



**Opportunities Ahead:
Advocacy Priorities
2018 - 2023**





As more of us live longer, healthier lives, New Hampshire faces a powerful opportunity to rethink the future of our communities. So many of us continue to have so much to offer as we age, but many of our current policies, structures, and cultural assumptions fail to take advantage of the new realities of an older Granite State.

Thanks to dramatic advances in medicine, public health and lifestyle choices, nearly half of children born today can expect to live to 100. Demographic trends show us that by 2030, nearly half a million people in New Hampshire will be over the age of 65.

This permanent shift toward longer lives affects where we live and how we work, obtain healthcare, and navigate our day-to-day lives. Current approaches are insufficient. We must roll up our sleeves and imagine new ways to think and act and new ways to shape the places in which we live.

The New Hampshire Alliance for Healthy Aging (NHAHA) has been working since 2014 to

prepare communities to create an even better, even older New Hampshire. Pulling together service organizations, state agencies, policy makers, advocates and older people themselves, NHAHA is creating a movement for a more age-friendly New Hampshire. NHAHA is raising awareness about how we can support Granite Staters as we age, encouraging collective action on several key priorities.

Educating the community and advocating for policy change are critical to creating age-friendly communities that involve and support all of us as we get older. The long-term advocacy priorities contained in this document were established through a 10-month input process. NHAHA participants of all ages were invited to contribute.

NHAHA firmly believes that focusing on these priorities will ensure that all of us can look forward to aging in the Granite State in a way that utilizes our skills and talents, meets our needs, and manages our resources effectively.



About the New Hampshire Alliance for Healthy Aging

VISION: *To create communities in New Hampshire that advance culture, policies and services which support older adults and their families, providing a wide range of choices that advance health, independence and dignity.*

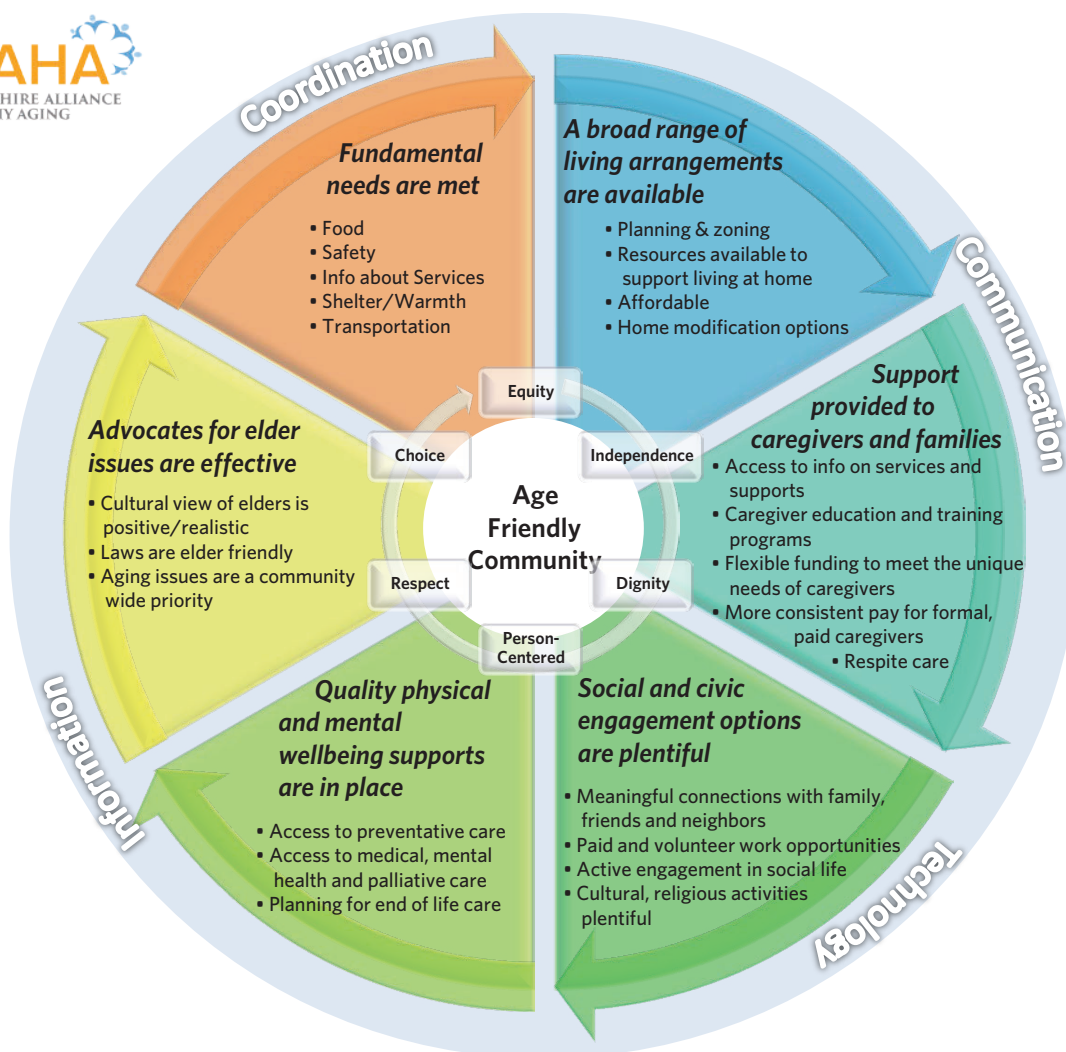
The New Hampshire Alliance for Healthy Aging (NHAHA) is a statewide coalition of stakeholders focused on the health and well-being of all of us as we age in New Hampshire. NHAHA works to promote a shared vision to create communities in New Hampshire that advance culture, policies and services which support all of us as we age. Rooted in nearly four years of work to engage stakeholders from many disciplines from across the state, NHAHA is advancing this advocacy agenda in support of its vision.



