

Appalachian State University

Falls Prevention Program Grantee Profile, Fiscal Year 2022

Goals

This 3-year grant aims to:

- Develop or expand capacity to significantly increase the number of older adults and adults with disabilities who participate in evidence-based falls prevention programs to empower them to reduce their risk of falls.
- Enhance the sustainability of evidence-based falls prevention programs through the implementation of robust sustainability strategies.

Activities

The grantee and its partners will:

- Build on existing partnerships with senior centers in rural Northwest North Carolina to train more leaders for A Matter of Balance and Tai Chi for Arthritis and Falls Prevention.
- Utilize enhanced instructor infrastructure to offer classes on a consistent schedule.
- Work with local hospitals and health care providers to build awareness of the fall prevention programs.
- Offer pre- and post- workshop balance assessments for all program participants and share data with the NC Falls Prevention Coalition.

Interventions

- A Matter of Balance (MOB)
- Tai Chi for Arthritis and Fall Prevention (TCAFP)

Partners

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

- High Country Area Agency on Aging

Outcomes

The grantee anticipates the following results from this project.

- Engage 840 participants in TCAFP and 560 in MOB.

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- Establish a medical referral network across seven counties for falls prevention programs.
 - Provide pre- and post- workshop balance assessment comparison data to all participants upon completion.

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Falls Prevention Program Grant Impact Summary, Fiscal Year 2022

Most Significant Accomplishments

- Over this grant, 1,074 participants were engaged.
- Delivered programs in 7 High Country Rural Counties.
- Trained 18 new MOB coaches and 29 new TCAFP leaders.
- Partnered with the High Country Area Agency on Aging, multiple senior centers, multiple churches, multiple health departments, social workers, dietitians, and other community organizations.
- Created strong connections between instructors and host sites to maintain a consistent class offering schedule.
- Fostered a strong fall prevention community with invested participants and instructors to increase visibility and availability of programming.
- Secured future grant funding with fall prevention classes written into other projects.
- Created and maintained a robust communication network within the community to distribute announcements and newsletters.
- Began referral partnerships with local providers and rehab facilities.

Lessons Learned

- Navigating Hurricane Helene and the aftermath showed us the importance of maintaining social connection and strong fall prevention programming in the midst of challenges and geography with increased fall risks.
- In an attempt to include more community members in programming, we intentionally diversified the locations in which we offered classes. This resulted in greater accessibility and an increase in our participants.
- Resources from the ACL and NCOA (including the annual conference) provided us with ideas to increase programming, sustainability, and creativity in making preventative programs more widely available.

What's Next

The Appalachian Institute for Health and Wellness will continue to be a regional leader in offering falls prevention and healthy aging programming. We have secured various funding sources, including the Older Americans Act Title III-D funding, BlueCross BlueShield, and the Older Adult Mental Health Grant, to support fall prevention efforts in different ways.

In the next year, the Aging Well program will continue to offer evidence-based fall prevention services while also diversifying its programming and partnering with dietitians, social workers, and speech-language pathologists in the clinic to provide healthy aging programming. The staff also continues to seek funding to further support fall prevention efforts in the High Country.

Grantee Contact

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