

# **Section II**

## **Model Health Promotion Programs For New Jersey Seniors**

## MODEL PROGRAMS

Today in the United States, only one in three communities offers a range of health promotion programs for seniors. This is changing, however, as the private and public sectors are beginning to respond to the science documenting the benefits of healthy behaviors for older adults, as well as the demand from consumers for community-based health promotion programs.

In considering which health promotion programs to implement, both community leaders and potential participants are interested in results. Replicating established programs that have proven to be effective elsewhere allows communities to get programs up and running quickly and with less investment of resources. Participants in these programs can expect to have the same positive outcomes that were documented in other sites.

The model programs featured in this section have demonstrated positive outcomes and are based on current science. Several of the model programs designated by this logo



are further defined as “Evidence-Based Disease Prevention Programs,” meaning they are recognized by the National Council on Aging as effective programs that were translated directly from a clinical research study. Nearly all of the programs described in this section include a comprehensive program manual that shows ‘what works’ and ‘how to do it’. Each program listed includes local contact information for you to learn more about implementation and replication.

### **Additional Ways to Access Information on Local Health Promotion Programs**

- ❖ New Jersey’s network of county offices on aging provide information and assistance for older adults and people with disabilities. They also work with their local aging networks, including senior centers and nutrition sites, to provide a range of programs to promote healthy aging. Call NJEASE toll-free at 1-877-222-3737 or visit <http://www.state.nj.us/health/senior/> to contact your local county office on aging.
- ❖ Local health departments also provide health promotions services such as health screenings, flu immunization, health education and physical activity programs. Find your local health department at <http://www.state.nj.us/health/lh/directory/lhdselectcounty.htm>
- ❖ Web-based resources on New Jersey programs include:
  - Many state and national evidence-based programs can be found in the HealthEASE Resource Directory at <http://www.state.nj.us/health/senior/stayinghealthy.shtml#Promotion>.
  - For information on how to implement healthy aging programs for older adults see the HealthEASE Program Guide at <http://www.state.nj.us/health/health/senior/stayinghealthy.shtml>.

- The Mayors Wellness Campaign is an initiative of the New Jersey Health Care Institute and the New Jersey State League of Municipalities. The public-private partnership of civic, academic and health policy advocates fosters active living and healthy lifestyles by providing communities the structure and resources to implement healthy community initiatives. The campaign, in which 196 municipalities are currently participating, focuses on four strategic areas: youth, community, employers and seniors. A campaign toolkit, titled *Seniors in Motion* is available at <http://www.mayorswellnesscampaign.org/>. It includes senior physical activity and walking programs. (For more information, contact Judith Doyle, New Jersey Health Care Institute at 609-393-4931, [Doylej@aol.com](mailto:Doylej@aol.com)).

#### **Call to Action<sup>16</sup>**

- Encourage local businesses and public agencies to promote wellness.
- Be a champion for wellness; encourage the use of proven health promotion and disease prevention programs and policies.
- Work with colleagues from other communities to share ideas on successes, challenges and lessons learned.
- Propose legislation and resources that support seniors in their healthy behavior choices.

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

**PROJECT HEALTHY BONES (STATEWIDE).** This exercise and education program for people with, or at risk of osteoporosis, includes exercises that target the body's larger muscle groups to improve strength, balance and flexibility. The 24-week curriculum includes sessions on the importance of exercise, nutrition, safety, drug therapy and lifestyle factors. The program is peer led. Lead Coordinators from local health departments, county offices on aging, Retired and Senior Volunteer Programs (RSVPs) and other community-based organizations coordinate the program at the local level and oversee program delivery and training for peer leaders.

Project Healthy Bones began in 1997 and today reaches over 2,000 older adults statewide. The program is based on research that links strength training exercises to improved bone density in older adults. Hospital-based regional program trainers provide technical assistance and train Lead Coordinators. (For more information, contact the Office of Community Education and Wellness, NJ Department of Health and Senior Services, 609-292-9152, [susan.lachenmayr@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:susan.lachenmayr@doh.state.nj.us)).



