

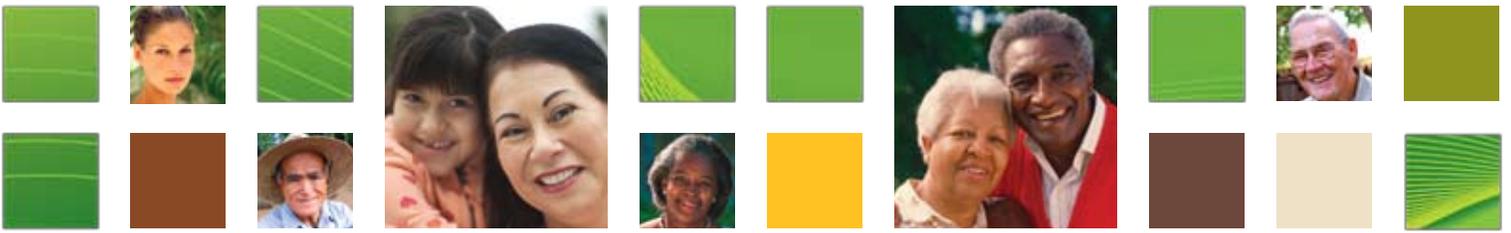


HEALTHY AGING
HELPING PEOPLE TO LIVE
LONG AND PRODUCTIVE
LIVES AND ENJOY A GOOD
QUALITY OF LIFE

AT A GLANCE
2011

National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion
Division of Adult and Community Health





Implications of an Aging Society

By 2030, the number of U.S. adults aged 65 or older will more than double to about 71 million. The rapidly increasing number of older Americans has far-reaching implications for our nation's public health system and will place unprecedented demands on the provision of health care and aging-related services. Public health efforts to promote health and functional independence are critical strategies in helping older adults stay healthy. Research has shown that poor health does not have to be an inevitable consequence of aging. Older adults who practice healthy behaviors, take advantage of clinical preventive services,

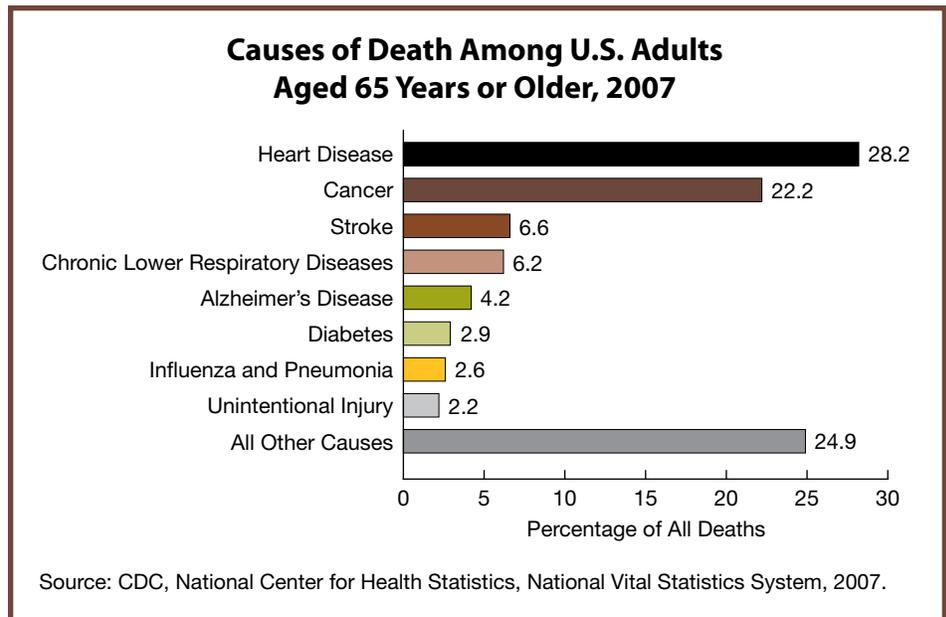
and continue to engage with family and friends are more likely to remain healthy, live independently, and incur fewer health-related costs. An essential component to keeping older adults healthy is preventing chronic diseases and reducing associated complications. About 80% of older adults have one chronic condition, and 50% have at least two. Infectious diseases (such as influenza and pneumococcal disease) and injuries also take a disproportionate toll on older adults. Efforts to identify strategies to prevent or reduce the risk of disease and injury and to widely apply effective interventions must be pursued.

