

The Prevention Research Centers: Healthy Aging Research Network

The Healthy Aging Network is made up of 9 universities with expertise in the health of older adults. Member universities collaborate on research to identify best practices for physical activity programs for older adults and to set a research for studying healthy aging.

Lead Agency:

The Prevention Research Centers

Agency Mission:

The Prevention Research Centers work as an interdependent network of community, academic, and public health partners to conduct prevention research and promote the wide use of practices proven to promote good health.

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Partner Agencies:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
Division of Adult and Community Health
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
National Council on Aging
National Association of Chronic Disease Directors
Alzheimer's Association
American Society on Aging
Administration on Aging
CDC's Division of Nutrition and Physical Activity
CDC's Prevention Research Centers

General Description:

The Healthy Aging Research Network is developing a research agenda around the public health aspects of healthy aging. The nine universities participating in the network are a subset of 33 Prevention Research Centers the CDC funds.

The prevention research agenda is intended to increase understanding of the determinants of healthy aging, identify interventions that promote healthy aging, and translate research into sustainable community-based programs that can be used throughout the nation. The researchers are identifying the key health-promoting skills and behaviors as well as the organ systems and syndromes that can affect healthy aging. The network members are also consulting with federal and state organizations on establishing local programs for healthy aging and working with national organizations to identify the most effective physical activity programs. The network members and other stakeholders are also conducting a literature review about the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of cross-cutting interventions for older adults that can affect multiple health outcomes. The results are intended as recommendations to be used by researchers in the network and the U.S. Task Force on Community Preventive Services to create a chapter for the Community Guide to Preventive Services on evidence-based interventions for promoting health in older adults.

Excellence: What makes this project exceptional?

The project is a collaboration of leading researchers in aging from across the country, spanning academia, government, and private foundations, who have come together to review and set a research agenda for healthy aging.

Significance: How is this research relevant to older persons, populations and/or an aging society?

The U.S. aging population is growing, and this research is vital to maintaining health and quality of life for this large subset of the U.S. population.

Effectiveness: What is the impact and/or application of this research to older persons?

Three national demonstration projects have been completed.

- 1) An in-depth, evidence-based review and statement of public health's role in addressing physical activity for older adults.
- 2) A network-wide survey and report of community-based physical activity opportunities for older adults at seven national sites.
- 3) An environmental audit to assess the built environment as it relates to physical activity for older adults.

Innovativeness: Why is this research exciting or newsworthy?

The network is unique in fostering collaboration among researchers on the issue of aging.