*“The best indicator of success is that the students continue to take classes -- some for years! Each time we start a new class, it is immediately filled to capacity,” Nancy Hess, Project Healthy Bones Lead Coordinator - NORWESCAP. (Morris, Sussex and Warren Counties)*

*“I frequently go to New York via the subway. To get up to the street, I used to have to hang onto the handrails for the last flight of stairs. Now, I can go up three flights of stairs much more easily,” Virginia, age 81, Florham Park. (Morris County)*



**Project Healthy Bones** received the 2006 Society for Public Health Education National Program Excellence Award.



**Project Healthy Bones** was featured as a model program in the 2004 U.S. Surgeon General's Report on Bone Health and Osteoporosis.

HealthEASE is a coordinated health promotion and disease prevention program, developed and evaluated by the NJ DHSS through a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation NJ Health Initiatives grant. HealthEASE establishes a local centralized health information source for seniors and their caregivers to provide awareness about health promotion activities across all ranges of health status. Components include physical activity, education and coordinated screening programs designed specifically for persons over age sixty.

HealthEASE *Move Today* (STATEWIDE). *Move Today* is a 30-45 minute non-aerobic exercise class designed to improve flexibility, balance and stamina. Trained peer leaders run the classes that meet once or twice a week for a total of twelve sessions. Participants assess their health, physical well-being and intent to make behavior changes before and upon completion of the program. The exercises and guidelines are based on current nationally recognized standards and science. Participants who complete the program report improved mobility, reach, and balance. (For more information, contact the Office of Community Education and Wellness, NJ Department of Health and Senior Services, 609-292-9152, [susan.lachenmayr@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:susan.lachenmayr@doh.state.nj.us)).



*When Anna told her doctor she was going to teach an exercise class, he saw an out-of-shape, overweight senior who was a self-proclaimed couch potato. Today, two years later, she continues to lead the exercises. "I've lost 12 pounds and lowered my blood glucose levels. I used to fall frequently, but in the 2 years I've been leading the exercise class, I haven't fallen." Anna, age 69, Beachwood. (Ocean County)*

*"With arthritis in my knees and shoulders, I could hardly walk. I joined the Move Today program to make me strong and able to walk without pain. Exercise and socialization with the other seniors are good for the health of the mind and body." Mrs. V, age 80+, New Milford. (Bergen County)*

**Strong For Life (MIDDLESEX COUNTY).** The program, which focuses on upper and lower body strength, was created by Boston University through a national pilot program. The Interfaith Network of Care, Inc. provides the program in local community sites. Seniors and people with disabilities participate in weekly group exercises led by a Master Trainer. Then, twice a week in the comfort of their own homes, they do the exercises while watching an instructional video. The exercises focus on movements that are used in everyday tasks. The group setting encourages social engagement and accountability. Participants receive hands-on assistance each week. (For more information, contact Sue Dowling, Interfaith Network of Care, Inc., 732-247-1655, [sdowling@interfaithnetworkofcare.org](mailto:sdowling@interfaithnetworkofcare.org)).



*“Before this group, I had zero exercise in my life. The class is helping me with my stiffness. I like the group atmosphere.”*  
*D. E., age 77, East Brunswick.*  
*(Middlesex County)*

*“One of our tenants has been able to stop using her cane. The tenants feel the program provides them with an opportunity to be together and learn how to exercise in a way that is safe and life enriching.”* Joseph,  
*Manager, Senior Citizen Housing, Spotswood.*  
*(Middlesex County)*

**Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program (STATEWIDE).** This community-based recreational exercise program, developed by the National Arthritis Foundation, is recognized by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as an effective evidence-based program for people with mild to moderate arthritis and related conditions. Low impact exercises help maintain muscle strength, increase joint flexibility and range of motion while improving overall stamina. Relaxation techniques and health education topics are also included. Certified instructors guide participants to perform the gentle exercises and activities that move every joint in the body. Classes meet two times a week for eight weeks. Participants in the program report decreased arthritis pain and disability. For information on New Jersey programs, contact: 1-888-467-3112 or e-mail [PLotkowi@arthritis.org](mailto:PLotkowi@arthritis.org). For **BERGEN, ESSEX, HUDSON, PASSAIC, SUSSEX AND UNION COUNTIES**, contact: 1/877/973-6500 or e-mail [Kathleen.Hodapp@ahsys.org](mailto:Kathleen.Hodapp@ahsys.org).; For **BURLINGTON, CAMDEN AND GLOUCESTER**, contact 856/325-3800 or e-mail [pmgordy@virtua.org](mailto:pmgordy@virtua.org).





