

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROGRAM CAPACITY: A MULTI-SITE DISCUSSION ON METHODS AND FINDINGS IN ASSESSING COMMUNITY CAPACITY FOR PROVIDING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROGRAMS FOR OLDER ADULTS

Panelists:

Susan Hughes, Center for Research on Health and Aging, University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, IL.

Lucinda L. Bryant, Division of Health Care Policy and Research, University of Colorado Health Sciences Center, Denver, CO.

Melissa Kealey, Center for Family and Community Health, University of California, Berkeley, William A. Satariano, School of Public Health, University of California, Berkeley.

Barbara Williams, UW Health Promotion Research Center, University of Washington.

Involvement in sustained physical activity is one of the most important health promotion strategies for healthy aging. Important barriers to physical activity are lack of user knowledge about available resources and limited capacity of organizations to provide physical activity programs that meet the needs of older adults. The Healthy Aging Research Network (HAN), developed by CDC, is a subset of the nation's Prevention Research Centers that is working in seven communities across the U.S. to survey physical activity programs in order to compare the supply of programs with potential demand for them. Based on an earlier Chicago Senior Health Alliance Promoting Exercise (SHAPE) survey of providers in Cook County, the HAN survey targeted 2071 programs in diverse rural and urban communities in order to estimate physical activity program capacity. Methodological issues encountered in developing and implementing a multi-site survey included the collaborative development of unique sampling frames; the need to standardize survey items while still enabling the HAN sites to obtain additional site-specific information; adaptability of the instrument to various methods of data collection (e.g., mail, telephone, web-based); and unique opportunities for pretests. Presenters will discuss the use of diverse methods at four HAN sites to compare efficacy of collecting information. Findings from these demographically different communities will be reported, as well as future implications for the field. To date, response rates have ranged from 45% - 98% across the sites.