

# Forum on Aging in Rural Oregon

Monday, May 15, 2023

**Track Key:**

**Track 1:** Clinical (C)

**Track 2:** Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)

**Track 3:** Policy, Programs, Resources (PPR)

**PRE-FORUM WORKSHOP**

*All Forum attendees are welcome!*

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
Necanicum West

**Advocacy Workshop: Pathways to Informed and Effective Policy and Advocacy for Oregon's Older Adults and People with Disabilities**

**Dr. James Davis | Oregon State Council for Retired Citizens, United Seniors of Oregon & Oregon Consumer League**

This workshop will focus on the pathways to informed and effective policy, programs and advocacy for seniors and people with disabilities. We will look at the past 50 years of senior and disability advocacy in Oregon and the influences that created our national model for long-term care service system for seniors and people with disabilities, as well as statewide senior/disability advocacy efforts. We will examine critical state and federal senior and disability policies and services and how they interrelate and collaborate, such as Medicaid, the Older Americans Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. We will take a close look at Oregon's Aging and People with Disabilities/Oregon Department of Human Services and the Oregon Health Authority and their impacts on seniors and people with disabilities around long-term services and supports, health care and behavioral health. We will review the priority senior/disability legislative issues in the 2023 Oregon Legislature and discuss tips and techniques to effectively advocate within the state legislative process on social policy and programs. The learning goal is for participants to leave the workshop with greater familiarity with concepts, processes, and implications of public policy and programs that affect elders and people with disabilities in Oregon.

**FORUM**

1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
Pacific Room

**Welcome & Opening Remarks**

**Stepha Dragoon, LMSW, MPAff | Oregon Office of Rural Health**  
**Senator Deb Patterson | Oregon State Legislature**  
**Keren Brown Wilson, PhD | Jessie F. Richardson Foundation**

2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
Pacific Room

**Building an Age-Friendly Ecosystem in Oregon**

**Stephanie Hooper | AGE+**  
**Peggy Maguire | Cambia Foundation**  
**Bandana Shrestha | AARP Oregon**

This plenary session will provide an interactive overview of the concept of an Age-Friendly Ecosystem, inspired by the John A. Hartford Foundation, currently forming in Oregon. This "impact network" is setting out to improve equitable health and well-being across generations for Oregonians in rural and urban areas. Centered in cross-sector collaboration, intentional relationship building and peer learning, the Ecosystem has 4 key impact areas: Re-framing Aging, Equitable access to resources, Intergenerational Solutions and Policy & Advocacy to

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catalyze systemic change. It provides a rich environment that aligns with initiatives such as Shared Future Oregon: becoming an Age-Friendly State with a Comprehensive Plan for Living & Aging that amplifies the needs and the inherent strengths of rural and underserved older adults. We will the progress, timeline, process development and inclusion of rural areas.

3:10 p.m. - 4:10 p.m.

## CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Track 3 (PPR)  
 Necanicum West

**Moving Advance Care Planning Upstream: Using Serious Illness Conversations to Promote Goal-Concordant Care and Increase Patient, Family, and Clinician Well-Being**  
**Annette Totten, PhD | Oregon Health & Science University**

This session will provide an overview of advance care planning (ACP) using the serious illness care program (SICP) from Ariadne Labs. We will focus on how ACP can be done efficiently and effectively in primary care and community settings. The format will include: 1) A multimedia presentation including evidence-based practices; 2) Engage small groups in abbreviated role-play conversations; 3) Collaboration to develop customized implementation plans; and 4) Discussion on practice, advocacy and research possibilities that could help make ACP routine. The session will build on experience from two multi-site/multi-state studies that included rural Oregon clinics, four other states, and two Canadian providences. Participants from these studies will provide lived experience and help facilitate the groups and discussion.