*“Everyone thinks the program is very beneficial. Not only do participants feel better after each class, they also have fun with the exercise routines and movement activities,” Gail DeKovessey, certified instructor. (Bergen County)*

*“I have arthritis in my hips and hands. It was so severe that I couldn’t bend my fingers and could hardly close my hands. I took arthritis classes and learned exercises to relieve the pain,” June, age 75, Stockholm. (Sussex County)*

## WALKING

**Live Long Live Well Walking Program – NJ DHSS (STATEWIDE).** This program encourages New Jersey residents age 50 and older to walk at least 30 minutes most days of the week for a period of twelve weeks. It also provides resource materials to communities and organizations to encourage the development of walking clubs. Participants receive a walking log to track their progress and receive a certificate of achievement for submitting completed logs. As of September 2006, 1,484 NJ older adults logged in 332,898 miles in 19 counties. The average walker walked 234 miles.

A community walking kit is available online at <http://www.state.nj.us/health/senior/walking>. Downloadable materials include: walking tips, benefits of physical activity, existing walking clubs (34 are currently listed), publicity poster/flyers, a mileage tally sheet, and participant logbooks. These materials can be reproduced by local agencies for distribution. (For more information, contact the Office of Community Education and Wellness, NJ Department of Health and Senior Services, 1-800-792-8820, [dacs@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:dacs@doh.state.nj.us)).



Palisade Park Senior Community Walk (Bergen County)

*“I joined the Cumberland County Adopt-a-Road Program and walk to pick up trash. It keeps me active and I’m doing something for the environment,” John, age 91, Millville. (Cumberland County)*

*The Gloucester County’s “Step by Step” walking program helps seniors find new ways to make walking a part of their lifestyle. Participants set personal goals and receive pedometers and a logbook. Blood pressure checks and individual counseling are available. (Gloucester County)*



*Live Long, Live Well* received the 2005 national award for the most innovative physical activity program from the International Council on Active Aging.



## GOOD NUTRITION

**Intercultural Nutrition Program (SOMERSET COUNTY).** To encourage friendship and understanding among seniors from different cultures, senior centers encourage participants to share information about their culture, way of life and food. The Somerset County Office on Aging established guidelines for centers to implement multicultural programs at least four times per year. The Office on Aging assists the centers in planning special cultural observances. Center activities have included discussions on the history of Kwanzaa, famous or little known black inventors, Martin Luther King's life and mission; Chinese New Year celebrations and flute recitals; Japanese tea ceremonies; and Asian Indian celebrations such as Spring Festival (Happy Holi), Divali Celebration (Festival of Lights), and Raksha Bandan. (For more information, contact Angela Dubivsky, [Dubivsky@co.somerset.nj.us](mailto:Dubivsky@co.somerset.nj.us))



*“The friends I have met at the Center offer humor, sensitivity and emotional support. Many are older than me and I am able to learn (even at this age) through their life experience,”*  
*Asha, age 64, Bridgewater.*  
*(Somerset County)*

*“The senior center manager created interest and incentives for Asian Indians to participate by encouraging displays of Indian culture and Indian food,”*  
*Barum, age 75, Warrenbrook. (Somerset County)*

**Focus/Suburban Essex Nutrition Program *Health and Fitness Café* (ESSEX COUNTY).**

This nutrition program has been serving nutritious meals to seniors since the early 1970s. Health and fitness initiatives began in 2001 with a walking program. Most participants are in their mid-eighties. The program helps seniors learn healthy behaviors and new skills and promotes well-being through several weekly activities, including: healthy breakfasts (eggbeaters and soy-based sausage); trail walking in a local mall where participants use pedometers to track their progress; T'ai chi exercises; blood pressure, pulse and weight checks; and participation in the NJ Senior Olympics. The program also offers indoor golf lessons from a retired professional, and golfing at a local course using equipment donated by businesses in the community. (For more information, contact Jackie Jones, Program Coordinator, Essex County, 973-624-2528 ext. 141, [jjones@focus411.org](mailto:jjones@focus411.org)).



