

University of Tennessee

Falls Prevention Program Grantee Profile, Fiscal Year 2022

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 the community.
- 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:

- Engage older adult participants in A Matter of Balance (MOB) workshops in Tennessee.
- Train coaches across the state to facilitate MOB workshops.
- Develop MOB as a program offered and sustained through University of Tennessee Extension's network of trained volunteers.

Interventions

- A Matter of Balance (MOB)

Partners

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

- Area Agencies on Aging
- Tennessee Commission on Aging and Disability

Outcomes

The grantee anticipates the following results from this project.

- Engage approximately 2,800 older adults in MOB.
- Achieve 80% or higher participant completion rate in MOB.
- Expand access to falls prevention programs by offering MOB in at least 50% of Tennessee counties.

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Falls Prevention Program Grant Impact Summary, Fiscal Year 2022

Most Significant Accomplishments

- Over this grant, 2,456 older adults were engaged.
- Delivered programs statewide with 244 completed workshops in rural, urban, and suburban areas.
- Trained 156 new MOB coaches via 16 coach trainings conducted by Master Trainers.
- Partnered with the Tennessee Department of Health/local health departments, Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS) of Tennessee, Ballad Health, and regional aging networks to expand reach.
- Expanded statewide training capacity by adding seven Master Trainers strategically placed across the three regions in Tennessee to make training more accessible to partners and agents.
- Established successful referral and implementation pathways with BCBS, which were then replicated with other healthcare partners like Ballad Health.
- Embedded MOB within UT Extension's county network to support ongoing delivery beyond the grant period.
- Maintained a public workshop website; developed social media graphics; produced an MOB leader guide ("Taking the Right Steps to Prevent Falls"); and released educational podcast content.

Lessons Learned

- Virtual data collection and workflows are essential. Early paper-based methods hindered returns, and shifting to standardized electronic collection and a state-managed process improved completeness and timeliness.
- Seasonality and modality matter. Winter weather reduced in-person attendance for this population; remote offerings mitigated disruption. Senior centers remained the most reliable in-person hosts.
- Partner operating models can boost fidelity and completion. BCBS's pairing of seasoned and new coaches and dedicated technical support increased attendance and completion—an approach now informing broader implementation.

What's Next

University of Tennessee Extension and partners will continue MOB delivery statewide. Coaches will continue registering workshops and submitting data for student workers to enter and track. The sustainability plan prioritizes no-fee access for participants and leverages the state and local Offices on Aging and Disability to fund participant workbooks and incentive items, reducing county-level burden. UT Extension will train BCBS Health Navigators up to three times a year, maintain Master Trainer coverage across regions, and strengthen referral pathways with payer and health system partners (ex: BCBS, Ballad Health) to identify and enroll high-risk older adults.

Regional coalitions (e.g., Southeast Tennessee Fall Prevention Workgroup) and coordinated remote offerings will be used to extend reach to rural and home-bound participants, while ongoing communications (website, social media, podcasts, conference presentations) will support recruitment and stakeholder engagement.

These strategies position MOB for post-grant replication and sustained inclusion in county plans of work and aging-network programming across Tennessee.

Grantee Contact

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