The Role of Home Modification in Promoting Aging in Place and Community

Funded by the Administration for Community Living
USC Leonard Davis School of Gerontology

• Applied Research
• Information Dissemination
• Professional Education and Training
## ACL Project
### Goals and Objectives

**Goal:** to maximize older adults’ ability to age in place by increasing the availability and awareness of HM at the local, state, and national levels

| 1. Develop a knowledge base | 2. Improve coordination among HM programs | 3. Train aging network to deliver, promote access to HM | 4. Improve access to and use of HM by older adults and caregivers |

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*University of Southern California*
Home Modification Is Key to Aging in Place
People Aging in Community

Aging in Place maintains access to resources, social connections, and supports independence (Pynoos, et al, 2006).

Sources: Chart: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates and Projections From: A Profile of Older Americans, 2016, Administration on Aging Administration for Community Living U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Photo: National Council on Aging
Of 25+ million households age 65+, 44% need accessibility features due to disability or difficulty with functioning.

< 1/3 of homes have basic accessibility features: a no-step entry and bedroom and full bathroom on entry level.

Disparities: older persons who need HM most (i.e., old-old, low-income, frail, living in oldest part of housing stock) are least likely to have them.

Source: Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies, 2015
Housing Does Not Support an Aging Population

Photo by Milly Eaton from Pexels
Where Do Falls Occur?

55% - Inside the House
23% - Outside Near House
22% - Away from Home

Sources: National Health Interview Survey, 1997-8 (Kochara, 2002); Kitchen Photo: Person, Environment, Performance Laboratory, Washington University in St. Louis, School of Medicine, Program in Occupational Therapy
What is Home Modification?

Change the environment

- ✔ Remove Fall Hazards
- ✔ Add Supports
- ✔ Change Behavior
### Benefits of Home Modifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits</th>
<th>Support</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Make daily activities easier</td>
<td>Save $/Cost effective</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reduce falls, injuries</td>
<td>Support caregivers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reduce depression</td>
<td>Avoid institutional settings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase activity</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase social connectedness</td>
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Home Modification Examples:
Bathroom

Eskaton, Sacramento, CA
Home Modifications in the Kitchen

Eskaton, Sacramento, CA
Home Modifications for the Stairs

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Home Modification Access: Challenges and Solutions

1. Awareness
2. Service Delivery
3. Funding
Challenge 1: Lack of Consumer Awareness
Solutions to Increase Consumer Awareness

Effective Communication Strategies

• Consumer Driven Assessments
• Change the Perspective & Messaging
• Change Ourselves
Solutions to Increase Consumer Awareness

Effective Educational Approaches

• Checklists and Fact Sheets
• Online Resources Community Displays and Visuals

www.lifetimehome.org
Challenge 2: Service Delivery

The delivery system for home modifications is a patchwork of uncoordinated services leaving consumers to navigate many different professionals...
Many Providers Involved

- Architects
- Area Agency on Aging staff
- Case managers
- City/County department staff (housing/community development, social services, planning, rehabilitation)
- Clergy (ministers, priests, rabbis, lay persons)
- Fair Housing Act and ADA implementation staff
- Family members
- Hardware stores personnel
- Home builders and contractors
- Home health care aides/agencies
- Home modification and repair program staff
- Hospital discharge planners
- Housing developers
- Independent Living Centers staff
- Information and Assistance Providers
- Interior designers
- Nurses
- Older Americans Act Service Providers
- Physicians
- Product Manufacturers
- Realtors
- Rehabilitation professionals (occupational and physical therapists)
- Remodelers and contractors
- Senior center staff
- Social workers
- State Technology Act program staff
Solutions: Evidence Is Growing...