*“I believe seniors appreciate the opportunity to learn, experience new adventures, and develop new skills, and when they participate, they have a new zest for life. Many seniors say they have always wanted to do these activities, but most did not have the money or time to pursue them,” Jackie Jones, Program Coordinator. (Essex County)*

## CHRONIC DISEASE MANAGEMENT PROGRAMS



**Chronic Disease Self-Management Program (ATLANTIC, CAMDEN, CAPE MAY, SOMERSET AND WARREN COUNTIES).** The Chronic Disease Self-Management (CDSM) Program assists people who have different chronic health conditions learn skills to manage disease and maintain and/or increase life's activities. Trained peer leaders facilitate the sessions. Local groups meet for 2-1/2 hours weekly for six weeks. The program enhances regular treatment and disease-specific education and is appropriate for people with one or multiple chronic conditions. Classes are very interactive and build participant confidence to manage their health and maintain active fulfilling lives. (For more information, contact the Office of Community Education and Wellness, NJ Department of Health and Senior Services, 609-943-3563, [dorothy.mcknight@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:dorothy.mcknight@doh.state.nj.us); for Camden, contact NJ Institute for Successful Aging, 856-566-7083, [divitocl@umdnj.edu](mailto:divitocl@umdnj.edu)).

*"I'm very good at controlling my diabetes because my husband also had it, but this class taught me how to distract myself to get over the pain,"*  
Saroja, age 88, Willingboro.  
(Burlington County)



*"For me, it's a way to conquer the depression and pain I feel from my illness by getting actively involved with other people who have similar problems,"* Glossi, Camden peer leader.  
(Camden County).

*"This program taught me how to focus on ways I could relieve stress and help myself feel better,"*  
Fay, age 90, Princeton Junction.  
(Mercer County)



**Lasting Lifestyles (MONMOUTH COUNTY).** Seniors and caregivers utilize a web-based program to help them self-manage their chronic diseases and remain independent. Individuals can access information in three primary areas: wellness, caregiving, and lifestyle. The program extends in-home, ambulatory and/or outpatient services through client tracking of key health indicators, e-mail, chat, video conferencing, discussion forums, ask an expert, risk screening tools, and on-line Q&A. Wellness tools include: nutrition information (food and fitness diaries and healthy recipes); medications inventory and reminders, medications look-up; video on demand library; disease resource centers (diabetes, congestive heart failure, and Alzheimer's); self-monitoring of vital signs; smart living information (finance, legal, on-line shopping); and spiritual information (access to local places of worship, daily readings, pastoral care professionals, and parish nursing programs). The national web service is designed for local sponsorships and community support. For more information, contact Janet Corbally, VieBridge Connections, 732-761-3597, [jcorbally@viebridgeconnections.net](mailto:jcorbally@viebridgeconnections.net)).



*“My friends tell me they haven’t seen me like this in years. Lasting Lifestyles has taught me there is so much more to live for. It brought me back to life!” Stephen, age 75 of Freehold, has congestive heart failure, diabetes, arthritis, hypertension, and is a disabled veteran. His web-based Lasting Lifestyles VieBridge Connections plan includes monitoring of vital signs and activities.  
(Monmouth County)*

*“This program stops me from sitting and staring at the walls. I can go anywhere in the world with a computer. No matter how old you are, you can still learn.” Robert, age 67, Lincroft.  
(Monmouth County)*

## COORDINATED SCREENINGS

**HealthEASE Coordinated Screenings (BERGEN AND OCEAN COUNTIES).** Local health and aging service provider agencies partner to provide a wide range of community-based screenings, including vision, hearing, blood pressure, cholesterol, body mass index, bone density, cancer, and diabetes. By bringing resources together in one place, such as senior or community centers, seniors receive information about their health status and risk for chronic disease, along with information about healthy aging strategies, including nutrition, exercise, home safety, and falls prevention. Partnering agencies establish protocols for referral if individuals have abnormal screening results. (For more information, contact the NJ DHSS Office of Community Education and Wellness, NJ Department of Health and Senior Services, 609-943-3573, [dorothy.mcknight@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:dorothy.mcknight@doh.state.nj.us)).