Track 1 (C)  
 Riverside Rooms AB

**End-of-Life Doulas in Rural Oregon: Improved Support for Living with Advanced Illness**  
**Erin Collins, MN, RN, CHPN | The Peaceful Presence Project**  
**Elizabeth Johnson, MA | The Peaceful Presence Project**

Living with serious illness can be especially difficult for individuals in rural Oregon, where hospice and palliative care are limited or nonexistent. These programs are also equally affected by staffing issues and increased census as the rest of the health care system. In the past several years, the role of the end-of-life doula has emerged to complement the medical care provided for individuals with serious and terminal illness. Embedding trained end-of-life doulas in rural communities can ensure that those in our state facing life-limiting illnesses have access to equitable, compassionate care. Learn how doulas provide emotional, spiritual and practical support in collaboration with care teams. We will discuss an end-of-life doula training that was facilitated with individuals living in rural counties of Oregon through private foundation funding.

Track 3 (PPR)  
 Seaside Rooms ABC

**Emergency Preparedness & Older Adults: Special Considerations for Preparedness and Recovery**  
**Teresa Mutschler | Douglas Public Health Network**  
**Vanessa A. Becker | Douglas Public Health Network**

Wildfires, severe weather events, floods and natural disasters can strike without much warning. Being prepared for and knowing what to do before, during and after a disaster is vital. There are many resources available for general emergency preparedness, but most do notvconsider older adults and their special preparedness needs. Transportation, accessible shelter options, vital medications, and medical equipment such as oxygen are some considerations that older adults must plan for, in addition to typical preparedness planning.

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This session will focus on identifying local hazards and specific needs for preparedness for older adults while also sharing resources. Presenters will also share an ESI-funded program, which is a collaboration between Douglas Public Health Network and Douglas County Senior Services.

4:15 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
Lobby

**Networking & Happy Hour**

## Tuesday, May 16, 2023

8:30 a.m. – 8:50 a.m.  
Pacific Room

**Breakfast & Announcements**

9:00 a.m. –  
10:00 a.m.  
Pacific Room

### PLENARY SESSION

#### **The Big 3: Aging, Housing and Behavioral Health Supports**

**Lucy Zammarelli, MA, CADC3, QMHP | Lane County Health & Human Services**  
**Randi Moore | Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments**

Behavioral health can impact nearly every aspect of rural residents' lives, including their ability to access helpful aging services, create good physical health, and maintain housing. The qualities of independence and self-sufficiency that rural dwellers cherish can be supported by informed systems that work with rural values and give residents opportunities to maintain independent lifestyles. Learn how to approach collaborative personal choice, which is a key to success in managing behavioral health conditions, utilizing available aging services, and accepting housing resources as choices that support independent living.

10:10 a.m. – 11:10 a.m.

### CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Track 2 (SDOH)  
Necanicum West

#### **Accelerated Aging in Our Communities: Identifying Risk and Areas for Opportunity**

**Laura K. Byerly, MD | Oregon Health & Science University**

Accelerated aging is a term that applies to individuals experiencing physiological aging at a rate outpacing their chronological age; it frequently occurs in those who have experienced chronic stress, trauma, and impaired social supports. Those experiencing accelerated aging are at higher risk for geriatric syndromes such as falls, incontinence, and cognitive impairment, but these conditions may go unnoticed by the health care team as the person's chronological age is not considered "geriatric." In this session, we will explore the concept of, and risk factors for, accelerated aging. We will demonstrate how social determinants of health impact accelerated aging, particularly systemic racism, experiencing houselessness, and time within the criminal justice system. We will also highlight resources and models for combating accelerated aging.

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Track 3 (PPR)  
 Riverside Rooms AB

## Improving Parkinson's Education for Rural Providers Through Project ECHO

Suvi Neukam, DO | Oregon Health & Science University

This presentation will provide a brief overview of The Oregon ECHO Network (Extension for Community Health Outcomes), which is a tele-teaching format used to improve education for rural providers through didactics, case-based learning and developing interprofessional connections. Dr. Neukam will demonstrate that participation in the Parkinson's ECHO showed improvements in various Parkinson's-related outcomes including comfort and ease of: diagnosis and treatment, prescribing Parkinson's medications, coordination of care, addressing safety and quality of life, management of non-motor Parkinson's symptoms, and familiarity with appropriate community resources. The goal of the presentation is to encourage more rural health care professionals to engage in the Parkinson's ECHO so that we may continue to improve the care of Parkinson's patients state-wide.

