

Ten “Best Practices” for Communities to Consider To Address the Needs of an Aging Population

1. Preventive health care, such as health and “lifestyle” education, immunizations and screenings, to reduce injuries and the onset of chronic diseases, as well as a range of in-home health assistance to help people stay in their homes longer.
2. Nutrition education to promote health eating throughout a person’s lifespan, as well as nutritious community-sponsored programs such as home-delivered meals for those who have difficulty or are unable to prepare their own meals.
3. Age-appropriate fitness programs and recreational facilities that offer walking trails, benches, fitness equipment.
4. Larger, easier-to-read road signage, grooved lane dividers, reflective road markings and dedicated left-turn lanes. Driver assessments and training to promote safe driving for all ages, especially after strokes or other health incidents. Transportation options for people who cannot or do not want to drive.
5. Special planning and training to help public safety personnel and other first responders locate and assist older adults during emergencies and disasters.
6. Home modification programs that make necessary adjustments for people with special needs. Zoning and subdivision plans that promote a variety of affordable, accessible housing located near medical, commercial and other desired services, as well as shared housing options for older adults and their caregivers.
7. Tax assistance and property-tax relief for those in financial need and programs to protect older adults against fraud and abuse.
8. Job training, re-training and lifelong learning opportunities, as well as flexible employment options to attract and retain older workers.
9. Opportunities to engage older adults in community boards and commissions, as well as purposeful volunteer activities in local government and non-profit organizations.
10. Single point of entry for information and access to ALL aging information and services in the community, and the strategic expansion of necessary services to support the older adults to age with dignity and independence in their home and community.