*“A dentist at the screening diagnosed me with severe periodontal disease. It was very costly, but the dentist helped me apply for a dental service program. Now I have a brand new smile! I advise anyone to take advantage of these events. You never know what can happen,” Kathleen, age 60, Hackensack. (Bergen County)*

**Senior Health and Awareness Program (HUNTERDON COUNTY).** The program started in 1976 and is now in multiple locations, with over 30 agencies and more than 10 doctors and several nurses volunteering their time and expertise. Forty-four different tests and consults, along with educational displays, are offered. Benefits include: educating seniors on risk factors of chronic diseases, screening tests to detect early onset, empowering seniors to recognize the early warning signs of disease, educating seniors on health issues and preventative measures, and encouraging seniors to take charge of their health in a positive way. (For more information, contact Eleanor Vesey, Hunterdon County Division of Senior Services, 908-728-7224, [evesey@co.hunterdon.nj.us](mailto:evesey@co.hunterdon.nj.us)).

*“In two cases, colon cancer was detected in very early stages. Peripheral artery disease and high blood pressure was found in persons who had no idea they had the condition.”  
Eleanor Vesey, Program Director. (Hunterdon County)*



## HEALTH EDUCATION

**HealthEASE Health Education (AVAILABLE STATEWIDE).** Curriculum includes six one-hour sessions on health promotion and disease prevention/management, designed by topic experts from the New Jersey Institute for Successful Aging. The modules can be delivered by health professionals at local community sites and used as stand-alone sessions or as a series. The health education sessions cover health promotion issues that are critical to help individuals age 50 or older maintain good health. Older adults are encouraged to improve their health by pledging to make at least one healthy behavior change. Topics for the six programs include: *Move Today*: Exercise and Getting Fit; Serving Up Good Nutrition; Bone Up On Your Health (falls prevention); Be Wise About Your Medications; Keeping Up The Beat (self management techniques for cardiovascular disease); and Maximizing Memory (maintaining memory and cognitive skills). A half-day training prepares health or aging professionals to facilitate this turn-key program and includes all materials needed to conduct educational sessions. (For more information, contact the Office of Community Education and Wellness, NJ Department of Health and Senior Services, 609-943-3573, [dorothy.mcknight@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:dorothy.mcknight@doh.state.nj.us)).



*“Thanks to the program, I am now walking more, I’m careful about reading food labels and I have information on how to take better care of myself,” Rosa, age 70, Lakewood, who has high blood pressure and participated in a health education program for Latinas. (Ocean County)*

*After a ‘Keeping Your Mind Sharp’ session, Mrs. M shared, “The class led me to recognize that my husband’s memory issues were more than the normal aging process. As a result of the class, I was able to get additional medical attention for my husband.” (Ocean County)*

*“We attended an education program at our AARP club on memory and medication misuse. It was the best presentation because we played memory games and learned practical tips on how to improve memory,” Bob and Adele. (Bergen County)*

*“Hearing this feedback on ‘Keeping Your Mind Sharp’ was wonderful, we couldn’t have been more pleased!” Joan Campanelli, (Bergen County Division of Senior Services).*



**RWJ-Hamilton Community Education Senior Program (MERCER COUNTY).** This comprehensive program addresses the physical, mental, and social aspects of aging. Seniors use a state-of-the-art fitness center and have access to screenings and education, healthy cooking, medication management, support groups and computer classes. The program's walking group logs approximately 800 miles per month. Measures of the program's success include reduced cholesterol counts and lowered blood pressure readings among its members. The program provides referrals to primary care and specialists for health problems detected during screenings. (For more information, contact Shirley Roberts, 609-584-5900, [sroberts@rwjuh.edu](mailto:sroberts@rwjuh.edu)).