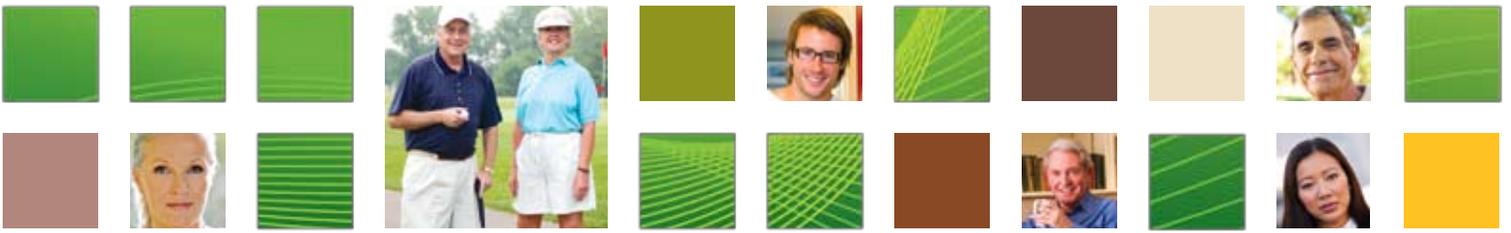
Opportunities to Improve Older Adults' Health and Quality of Life

CDC works with states, communities, and other partners to support public health interventions that are designed to promote and preserve the health of older adults. Our priorities are to—

- **Promote healthy lifestyle behaviors to improve the health of older adults.** Environmental and policy approaches that help older adults make healthy choices, such as getting regular physical activity and not smoking, could reduce the chronic disease burden in this population.
- **Increase the use of clinical preventive services.** Only about 25% of adults aged 50–64 years are up-to-date on recommended immunizations and cancer screenings. Community strategies that increase the number of places where older adults can receive multiple preventive services could increase the use of these potentially lifesaving measures.
- **Address cognitive impairment.** Cognitive impairment affects health and long-term care needs and presents major caregiving and financial challenges. Given the rapid aging of the U.S. population, a key public health goal is to assess and monitor the perceived burden of cognitive impairment in order to help states and communities develop policies and strategies to address this issue.

- **Address issues related to mental health.** Mental health is essential to overall health and well-being. In recent years, public health efforts have focused on ways to better assess mental health among older adults. These efforts have led to the development of effective, community-based screening and treatment programs for people with depression.
- **Provide education on planning for serious illness.** Public health and aging services professionals are in key positions to help people plan for care in case of serious or terminal illness.





CDC's Role in Promoting Healthy Aging

The Healthy Aging Program at CDC conducts activities that contribute to a comprehensive approach to helping older adults live long, productive, and independent lives. It collaborates with other CDC programs and key external partners.

For example, the Healthy Aging Program works to—

Enhance the ability of states and communities to identify and implement effective strategies, policies, and programs to promote and protect the health of older adults.

Since 2001, CDC has supported the Healthy Aging Research Network, a consortium of Prevention Research Centers at academic institutions around the country working to better understand the determinants of healthy aging, identify interventions that promote healthy aging, and help translate research into sustainable, community-based programs.

With support from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and CDC's Healthy Communities Program, the Healthy Aging Research Network created the Environmental and Policy Change for Healthy Aging conference series. This online, interactive initiative uses presentations, webinars, and other resources to help states and communities strengthen their ability to promote healthy aging (available at <http://www.prc-han.org>).

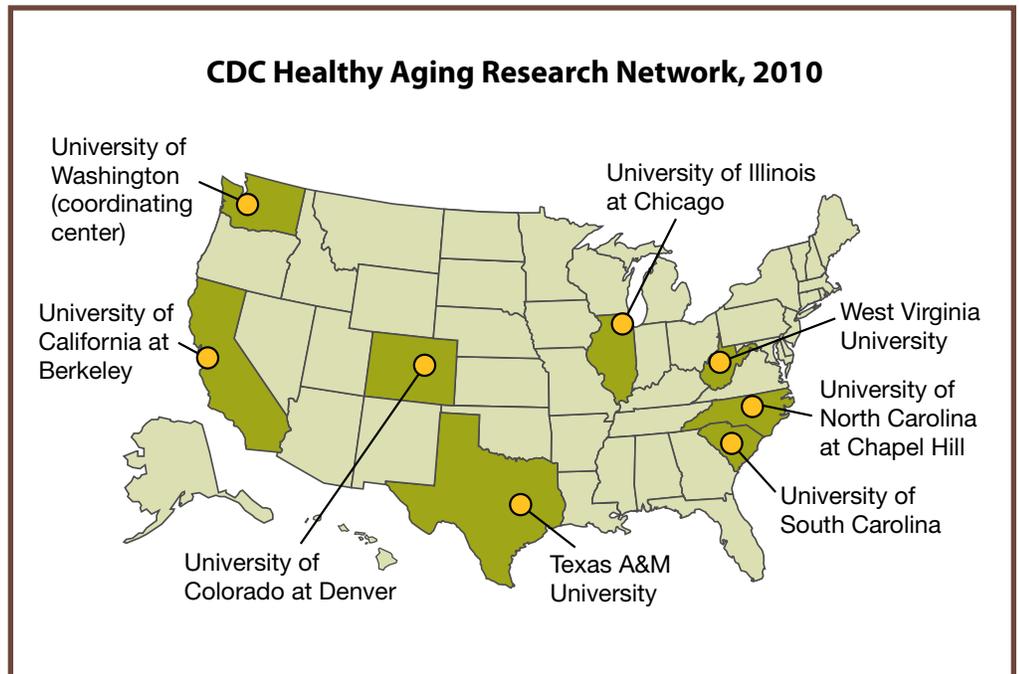
In addition, CDC provides three online, interactive data tools that present information and resources in a user-friendly format for public health and aging services professionals, journalists, researchers, and the public (<http://www.cdc.gov/aging>). These tools are based on publications that examine different health issues among older adults. *The State of Aging and Health in America* presents data and program resources on a variety of health topics for adults aged 65 years or older. *The State of Mental Health and Aging in America* focuses on key indicators of mental health for adults aged 50 years or older, including three evidence-based programs that communities can use to address depression in older adults.