Track 3 (PPR)  
 Seaside Rooms ABC

## Advance Directive Community Awareness Campaign: An Innovative Model for Reaching Underserved Communities

Lorena Sprager, CHW | The Next Door, Inc.

Learn about the advanced directive and what prompted a community awareness campaign focused on it. Find out how this unique, innovative campaign focused on the Spanish-speaking Latino community. Discover how essential the community health worker model is to this ongoing campaign. Leave with resources in English and Spanish on the advance directive that you can use in your community.

11:20 a.m. - 12:20 p.m.  
 Pacific Room

## Lunch

### Online Community for Aging Services Professionals

Stepha Dragoon, LMSW, MPAff | Oregon Office of Rural Health

12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

## CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Track 3 (PPR)  
 Necanicum West

## Out Here on My Own: Using Creative Engagement to Reduce Loneliness and Isolation

Ann McQueen, PhD | TimeSlips Creative Storytelling

Kera Magarill, MA | Washington County Disability, Aging and Veteran Services

Warning: this session will include joy and laughter! COVID and other factors have highlighted the loneliness and isolation that many older adults experience and these feelings can be especially prevalent among older adults in rural areas. This session will offer research about how creative engagement can combat loneliness and isolation; give participants a chance to experience a creative engagement activity in a safe, no-pressure environment; and provide tools and resources that can be used right away to build creative partnerships in rural communities.

Track 1 (C)  
 Riverside Rooms AB

## Strengthen Your Body: A Muscle-Building Checklist for Older Adults

Erin Fredericks, MScN | FAMILIAR Foods

With every decade, our health needs change. We may feel these differences in our bodies but don't always know how to adjust our daily routines. Over time, the aging process taps our nutritional stores and alters how our cells function, making older adults uniquely vulnerable to deficiencies and health conditions. This presentation focuses on muscle mass in older adults – a

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limiting factor in mobility, longevity, and independence. Drawn from clinical literature, this session describes how muscle changes with age, why older adults need to eat (a lot!) more protein, and outlines a new dietary approach for rebuilding muscle as we age. Hear how these principles may be readily applied to a rural, in-home setting, with real-world meal-planning examples. The goal: help older adults find greater health rewards through accessible, nutrient-dense food choices.

Track 2 (SDOH)  
 Seaside Rooms ABC

### Community Health Workers: Models to Improve Care for Rural Elders

**Oralia Mendez, MPH, CHW** | OSU Center for Health Innovation

**Jodi Ready, MD FACP** | Providence Hood River Internal Medicine Clinic

**Moderation by Sarah Andersen** | Oregon Office of Rural Health

This session will include two brief presentations and a moderated panel discussion. Oralia Mendez and Stephanie Hooper will discuss how the Community Health Worker model can fill workforce shortages in geriatric-related services and system navigation for rural older adults and older adults in communities of color and/or low-income areas. Jodi Ready will present on the Connected Care model, which is currently being piloted in Hood River, Wasco, and Sherman counties. Connected Care uses Community Health Workers to improve care for frail older adults in rural areas by providing information and education, connecting patients with existing community services, and referring patients for further assessment and support.

1:40 p.m. - 2:40 p.m.

### CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Track 1 (C)  
 Necanicum West

### Supporting Long-Term Care Workforce Well-Being

**Paula Carder** | Institute on Aging, Portland State University/OHSU-PSU School of Public Health

**Raeann Voorhies** | Vanda Health

**Leah Brandis** | Oregon ECHO Network-OHSU

Retaining consistent, high-quality workers in residential long-term care (LTC) remains a challenge in Oregon and nationally. Last fall, direct care workers, industry providers, and state agency staff participated in focus groups and interviews conducted by the PSU Institute on Aging to discuss how working in assisted living and residential care facilities affects personal well-being and to share promising organizational strategies to enhance the experience of the direct care workforce. This work resulted in recommendations to support direct care worker well-being. This spring, the Oregon ECHO Network launched a learning collaborative of LTC leaders titled *Leading Employee Well-being: Promoting Organizational Change in LTC*. With the support of ODHS, this 12-session workforce well-being learning collaborative was designed to promote organizational change in long-term care. Learn about the research and how the Oregon ECHO Network is supporting the LTC workforce.

Track 3 (PPR)  
 Riverside Rooms AB

### Compassionate Presence Project: Collaboration in Action for Person-Centered Care

**Elizabeth Johnson, MA** | The Peaceful Presence Project

**Erin Collins MN RN CHPN** | The Peaceful Presence Project

**Angela Franklin** | Options for Southern Oregon, Older Adult Behavioral Health Initiative

Through a unique collaboration between the Oregon Older Adult Behavioral Health Initiative and the Peaceful Presence Project, older adults residing in assisted living facilities or in their

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homes are receiving community-based volunteer support to address social isolation and loneliness. Based on the Compassionate Communities model of care and in response to the expressed need for more services for rural-dwelling adults experiencing serious and life-limiting illness, this partnership created a pilot program to serve Josephine County. This session will share the curriculum developed and delivered by the Peaceful Presence Project, which emphasizes companioning individuals in their homes in a non-medical model, as well as how it is managed by an Older Adult Behavioral Health Specialist in partnership with local nonprofit organizations such as Southern Oregon Friends of Hospice and Illinois Valley Wellness Resources.

Track 2 (SDOH)  
 Seaside Rooms ABC

### **A Community-Based Approach to Address SDOH in Patient Care Coordination**

**Seema Rathor | Comagine Health**  
**Alexandra Topper, MPH | Comagine Health**

Hospitals are working to reduce utilization through internal quality improvement efforts. However, a well-developed network of community-based resources can also effectively address patients' clinical and non-clinical needs. Learn how a community-based approach can help address barriers arising from differences in language, health illiteracy, transportation issues, disability, and social isolation. Partnerships with community service providers can facilitate the transition of patients back into the community and ensure continuity of care for patients following hospitalization.

2:40 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.  
 Lobby

### **Break & Refreshments**

3:15 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.

### **CONCURRENT SESSIONS**

Track 2 (SDOH)  
 Necanicum West

### **Circles of Care Hood River: A Case Study in Standing Up a Reciprocal Volunteer Program**

**Scott McKay | AGE+**  
**Rita Rathkey | AGE+**  
**Amy Mallett | Hood River Adult Center**

Circles of Care is a volunteer model designed to support healthy aging for older adults, allowing them to age in place by relying on peer-to-peer support best practices. Circles of Care Hood River is led by a community liaison who matches local volunteers with older adults who often live alone or with disabilities. Volunteer activities include light household chores, grocery shopping, meal preparation, transportation, friendly check-ins, in-person companionship, minor home handywork, respite care, and yard maintenance. The program's infrastructure includes recruitment, background checks, training materials (online, printed and in-person), client screening interviews, matching and management of activity events.

Track 3 (PPR)  
 Riverside Rooms AB

### **Dementia in Rural Oregon: Envisioning Support Across the Care Continuum**

**Dr. Beth Mastel-Smith | The University of Texas at Tyler**  
**Dr. Walter Dawson | OHSU School of Medicine and PSU, Institute on Aging**  
**Rod Harwood, MDiv, MA, QMHP-C | GOBHI**

This panel includes the following: a) Development of a dementia-friendly community. Dementia-friendly is an international movement aimed at creating communities that support people with dementia and promote quality of life. You will learn about creating a dementia-

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friendly community in rural Oregon, along with challenges and accomplishments. b) Family care partners and people living with dementia in Oregon's rural communities face unique challenges. There is a need to change policy and practice to better support care partners of people living with ADRD. We will discuss current policies and opportunities for change at the state and federal levels. c) Caring for a person with dementia at the end of life has some unique challenges. We will discuss navigating frequent hospital stays, advanced directives, living wills, do not resuscitate orders, palliative care and giving the person permission to pass.