*“I’ve learned so much about nutrition and had fun doing it. It’s really helped me control my diabetes,” Rose, age 73, Hamilton.  
(Mercer County)*

*“Learning how to eat healthy has helped me approach life in a whole new way,” Emily, age 71, Hamilton.  
(Mercer County)*

## MENTAL HEALTH AND SOCIALIZATION



**Healthy IDEAS - Identifying Depression, Empowering Activities for Seniors (Parts of ESSEX AND UNION COUNTIES).** Healthy IDEAS is an evidence-based program for the identification and management of depression symptoms in older adults receiving community-based case management. At risk individuals, identified through a depression screening questionnaire, are encouraged to participate in behavioral activation therapy (a depression self-management intervention), and/or are referred to appropriate professional health or mental health care for additional services. (For more information, contact the Office of Community Education and Wellness, NJ Department of Health and Senior Services 609-633-8746, [maryann.marian@doh.state.nj.us](mailto:maryann.marian@doh.state.nj.us)).

*“I’m doing well now, but it is always good to learn about depression since you never know when things might change,” said Ms. N, age 74, Irvington, who has several chronic conditions but has no depressive symptoms.  
(Essex County)*

*“The staff at JFS tries very hard but I’m a rough customer. It helps to know that people care. Without people, you ain’t got nothing.” SY, an 87-year old man from Roselle, who participates in several programs through Jewish Family Services of Central New Jersey, including: Kosher meals, Creative Arts Therapy, Case Management and Bereavement Counseling.  
(Union County)*

## SUBSTANCE ABUSE

**New Jersey Quitline and QuitNet. (AVAILABLE STATEWIDE).** Quitting smoking at any age can provide important benefits. New Jersey Quitline, which is operated by the Mayo Foundation, is a toll-free service that provides free access to trained counselors in 26 languages. Counselors assess the caller's tobacco use history and define an appropriate quitting strategy. New Jersey QuitNet provides free online counseling, expert quitting advice, and information on medications. It also offers interactive forums that are available 24 hours a day to help smokers overcome quitting challenges and celebrate smoke-free milestones with fellow quitters. Quitnet services are available in English and Spanish.

For more information about how to quit smoking call New Jersey Quitline toll-free at 1-866-NJ Stops, or visit Quitnet online at [www.quitnet.com](http://www.quitnet.com).

*“I have angina. I quit smoking and started walking on a regular basis to keep my cholesterol under control and my weight from ballooning.” Jean, age 78, Allentown.  
(Mercer County)*

**WISE - Wellness Initiative for Senior Education Program: A Prevention Program for Older Adults (AVAILABLE STATEWIDE).** This substance abuse prevention program, developed by the New Jersey Prevention Network (NJPN), promotes health through education concerning high-risk behaviors in older adults. Six two-hour sessions, facilitated by prevention specialists, address nutrition and exercise, medication use and misuse, stress management, depression and substance abuse.

Participants gain a better understanding of the biological changes associated with aging, a heightened awareness of the risk of depression among seniors, increased awareness of the prevalence of medication use and misuse, increased understanding of addiction as a disease and the ability to identify signs of substance abuse among seniors. (For more information, contact Diane Liga, New Jersey Prevention Network, 732-367-0611, [diane@njpn.org](mailto:diane@njpn.org)).

*“I liked the topics about alcohol, drugs and depression. I learned about how to build a relationship with my pharmacist to discuss my medications,” Maureen, Hoboken. (Hudson County)*

*“I enjoyed the program very much because I learned important information about aging well,” Eufemia, Hoboken.  
(Hudson County)*

***Keeping Your Memory Healthy –New Vitality (PASSAIC COUNTY).*** This interactive program focuses on how seniors can lead a healthy lifestyle and remain independent. A facilitator discusses alcohol use and misuse of medications and how these practices may diminish cognitive performance. The program encourages older adults to make informed judgments. Participants receive a special form to list their medication, emergency contact information, insurance, and allergies. Other handouts include: Questions to Ask a Doctor or Pharmacist; Safe Use of Alcohol and Medications: Tips for Older Adults; and Prevention and Treatment of Mental Health Problems Among Older Adults. Additional referral and on-site consulting are included. (For more information contact Joan Beloff, Chilton Memorial Hospital 973-831-5167, [joan\\_beloff@chiltonmemorial.org](mailto:joan_beloff@chiltonmemorial.org)).

*“I am a senior who is independent and I plan to keep my independence by being active. I attend several programs that help me physically and mentally,” Fay, age 78, Wayne.  
(Passaic County)*