

PARTNERSHIP WITH LT. GOVERNOR'S OFFICE ON AGING EXPANDS PROGRAMS

Proven arthritis interventions can help prevent disability and reduce visits to the doctor

Public Health Problem

- Almost a third of South Carolina adults have arthritis.
- Arthritis is even more common with aging – over half of people 65 and older have some form of the disease.
- Arthritis is the leading cause of disability and amounts to more than \$2 billion for South Carolina's total arthritis-related costs.
- The reach and visibility of programs for people with arthritis has traditionally been limited due to minimal state and federal funding.

Program

- South Carolina recently became one of twelve states to receive a four-year grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that substantially increases the resources available for arthritis. This enables South Carolina to expand the reach of evidence-based prevention programs through partnerships.
- A partnership established with the Lt. Governor's Office on Aging provides an opportunity to work with the statewide Aging Network to set up agreements with Area Agencies on Aging and County Councils on Aging to implement evidence-based interventions. The Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging is South Carolina's State Unit on Aging and works through partnerships to meet the needs of older state residents.
- The South Carolina Arthritis Program goal is to reach 40,000 people over four years.

Impact

During year one of the funding cycle the following has been accomplished:

- More evidenced-based programs are already reaching residents partially fulfilling an objective of the state arthritis plan to "Develop and expand services to people with arthritis." Twenty-one Councils on Aging in the state have offered at least one program at one or more sites
- Increased awareness of and participation in evidence-based programs by people with arthritis
- Better quality programs for older adults - participant feedback is positive
- Better coordination in state action due to the strong partnership between the South Carolina Department of Health & Environmental Control and the State Unit on Aging – over eighty staff or volunteers from the Councils on Aging have been trained in at least one of the three proven interventions

Contact

Cora Plass

South Carolina Department of Health & Environmental Control

803-898-0349

plasscf@dhec.sc.gov