We are engaging in a collective impact approach to:

1. *Change the conversation* about how we age across all sectors of the community
2. *Change public policy* to promote a strong, stable, and state-of-the-art infrastructure for aging and
3. *Change practice* across public and private sectors to transform care and develop innovative ways to support older adults, our families and our communities.

Our shared vision includes six domains of an age-friendly New Hampshire:



We envision communities where New Hampshire's culture, policies and services support all of us as we get older, providing a wide range of choices that advance health, independence and dignity.

The New Hampshire Alliance for Healthy Aging has established long-term advocacy priorities for 2018–2023

Goal 1

Establish a permanent statewide entity on aging which can champion issues affecting older people across all state agencies, build effective public/private partnerships and focus attention on creating an age-friendly state.

Strategies:

- Determine the steps needed to create a permanent statewide entity focusing on aging in New Hampshire and build needed support from a variety of constituencies.
- Identify the most effective policies and practices of other states and similar organizations to incorporate into goals and functions.
- Include older people as leaders and resources for the statewide entity.

Goal 2

Ensure adequate and sustainable funding to support and promote healthy aging in New Hampshire.

Strategies:

- Advocate for adequate funding for timely and appropriate services and supports for older people in New Hampshire.
- Advocate for adequate funding to fight ageism and promote the involvement of older people as employees, advisors, and volunteers.
- Develop a roadmap to transform long-term care in New Hampshire that honors the needs of older people and their family members and encourages aging in community.
- Identify solutions to address current systemic challenges particularly around sustaining a strong direct care workforce and reimbursement for the long-term care system.
- Evaluate other models of statewide budgeting which allow for maximum flexibility in use of funds to determine the most effective, coordinated system of care.

Goal 3

Strengthen the focus on aging within the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services to ensure that the needs of New Hampshire's older people are met.

Strategies:

- Advocate for stronger infrastructure within the Department of Health and Human Services to marshal the resources needed to support all of us as we age in New Hampshire.
- Identify existing gaps in data to quantify the size and scope of the need for services, tracking usage and unmet need, and advocate for a system which is transparent and widely shared.

Goal 4

Ensure the availability of a stable workforce of direct care workers to support us as we age.

Strategies:

- Advocate for adequate and sufficient increases in pay for the direct care workforce.
- Increase the pool of skilled direct care providers by advocating for benefits, access to ongoing training and supportive regulations that encourage flexible and efficient use of direct care services.

Goal 5

Make New Hampshire communities more age-friendly.

Strategies:

- Advocate for state and local policies that offer more choice in transportation options so that all of us can access needed services and supports as we get older.
- Advocate for state and local policies that support flexibility in zoning and housing options so that we all have more choices about living situations that best meet our needs.



Goal 6

Establish the New Hampshire Alliance for Healthy Aging as a trusted and knowledgeable resource for legislators, policy makers and the media on policy issues related to aging in New Hampshire.

Strategies:

- Participate in informational gatherings for policy makers and legislators to inform them on key issues and strengthen relationships in order to work together effectively.
- Identify and cultivate legislative champions for issues affecting all of us as we age.
- Seek media opportunities related to key policy or legislative topics to inform decision makers and the public at large.
- Disseminate data that describes the predicted economic impact of aging in New Hampshire on individuals, communities, and state services, so that the public at large understands the scope and depth of the challenges and opportunities.

Goal 7

Build upon the New Hampshire Alliance for Healthy Aging's role as a watchdog on key legislation and policy affecting older people in New Hampshire and marshal people and resources to react to upcoming issues.

Strategies:

- Ensure that advocates, including older people, are trained and ready to testify on key issues.
- Ensure that a strong system exists to notify and activate advocates.
- Determine a process to assess the relevancy of key federal and regional policy decisions on New Hampshire's older people and create methods for response.