

Home and Community-Based Services for Florida's Seniors: Health Promotion and Disease Prevention¹

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Introduction

This article is part of the Home and Community-Based Services for Florida's Seniors series, a collection of educational resources designed to inform the public about home and community-based support services available to seniors in Florida.

The Older Americans Act of 1965 (OAA) provides a variety of home and community-based services for eligible older Americans (those aged 60 years or older, as defined by the OAA) that are channeled through the Administration on Aging (AoA) and state-level units on aging. In the state of Florida, these services are administered and implemented through Florida's Aging Network, which comprises the Florida Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) and a host of 58 nonprofit organizations.

As the older adult population of Florida continues to grow rapidly, it is increasingly important that the state's seniors, their caregivers, other stakeholders, and the general public understand the home and community-based services and protections available through the 58 nonprofits — 11 Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs) and 47 Community Care for the Elderly (CCE) lead agencies — that make up Florida's Aging Network.

Focusing on health promotion and disease prevention programs, this article details the services available to seniors in Florida under Title IIID of the Older Americans Act. Title IIID mandates interventions to improve senior health and function, using evidence-based programs that have been proven to improve health and well-being and reduce disease and injury (Administration for Community Living, 2025). These programs address certain conditions such as chronic disease (e.g., diabetes), falling, mobility, and mental health. They intend to reduce the need for more costly interventions that result from poor health and mobility. Priority is given to older adults who are in economic need and medically underserved areas (Administration for Community Living, 2025).



Figure 1. Two older adults and a younger adult exercising.
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What Are Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Programs?

Health Promotion

Health promotion programs refer to the workshops, seminars, and health screening opportunities available to Florida's older adults. These can include organized physical fitness activities (e.g., tai chi or chair yoga), evidence-based programs (e.g., caregiver training programs), and educational resources (e.g., nutrition handouts or seminars at senior centers) (Tillery, 2021).

Health Promotion-Related Information (Florida Department of Elder Affairs, 2023)

Mental Health: [Mental Health America](#)

Nutrition: [Human Nutrition and Food Safety, USDA National Agricultural Library](#); [U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Information Center](#)

Oral Health: [Medline Plus](#)

Physical Fitness: [Healthy Steps for Older Adults](#)

Suicide: <https://www.cdc.gov/suicide/>

Violence and Substance Abuse Prevention: [Substance Abuse Prevention, Florida Department of Children and Families](#)

Disease Prevention

Health promotion and disease prevention programs often go hand in hand. By promoting health through various programs, older adults may prevent chronic disease and physical decline. For example, an information session about vaccines at a senior center may increase the number of seniors getting influenza or pneumonia vaccines, which in turn could decrease hospitalization or death from these preventable diseases. Guest speakers such as local doctors can help educate the public about signs and symptoms of common diseases for older adults such as heart disease. Disease prevention programs often refer to self-management courses and chronic disease prevention for health conditions such as arthritis, cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, flu, osteoporosis, and stroke. These programs are designed to enable elders to live fuller, longer lives (Tillery, 2021).

Disease Prevention-Related Information (Florida Department of Elder Affairs, 2023)

Arthritis: [Arthritis Foundation](#)

Cancer: [American Cancer Society](#)

Cardiovascular Disease: [American Heart Association](#)

Diabetes: [American Diabetes Association](#)

Flu: [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention — Flu](#)

Osteoporosis: [Bone Health & Osteoporosis Foundation](#)

Stroke: [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention — Stroke](#)

Fall Prevention: [DOEA](#)

Together, health promotion and disease prevention programs aim to empower older adults to positively manage symptoms and pain, make healthier choices, manage medications, build strength, and maintain balance. By using evidence-based programs based on extensive research and proven health benefits, older adults are empowered to take control of their health through self-efficacy and self-management (Tillery, 2021).



Figure 2. An older adult and a younger adult review a task on a laptop.
Credit: © Nexa/Adobe Stock.

Conclusion

Florida's health promotion and disease prevention programs are available statewide through the coordinated efforts of the Florida Department of Elder Affairs and the 58 nonprofit organizations that make up the Aging Network, including 11 AAAs and 47 CCE lead agencies. Specific programs vary widely, so seniors and caregivers interested in accessing these free or low-cost programs such as chronic disease self-management, fall prevention workshops, nutrition education, and mental health resources can start by contacting their local AAA. To find their regional agency, individuals can call the statewide Elder Helpline at 1-800-96-ELDER (1-800-963-5337) for personalized assistance. Local senior centers, community organizations, and health departments often host these programs in partnership with the Aging Network. By connecting with these resources, Florida's older adults can take an active role in managing their health, improving their quality of life, and aging with independence and dignity.

References

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<https://elderaffairs.org/programs-and-services/health-promotion-disease-prevention-programs-older-americans-act-title-iii-d/>

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