Track 3 (PPR)  
Seaside Rooms ABC

## Suicide Prevention: OHA Initiatives with Older Adults Living in Rural Areas

**Debra Darmata, M.S. | Oregon Health Authority**  
**Nirmala Dhar, LCSW, ACSW | Oregon Health Authority**

Older Oregonians living in rural areas have some of the highest rates of suicide, and this is especially true for men. This session will provide an overview of the scope of the problem by looking at statistical demographics, followed by an overview of several OHA initiatives to combat this devastating problem. In February 2023, the first Adult Suicide Intervention and Prevention Plan was published, which has a substantial focus on the intersections of men, older adults (55+) and living in rural areas. Additionally, in September 2022, OHA was awarded a five-year grant to focus on older adults, veterans, those living in rural and remote areas and those with easy access to firearms. Goals and accomplishments of the OHA Older Adult Behavioral Health Initiative will also be highlighted, including programs designed to reduce isolation and loneliness, such as OPAL & PEARLS.

Wednesday, May 17, 2023

8:30 a.m. - 8:50 a.m.  
Pacific Room

## Breakfast

9:00 a.m. - 9:50 a.m.  
Pacific Room

## PLENARY SESSION

### Are We Ready? Meeting the Behavioral Health Needs of Older Adults in Rural Oregon

**Nirmala Dhar, LCSW, ACSW | Oregon Health Authority**  
**Walter Dawson, DPhil | Oregon Health & Science University - Portland State University**  
**Maureen Nash, MD, MS, FAPA, FACP | Providence ElderPlace PACE Oregon**

The behavioral health needs of older adults are particularly acute in Oregon's rural and frontier areas. Since 2015, the Behavioral Health Initiative for Older Adults and People with Disabilities has worked to better coordinate services and resources for older adults and people with disabilities who have behavioral health needs. Data from Portland State University's Institute on Aging evaluation suggests multiple impacts as well as persistent barriers to improved care, including a need for affordable housing, more behavioral health services in long-term care settings, improved transportation services to support the needs of isolated older adults, and a need to address historically siloed service agencies. The complex care needs of older adults in rural areas also necessitate a specific focus. Join us for a discussion of these issues.

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**CONCURRENT SESSIONS**

Track 3 (PPR)  
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**Climate Emergencies and Resources for Building Resilience**

**Nicki Holmes | Aging and People with Disabilities, Oregon Dept of Human Services**  
**Chad Knowles | Office of Resilience and Emergency (OREM), Oregon Dept of Human Services**

**Stephanie Sheelar | Senior and Disability Services, Lane Council of Governments**

**Jacklyn Kohon | Institute on Aging, Portland State University**

**Dani Himes | Institute on Aging, Portland State University**

The effects of climate change and recent emergency events, such as wildfires, extreme heat events, planned power outages, ice storms, and flooding, disproportionately impact older adults. This presentation will provide an overview of how older adults are impacted by changing climate conditions. We'll also share some recent research about the impacts of climate change events on older adults from the Institute on Aging at Portland State University. Finally, we'll discuss how ODHS/Aging and People with Disabilities and Area Agencies on Aging assist during disasters, including recent experiences from the Cedar Creek fire and power outages in Lane County. We'll provide some recommendations and resources for building resilience among older adults in Oregon.