Because of the high prevalence and large eligible population, addressing home hazards with the assistance of an occupational therapist would prevent the greatest number of medically treated falls (n=45,164) and avert the most in direct medical costs ($442 million).
Evidence-Based Solutions: Community Aging in Place, Advancing Better Living for Elders (CAPABLE) Program

- Functioning
- Depression
- Home Hazards
- Nursing Home Admissions
- Hospitalizations

Three key professionals:
1. OT
2. Registered Nurse
3. Handyperson

Medicare Savings: $10K/participant/year


27 locations, 12 states
Solutions: Increase in Home Mod Service Providers

www.homemods.org
### Solutions: Referral Access Channels

#### Aging Sector
- Area Agency on Aging or Title VI – Eldercare Locator
- Senior Centers

#### Disability Sector
- Independent Living Center
- Assistive Technology Programs

#### Voluntary Sector
- Rebuilding Together
- Habitat for Humanity

#### Housing Sector
City/County Housing and Community Development Departments

#### Health Care Sector
Home health agencies

#### USC Resources
- National Directory of Home Modification Resources
- ACL State by State Inventory
Solutions: Improving Skills of Home Modification Professionals

- National Association of Home Builders – Certified Aging in Place Specialists
- USC’s Executive Certificate in Home Modification Program
- SUNY Buffalo Universal Design Courses
- Certified Living in Place Professional
- Certified Environmental Access Consultant – VPM Group
- And more!
Challenge 3: Complexity in Home Modification Funding

- HUD
- CMS
- AOA
- VA
- USDA
- DOE

Homeowner | Renter | Landlord | Veteran | Family Member
Income | Age | Disability | Geographic Location

University of Southern California
Solution: Funding Source Identification

Funding Sources for Home Modification

The National Council on Aging (NCOA) partnered with the University of Southern California (USC) Leonard Davis School of Gerontology on a series of projects to feature home modification and home safety programs, assessment instruments, and funding sources to provide resources for families and professionals.

For information on NCOA’s National Falls Prevention Resource Center, visit: https://www.ncoa.org/center-for-healthy-aging/falls-resource-center/. For information on USC’s Fall Prevention Center of Excellence and efforts in home modification, visit: www.stopfalls.org and www.homemods.org. If you have any updates or additions to the list below, please contact homemods@usc.edu.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Target Populations/ Eligibility Requirements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)</td>
<td>CDBG is a funding stream allocated by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to state and local governments to support housing, community, and economic development needs including home repair/improvement.</td>
<td>Homeowners, Renters, Landlords, Those with low income, Older adults, People with disabilities</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/cdbg-entitlement/">https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/cdbg-entitlement/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Use the “Contact a CDBG Grantee” link on the right side of the page to access a Directory of CDBG grantees in your area.</td>
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<tr>
<td>HUD HOME Program</td>
<td>HOME is a newer block grant that is allocated to states and communities to support only housing activities. It funds many home repair efforts nationwide.</td>
<td>Homeowners, Renters, Landlords, Those with low income, Older adults, People with disabilities</td>
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Visit www.stopfalls.org and www.homemods.org for more information
Innovative Funding Source Solutions: National, State, Local, Other

- Tax Credits (federal, state, and local)
- Medicare Advantage
- Medicaid Waivers
- Direct State Funding
- State Technology Act Funds
- Local Non Profits
- Insurance Companies (HMOs, The Hartford)
Great News for Home Modification Funding and Policies in 2019!

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>H.R. 648 U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development’s FY 2019 Appropriations</th>
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<td>• $10 million to make grants to non-profits, states, local govts or public housing agencies for home modification repairs for low-income older adults</td>
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<th>S. 702, H.R. 1583 Senior &amp; Disability Home Modification Assistance Initiative Act of 2019</th>
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<td>• Introduced March 2019 by Senator King</td>
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<td>• Coordinate federal home mod efforts</td>
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<td>• Produce, disseminate home mod brochure</td>
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<th>S. 1171 The Disability and Integration Act of 2019</th>
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<td>• Introduced Jan. 2019</td>
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<td>• Includes home mods relative to Long Term Services and Supports for people being integrated into the community</td>
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Thank you!

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• Julie Overton, MSG, MHA – overton@usc.edu

www.homemods.org
www.stopfalls.org