

Montana Department of Health and Human Services

Falls Prevention Program Grantee Profile, Fiscal Year 2021

Goals

This 3-year grant aims to:

- Through robust partnerships, develop a result-based, comprehensive strategy for reducing falls and falls risk among older adults and adults with disabilities living in your community; and
- Significantly increase the number of older adults and adults with disabilities who participate in evidence-based falls prevention programs, while concurrently pursuing the sustainability of these programs beyond the end of the grant period.

Activities

The grantee and its partners will:

- Expand Stepping On and implement Stay Active and Independent for Life (SAIL) into all 10 area agency on aging (AAA) regions.
- Evaluate project activities and disseminate results to local, state, and national audiences.
- Develop and implement a unified outreach and marketing campaign.
- Engage with the Aging Services Bureau to identify and support affiliated AAA senior centers and partners as a primary source for implementing and sustaining Stepping On and SAIL.

Interventions

- Stepping On
- Stay Independent and Active for Life (SAIL)

Partners

To achieve the goals of this project, the grantee will collaborate with these key partners:

- Montana Aging Services Bureau
- Montana Area Agencies on Aging
- Montana Area Agencies on Aging Association
- Montana Chronic Disease Prevention & Health Promotion Bureau

-
- Montana Disability and Health Program
 - Montana State University Extension

Outcomes

The grantee anticipates the following results from this project.

- Establish the 10 regional AAAs as regionalized network hubs to implement and refer to community falls prevention programs.
- Embed Stepping on and SAIL classes into 30 new sites statewide within all 10 regional AAA with a focus on current areas with no falls prevention programs.
- Engage 1,200 participants in Stepping On and SAIL, achieving an 80% retention rate.
- Upgrade the statewide program database to include additional falls prevention programs and have all sites utilize the database system.
- Increase older adults' improvement in behavior and health status to prevent falls.

Montana Department of Health and Human Services

Falls Prevention Program Grant Impact Summary, Fiscal Year 2021

Most Significant Accomplishments

- Over this grant, 1,989 older adults and adults with disabilities attended a falls prevention workshop.
- Expanded to 43 out of the 56 counties in Montana to implement falls prevention programs.
- Reached four of the eight Tribal Nations in Montana to implement a falls prevention program.
- Expanded program reach into the rural and frontier areas of Montana.
- Embedded SAIL and/or Stepping On into the Chronic Disease Prevention & Health Promotion Bureau Coordinated Contract as a deliverable for local health departments.
- Built new partnerships with the health care organizations, local Parks and Recreation Departments, YMCA's, Montana Veterans Affairs, and Montana State University Extension.
- Maintained and enhanced the falls prevention online database system. This system allows for online registration, tracking participants and workshops, and creating reports.
- Collaborated with the Montana Arthritis Program, which approved the SAIL program as a recognized arthritis management program, to expand access to evidence-based interventions for both conditions.

Lessons Learned

- High staff turnover within partner organizations impacted the ability to establish and maintain a consistent presence in communities. The Montana Falls Prevention Program shifted its focus from training individual leaders to embedding the program within the organization's work plan.
- Recruitment and retention of Master Trainers for both SAIL and Stepping On were challenging. To mitigate this, strategically recruited and trained internal staff to serve as Master Trainers. This approach reduced reliance on external individuals and created more sustainable and reliable training infrastructure.
- Prioritizing quality over quantity, a thorough vetting process for new leaders was important. Built a process to ensure that leaders have the necessary skills and qualifications to effectively deliver the evidence-based programs with fidelity.

What's Next

The Montana Falls Prevention Program has built a foundation for sustainability, particularly through its inclusion in the Chronic Disease Prevention & Health Program Bureau Coordinated Contract, which embeds falls prevention activities into the work of local health departments across the state.

The Montana Falls Prevention Program also has built internal capacity by training multiple staff as Master Trainers, which ensures the state can independently continue to offer leader trainings and support local sites.

The Montana Falls Prevention Program will continue to leverage diverse partnerships with organizations such as the Montana Arthritis Program, hospitals, and YMCAs to integrate falls prevention into various community settings.

The Montana Falls Prevention Program will continue to secure sustainability resources to maintain and scale its long-term impact.

Grantee Contact

Melisa Dale, Program Manager, Arthritis Program, Montana Department of Health Melissa.Dale@mt.gov