



**NHAHA Quarterly Meeting
Creating a Collective Approach to Address an Aging NH**

September 13, 2023. 9:00am – 11:30am

Meeting Summary

Welcome and NHAHA Updates

Presenter: Jennifer Rabalais, UNH Center on Aging and Community Living, NHAHA Coordinator

Jennifer welcomed everyone to the September NHAHA Quarterly meeting and reviewed the day's agenda. Meeting materials will be posted on the NHAHA [website](#).

Next, Jennifer reviewed a couple of NHAHA's values:

1. Bridging connections: NHAHA strives to bring people together to discuss shared priorities and work together to make New Hampshire a healthier state. She reminded the attendees of the scheduled breaks within the meeting as well as the lunch afterward, which provides an opportunity for attendees to network.
2. Accessibility: providing accessibility and making sure everyone can fully participate during meetings is a core value of NHAHA. She reviewed the accessibility provided during the meeting, including captioning provided by Denise Gracia, and availability of microphones for all speakers.

In the spirit of creating connections and encouraging collaborative efforts, Jennifer then had each attendee introduce themselves.

NHAHA Updates

Jennifer provided updates on a few of the activities that NHAHA is currently involved in and encouraged the group to visit the NHAHA [website](#) for more information regarding events and activities.

- ***Transportation Strategic Priority Area:*** The workgroup is working to support volunteer driver programs (VDPs) across the state. VDPs were negatively impacted by a loss of volunteer drivers during COVID-19, but NHAHA has worked to create a network for volunteer drivers to connect for support, learning, and growth. NHAHA has also recently

received funding that will all for an additional 6 months of marketing for a state-wide volunteer driver recruitment initiative. Previously launched in the fall of 2022, NHAHA will once again be launching an advertisement campaign for the recruitment initiative in the fall of this year. The NHAHA website also features an interactive map where individuals can go to find information about volunteer driver programs in their area.

- **Direct Care Workforce Strategic Priority Area:** On October 14th, this NHAHA workgroup will convene a direct care workforce coalition to allow direct care workers the chance to discuss their experience and needs. One of the goals of the coalition is to elevate the voices of direct care workers and create connections with workforce advocacy initiatives.
- **Reframing Aging:** A webinar will be released this fall regarding recommendations on guidelines for communicating about aging. A future NHAHA newsletter, AHA Moments, will be sent out with more information as this moves forward.

Healthy Aging Field Assessment: 7 year follow-up Assessment (slides 4-24)

Presenter: George Tremblay, Behavioral Health Improvement Institute, Keene State College

George Tremblay discussed the Healthy Aging Field Assessment, conducted by Keene State College in collaboration with the Endowment for Health which applied a strategy assessment on the study of healthy aging in New Hampshire. In their assessment of healthy aging in New Hampshire, they used a field assessment tool (FASST), which consists of structured interviews and qualitative and quantitative analysis within seven domains:

1. Shared purpose
2. Leadership and support
3. Shared knowledge
4. Quality programs and services
5. Adequate funding and policy
6. Adaptive capacity
7. Equity

Twenty-seven key respondents were interviewed and Tremblay shared the results of their analysis from the field assessment:

- Shared Purpose was the highest rated domain and illustrates a decrease in silos amongst entities.
- Equity was the lowest rated domain.
- Trends over time (2016 to 2023) of each of the seven domains showed meaningful improvements, with the exception of Equity.
- Tremblay also shared the important developments that may explain the improvements in domain ratings:
 - An Increased older adult population and a louder collective voice.
 - COVID forced many to recognize isolation in older adult groups (the pandemic highlighted failures of care, but also the essentialness of organizations like Meals on Wheels).
 - Evolution of system structures and the support from NHAHA to encourage collaboration across entities and knowledge sharing.

- Establishment of the Commission on Aging.

Tremblay also discussed Recommendations resulting from the assessment including the need to build long term services and supports, expand the direct care workforce, address caregivers needs, increase access to transportation, address the housing shortage. A master plan on aging is recommended to align coordinated efforts across different sectors as well.

Addressing Social Isolation

NH Social Isolation survey (slides 26-36)

Presenter: Margaret Franckhauser, JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc. for the Partnership for Public Health

Margaret Franckhauser provided an overview of the collaborative study conducted in 2022 between Partnership for Public Health and JSI regarding New Hampshire older adults (60+ yrs old) and social isolation. Within this study, they conducted interviews with 28 people who work with older adults, held 9 focus groups (3-12 people each), and created a written survey (872 respondents). Their findings confirmed the large extent of social isolation experienced by older adults in New Hampshire as well as the lack of information available for services or lack of access to services. She cited issues of fluctuating volunteerism rates, the need for broadband access and support, and the provision of more diverse social activities to meet individual needs.

Franckhauser recommended The U.S. Surgeon General's advisory report on isolation: [Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation](#)

Addressing Social Isolation (slides 37-46)

WellnessLink

Presenters:

Carissa Elphick, Deputy Director, Partnership for Public Health

Molly Bragg, WellnessLink Coordinator, Partnership for Public Health

Christa Demichelis, Program Specialist, Partnership for Public Health

Carissa Elphick provided background on the formation of Partnership for Public Health and its formation through the ServiceLink program. Carissa explained that WellnessLink was originally developed to provide education on disease prevention and health education as a resource for older adults during the COVID-19 pandemic. It currently acts as a hub for accessing information about healthy aging.

Molly Bragg next discussed her role in the COVID-19 Center, a component of WellnessLink. As a WellnessLink coordinator, Bragg schedules medical testing, home-bound vaccinations, and finds transportation options by connecting with mobility managers across New Hampshire.

Christa Demichelis lastly discussed Partnership for Public Health's Healthy Connections campaign to reduce loneliness and social isolation in New Hampshire, which includes educational material provided on the WellnessLink website. Demichelis also explained the community calendar available through WellnessLink's Healthy Connections, which provides information about local events for older adults to participate in along with the ability to speak

with a representative from WellnessLink over the phone to be assisted with finding local events.

For more information regarding WellnessLink, the COVID-19 Center, and Healthy Connections, visit WellnessLinkNH.org.

New Hampshire LTSS Assessment and Gaps (slides 47-54)

Presenter: Alixe Bonardi, Vice President, HSRI

Presenter: Sarah Galantowicz, Senior Policy Associate, HSRI

Alixé Bonardi and Sarah Galantowicz provided an overview of the work of the Human Services Research Institute and their role, in collaboration with the Center on Aging and Community Living at UNH, in the assessment of long-term services and support (LTSS) in New Hampshire. Bonardi reviewed their approach to system assessment and the creation of recommendations for closing any existing gaps in LTSS. The project is currently underway and will be completed by July 2024. They explained that they are currently developing an asset map, which defines what work is already being done to address LTSS needs in the state in order to leverage pre-existing resources and where additional entities need to be brought into the process.

System of Care for Healthy Aging (slides 56-66)

Presenter: Heather Carroll, NHAHA Advocacy

Presenter: Martha McLeod, NHAHA Advocacy

Heather Carroll provided an overview of the development of the System of Care Bill. She celebrated the hard work of the advocates, community members, and the bipartisan effort to bring the bill to the House.

Carroll also introduced the Legislator of the Year award, which is voted on by the NHAHA advocates, celebrating outstanding legislators and the work they do enhance to move New Hampshire forward, particularly their fight to have older adults' voices heard. Carroll and McLeod introduced Senator Bill Gannon and Senator Cindy Rosenwald, thanking them for the work, and presented both senators with their award.

Next Meeting:

Thursday December 14th, 2023 @9:00 AM

In-person only