

NH's Aging Population and Public Health (Revised 2015)

The New Hampshire Public Health Association (NHPHA) recognizes that the population of New Hampshire is aging and that in the next few decades we will have one of the highest proportions of older residents in the nation. This will have a significant impact on the availability, cost and demand for services, both health and social, in the coming decades. Preventive services and community supports targeting adults and older adults can assist in reducing these impacts. Financing of long term care services is splintered among many payers and has a strong institutional bias despite an increasing need for home and community-based services.

NHPHA supports access to a full array of screening, assessment, treatment, and preventive services for New Hampshire's older adult population. Routine screening results in early detection of pathology and more cost effective, and often less invasive, treatments – as well as reduced morbidity and mortality. In addition, NHPHA supports a comprehensive approach to supporting older adults through community programs which impact the health and well-being of older adults such as meals on wheels, transportation, and medication assistance.

NHPHA supports policies that will:

- Enhance community supports to enable older people to maximize their level of functioning and independence;
- Emphasize a person-centered approach to long term care planning;
- Ensure access to comprehensive services that integrate medical, behavioral and mental health care to enable older adults to optimize their quality of life;
- Reform reimbursement methods for long term care; and
- Ensure access to person-centered options to allow elders to live and age in the communities of their choice.

Resources

NH Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau of Elderly and Adult Service. “NH State Plan on Aging: October 1, 2011-September 30, 2015”. <http://www.dhhs.nh.gov/dcbcs/beas/documents/stateplan.pdf>

U.S. Federal Interagency Forum on Aging-Related Statistics, “2012 Older Americans: Key Indicators of Well-Being”. http://www.agingstats.gov/main_site/default.aspx

Norton, Steve. “New Hampshire’s Silver Tsunami: Aging and the Health Care System”, *NH Center for Public Policy Studies*. September 2011. http://www.nhpolicy.org/UploadedFiles/Reports/aging_and_the_healthcare_system_final.pdf

NH Care Path Website: <http://www.nhcarepath.org/>

AARP Public Policy Institute New Hampshire State Data (State-specific data on socioeconomic indicators and public programs that impact the health and well-being of older Americans) <http://www.aarp.org/ppi/state-data/nh/>