Promoting Preventive Services for Adults 50–64: Community and Clinical Partnerships identifies a core set of recommended preventive services, provides indicators and data to monitor their use, and describes successful strategies to enhance their delivery.

The Healthy Aging Program also received a multiyear grant from CDC's Office of Public Health Preparedness and Response to improve the care of vulnerable older adults during disasters or emergencies. This project is being conducted with CDC's Public Health Law Program and will result in a new resource guide and online tool kit for local, state, territorial, and tribal jurisdictions. This guide will provide information on how to identify and protect older adults with chronic diseases, disabilities, or other conditions that make them vulnerable during disasters.

Expand efforts to integrate public health and aging services and enhance outreach for health promotion and disease prevention for older adults.

CDC works to integrate public health's expertise in research, health tracking, and prevention with the experience and reach of the aging services network. Through the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors, CDC funds SENIOR (State-





CDC's Role in Promoting Healthy Aging (continued)

based Examples of Network Innovation, Opportunity, and Replication) grants in states to help health departments work more closely with their aging network colleagues. CDC also conducted a pilot workshop for the Massachusetts Department of Public Health in 2010 as part of its efforts to educate public health and aging services professionals on issues related to advance care planning. CDC is currently developing an online course on how to plan for serious illness care, which will be available to people who serve in public health and aging services networks across the country.

Promote health and preserve health-related quality of life for older adults within health care and other systems.

CDC has developed a draft action guide for implementing SPARC (Sickness Prevention Achieved through Regional Collaboration), a program that has proven effective in increasing the use of preventive services among older adults. This action guide is for public health practitioners, clinicians, and policy makers and is being pilot-tested by a local medical society as a way to increase the delivery of preventive services to residents aged 50 years or older.

Healthy Brain Initiative

In 2007, CDC and the Alzheimer's Association released *The Healthy Brain Initiative: A National Public Health Road Map to Maintaining Cognitive Health* (<http://www.cdc.gov/aging/healthybrain/roadmap.htm>). One of the report's recommendations is to assess and monitor the effect of cognitive impairment at the state level. In response, CDC supported the development of new survey questions on cognitive impairment for the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS). With data from five states that used the new questions in 2009, CDC is developing publications to educate public health professionals, policy makers, and other stakeholders about the importance of addressing cognitive impairment as a public health problem. These publications also can serve as models for how BRFSS data can be used. For 2011, a total of 19 states have been funded to include the new questions in their BRFSS surveys.

Future Directions

CDC and AARP are collaborating on an initiative to identify and promote community policies that can increase adults' use of clinical preventive services. As part of this initiative, a series of action briefs and a strategic plan are being developed to help implement the policies or strategies that stakeholders have identified as having the greatest potential to bring about measurable benefits in the next 3 years.

CDC partnered with the Administration on Aging, the AHRQ, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, and eight nonfederal partners to develop a report to draw attention to the use of clinical preventive services among adults aged 65 years or older. *Enhancing Use of Clinical Preventive Services Among Older Adults: Closing the Gap*, released in 2011, provides self-reported data to highlight gaps in the use of clinical preventive services and opportunities for increasing their use, particularly among the underserved. The report also features activities, interventions, and policies related to community actions that can increase access to and use of services. CDC's Healthy Aging Program will work with partners to ensure broad dissemination of the findings and activities described in this report.

In addition, CDC has funded the University of Washington as a member of the Healthy Aging Research Network to conduct a 3-year project examining the effects of dementia on other chronic diseases, including how it affects health outcomes such as a person's ability to function, quality of life, and length of lifespan. The project supports the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' strategic framework for addressing multiple chronic conditions.

CDC also is working with the Center for Practical Bioethics and other partners to develop eLearning modules (online training) for public health and aging services professionals to introduce the subject of advance care planning, offer tools and resources, and explore the roles they might play with clients and constituents in their communities.

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