Track 2 (SDOH)  
 Riverside Rooms AB

**Health Literacy and Systemic Ageism: Achieving Better Outcomes for Older Adults Through Clear Communication**

**Cliff Coleman, MD, MPH | Oregon Health & Science University**

Ageism is a system that produces unfair advantages for some and reduced opportunities for others based on age. Health literacy is one's ability to get, understand, and use health information optimally. Low health literacy is nearly twice as prevalent in people over 65 compared to younger people. This presentation will discuss how typical forms of written and spoken health communication unfairly disadvantage older adults and contribute to ageism, which leads to health care inequities and disparities. The presentation will offer practical health system-based solutions to addressing systemic ageism, focusing on universal clear communication approaches to improve health outcomes for older adults.

Track 1 (C)  
 Seaside Rooms ABC

**TalkOregon: Empowering Clinicians to Excellence in Compassionate Communication**

**Katie H. Stowers, DO | OHSU Center for Ethics in Healthcare; Section of Palliative Care**

**Briana Ketterer MD, MS | OHSU Section of Palliative Care; OHSU Center for Ethics in Healthcare**

**Jared Chiarchiaro | Oregon Health & Science University**

Living with a serious illness can be scary. Many patients want honest information about their serious illness, no matter how difficult. Unfortunately, clinicians often feel unprepared for these difficult conversations. Luckily, communication is a skill that can be honed through practice, empowering clinicians to engage more confidently in serious illness conversations. Join us for a discussion on empowering clinicians to communicate compassionately with patients who have serious illnesses.

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11:15 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.  
 Lobby

**Break, Refreshments & Prizes**

11:50 a.m. - 12:50 p.m.

**CONCURRENT SESSIONS**

Track 3 (PPR)  
 Necanicum West

**LGBTQ+ Older Adult Survey – What’s Next? Addressing Survey Gaps**

**Naomi Sacks | Oregon Department of Human Services, Office of Aging & People with Disabilities**  
**Deb McCuin | Oregon Department of Human Services, Office of Aging & People with Disabilities**  
 Come and learn about how you can help support LGBTQ+ older adults. The first ever LGBTQ+ Older Adult statewide survey was completed in 2021. Since then, the Oregon Department of Human Services Office of Aging and People with Disabilities (APD) has been raising awareness of findings, working with community members and organizations to prioritize results, and formulating action plans to address survey gaps. This session will share legislation, APD, AAA and cross-organizational, community-engaged action plans to address gaps and needs found in the survey. Learn how you can be involved!

Track 2 (SDOH)  
 Riverside Rooms AB

**Scams & Fraud: Impact on Seniors**

**Carmel Perez Snyder | AARP Oregon**  
**Suzanne Knight | AARP Oregon**

Con artists steal millions of dollars every year from seniors in Oregon – in 2022, more than \$62 million. For seniors, that could mean a loss of independence and impact both their physical and mental well-being. The AARP Fraud Watch Network is a free resource that helps individuals, organizations and communities understand how scams work and how they can take steps to break the cycle. Presenters will highlight how con artists manipulate and how organizations, businesses and communities can help fight back.

Track 1 (C)  
 Seaside Rooms ABC

**Let’s Talk About Sex, Sexual Health and Aging**

**Jessica Wright PA-C | Oregon Health & Science University**  
**Nick Kinder, AGNP-C | Oregon Health & Science University**

Older adult sexual health remains a topic that is rife with common and often harmful misconceptions, and it is frequently left out of assessments and discussions with patients. In fact, some studies show that less than 20% of older adults have had any conversations about sexual health with their health care team. In this session, we will review age-related physiological changes, older adults’ sexual practices and age-/function-associated modifications, common chronic diseases and their effects, and STIs. We will also discuss sexual health in select populations, including older adults with dementia, and provide a guide for taking a sexual history. Learn how to take older adult sexual health from the realm of the taboo into an open, factual discussion to improve care and quality of life. (Note: This session contains material about consent and trauma-informed care that may be distressing to some attendees.)

12:50 p.m.

**Forum Concludes**