population 65 years or older as % of total population | 12.7% | 15.1% |
| Total population 65 years or older | 2,956 | 1,016,679 |
| % 65-74 years | 55.2% | 55.3% |
| % 75-84 years | 31.8% | 29.4% |
| % 85 years or older | 12.9% | 15.2% |
| Gender (65+ population) | | |
| % female | 58.6% | 57.2% |
| Race/Ethnicity (65+ population) | | |
Age and Dementia Friendly Communities
Age-Friendly Massachusetts

Community-Led Age and Dementia Friendly Efforts

Dementia Friendly Massachusetts

Feedback and Input from Stakeholders

Massachusetts Healthy Aging Collaborative (MHAC and Multicultural Coalition on Aging)

Governor’s Council to Address Aging in Massachusetts

Cross-Sector Partnerships and Collaboration

Input from 500+ Residents Across Massachusetts

State Commissions on Issues Critical to Older People

Sector-Specific Age-Friendly Initiatives

ReiMAgine Aging:
Planning Together to Create an Age-Friendly Future for Massachusetts
# Age-Friendly Massachusetts

## Mission

To amplify, align, and coordinate local, regional, and statewide efforts to create a welcoming and livable Commonwealth as residents grow up and grow older together.

## Vision

**Aging in Massachusetts is reimagined.**
The Commonwealth is an accountable partner in supporting communities, embedding aging in all policies, and empowering residents with opportunities to age meaningfully in the communities of their choice.

## Goals

1. Deepen Community Initiatives
2. Promote Information and Communication
3. Reframe Aging
4. Embed Aging in Policy and Practice
5. Improve Economic Security
6. Create Sustainability
Innovative Community Response to COVID-19

Protective factors for older adults disproportionately impacted by COVID-19

• Intergenerational households and families with strong intergenerational ties where members support one another in meeting daily needs and provide companionship to counter the threat of social isolation

• Tight-knit networks of individuals dedicated to the wellbeing of the community who disseminate information, keep an eye out for people who may have greater barriers to receiving services, and are willing to do whatever it takes to help their community

• Skillful and nimble CBOs that know community residents, have earned their trust, and are willing and able to pivot rapidly as needs arise.

• Leaders with a passion for the community, a history of coming together through past crises, personal connections, and willingness to collaborate
What is the role of MHAC and its network in advancing these protective factors?

Understanding the community

• **Who** in your community is most affected by the pandemic? If you are unsure, how can you ask those you serve about their most significant concerns?

• **To what extent** are you and others in your community reaching individuals living in conditions that heighten the threat of the pandemic (see page 5)? **What opportunities are there to deepen or expand your work** with these individuals?

• Protective factors offer opportunities to provide older adults with the resources to navigate the pandemic (see page 6). To what extent are you currently building on protective factors in the way you do your work? How might you work differently with partners to further incorporate them into your work?

• **What other protective factors** have you observed in your community? How could you help create more of these protective factors or ensure older adults and others benefit?
Healthy Aging for All

Input from:

- MHAC Advisory Council (x2)
- MHAC Executive Committee (x2)
- Access, Equity, & Inclusion Workgroup
- MCA@MHAC
- Age/Dementia Friendly Framingham
## Inclusive Communities Crosswalk

The crosswalk can serve as a discussion and planning guide for stakeholder groups about different topics that are considerations of all residents in a city, town or region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Behavioral Health</th>
<th>Country of Origin</th>
<th>Dementia</th>
<th>Disability</th>
<th>Economic Security</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>LGBTQIA</th>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Residential Setting</th>
<th>Substance Use Disorder</th>
<th>Veterans</th>
<th>Other</th>
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*Inclusive Communities Toolkit 1.0*
How to use Healthy Aging for All

Age and dementia friendly initiatives are about improving health and well-being for people of all ages in a community or region— and that means all people. This guide can be used throughout the continuous improvement process where coordinators and/or stakeholder groups convene, conduct community assessments, create an action plan, and implement that plan.

Convening

Healthy Aging for All can help local Age- and Dementia-Friendly leaders and conveners provide broad representation when bringing together relevant municipal department heads and local entities working to improve the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH). This is important throughout the Age- and Dementia-Friendly process.

Goal Setting and Action Planning

By using Healthy Aging for All community leaders can generate statements and themes that reflect an ideal end result of a community's Age- and Dementia-Friendly Community efforts.

A community does NOT have to address all the domains of the Age- and Dementia Friendly assessment. The domains should be selected based on the community's strengths and needs.

Surveys and Assessment

Qualitative data is important to understand what Age-Friendly means to people within cities and towns. Some ways in which this data is gathered include (but is not limited to):

- Community Profiles available in the Healthy Aging Data Report
- Municipal master plans
- Regional planning agency assessments
- Community health needs assessments (CHNA)

Several organizations in a community—including the municipality itself—may already be conducting assessments or have recently gathered resident feedback. This can all inform the Age- and Dementia Friendly process so stakeholders don’t have to recreate the wheel.

Implementation

In addition to helping a community assess their strengths and identify opportunities relative to access, equity and inclusion, Healthy Aging for All can help stakeholders take ownership or play a leading role in working to address gaps.

Stakeholders can discuss, identify and plan how to improve disparities at the intersections of the population groups and the Age- and Dementia-Friendly domains. It bears emphasizing that people often connect to multiple categories in the listed population groups on page 6.

Strategies may include targeted outreach or informing residents about already available resources.
# Inclusive Communities Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE- AND DEMENTIA- FRIENDLY DOMAIN</th>
<th>The space below can be used to note the strategies you plan to use to ensure Access, Equity and inclusion while you strive to make your community age- and dementia-friendly.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
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<td>Housing</td>
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<td>Social Inclusion &amp; Participation</td>
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<td>Public Safety</td>
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<tr>
<td>Custom Theme</td>
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Age-Friendly Winter Spaces

Ideas for Municipalities to Embrace Winter

Communities have an opportunity to support people of all ages in remaining physically active and socially engaged during the winter months. There are simple and innovative ideas for communities to improve their physical environments—and promote the physical and mental wellness of their residents— all 52 weeks of the year.

Promote Winter Walkability

Identify and promote a walking route to allow individuals of all ages to stay active. Establish a walking loop through main street and city center to promote local business and connect essential services or use existing areas, such as local parks or an outdoor track for the walking route.

Things to consider when choosing the walking route:
- Is there sufficient lighting to allow for use during evening hours?
- Are there accessible restrooms and benches available near the walking route?
- How are community residents learning about the walking route?
- Can your community commit to keeping the walking route clear of snow and ice?
- Do you have well-plowed municipal parking lots that could serve as walking loops?
- Does the walking route provide access to essential businesses that people may need to visit?

Create Winter Destinations

Shared Winter Streets and Spaces Grant Program
A Quick-Launch/Quick-Build Municipal Funding Program

- **Grants:** $5,000 - $500,000 to improve plazas, sidewalks, curbs, streets, parking areas, and other public spaces in support of public health, safe mobility, and renewed commerce.

- **Bonus points** for Safe Routes for Seniors, including safe walking and bicycling facilities within one mile of senior centers, housing for elders, and travel corridors used by seniors.
Thank You!

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