

North Carolina Center for Health & Wellness at UNC Asheville Receives Major Grant for Statewide Initiative to Combat Arthritis

Healthy Aging NC, an initiative of the North Carolina Center for Health and Wellness (NCCHW) at UNC Asheville, offers easy access to, and information on, evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention programs in North Carolina. Healthy Aging NC connects people and agencies to the programs that improve population health, improves the capacity of agencies to offer these programs, provides an easy to navigate entry point into programs, and provides reports on patient outcomes.

On July 1, 2018 NCCHW received a five-year CDC grant to address the impact of the chronic disease of Arthritis in North Carolina. The competitive grant offered to only a handful of states will allow NCCHW to implement a state-based approach to increase self-management behaviors and improve the quality of life of adults with Arthritis. The approach will include multiple strategies to build the capacity of community and state agencies to engage people in group and individual-based walking and self-management programs like Walk With Ease and Living Healthy with Chronic Disease and Chronic Pain Self-Management. It also includes raising awareness and education about the proven strategies to manage Arthritis by engaging health care providers.

NCCHW's goals of the grant include: improving physical activity and health status among adults with Arthritis; engaging more adults with Arthritis in evidence-based self-management and walking programs; and increasing health education provided to adults with Arthritis. The new grant supports NCCHW's efforts to improve the health of North Carolinians as they age.

Patients engaged in Healthy Aging NC programs report greater self-efficacy, improved communication with family and clinicians about health needs, better self-management, and satisfaction with their involvement in the programs. The group-based classes offered in community settings by community agencies also reduce social isolation and allow patients to give and receive support from their peers via facilitated group discussions and physical activity.

Information about Healthy Aging NC, including contact information for the staff managing the initiative, can be found at www.healthyagingnc.com.

