



The New York Academy of Medicine

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Commitments from the
Private Sector to Improve the
Age-friendliness of New York City

Critical Findings and Commitments for Change

Based upon NYAM's Findings Report and the Private Sector Work Groups

Critical Findings	Private Sector Commitments
<p>Neighborhood social cohesion can protect older residents from some of the challenges associated with aging (e.g., poverty, social isolation).</p> <p>Neighborhoods are key places to focus age-friendly strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot a model for "Aging Improvement Districts" in two (and possibly a third in an outer borough) neighborhoods (asset-mapping, development & implementation of local action plans to improve age-friendliness) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NYAM with M. Mark-Viverito, Community Board 11 ○ NYAM with G. Brewer, Anita Altman (UJA-Federation)/Manhattan Community Board 7 <i>(include Lincoln Square Neighborhood Center, one-Stop Senior Services)</i>
<p>Social exclusion, caused by ageism and a lack of respect for older people, is experienced by many New Yorkers.</p> <p>Educating New Yorkers about the experiences of aging and the contribution of older people as well as promoting age-inclusive programs and places can help to promote inclusion and combat ageist stereotypes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universities will begin to develop an "Age Friendly Education Protocol" (undergraduate, graduate, and core disciplines) to ensure all university students receive basic information about aging and exposure to older adults <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NYU School of Nursing; Columbia School of Public Health; Hunter College School of Public Health will begin process with others to follow. • Universities will explore further integration of older adults (alumni, community residents) into educational and program opportunities.
<p>Social and civic engagement is essential to health and well-being among older adults.</p> <p>Older New Yorkers are enthusiastic users of all the city has to offer including cultural, political, religious, and special interest activities. They want to remain active and continue pursuing their social and civic interests as they age however they identified several key barriers to their ongoing participation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • affordability • physical accessibility • transportation options • linguistic considerations <p>An integrated volunteer database that is easily accessible to older adults was highlighted as a way to enhance the civic participation of older New Yorkers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BID's will partner with NYAM and community organizations such as Lighthouse International to develop an "Age-friendly Business Guide" that will be distributed to businesses across the city <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NYAM, BID Association, Lighthouse International • Develop a virtual volunteering program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ OATS and AARP • BID's will examine their "Safe Ambassadors Program" to ascertain if it is feasible to train these individuals to evaluate and report on age-friendly principles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ BID Association

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<p>The ability of older adults to stay involved in social and civic activities and employment is improved through safe and accessible environments.</p> <p>Older New Yorkers identified several ways to improve the accessibility of the city:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • benches and resting places • public restrooms • clean sidewalks • bus shelters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminate information to businesses in local communities about low and no-cost steps for making workplaces more physically accessible and therefore more age-friendly; possibly tie it to the existing <i>ShopAble NYC</i> program to improve shopping for visually impaired residents (e.g., signage, access to restrooms, clear sidewalks, parking, seating, etc.) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ BID Association
<p>Social isolation, loneliness and fear are a concern among some older New Yorkers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a 'gate-keeper' model in local communities, which trains employees of local businesses who work with the public to identify and refer community-dwelling older adults who may be in need of help. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Work with UNH to find funding for their pilot • Initiate friendly-visiting program for GLBT seniors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Metropolitan Community Church of New York in consultation with SAGE
<p>Many older adults want, or have to, participate in the workforce.</p> <p>There are several ways to support their participation such as improving the flexibility of jobs as well as addressing retirement policies and programs.</p> <p>A job search aggregator for older adults was identified as a useful and necessary resource for employment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine Social Security, Medicare, pension policies, and other regulatory and legal frameworks that promote or inhibit part-time/flexible work and phased retirement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NYAM • Work with other sectors to build upon and promote the existing WorkSearch aggregator tool <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ AARP • Assess feasibility of centralizing job placement information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ReServe and AARP
<p>Homes are key places of aging as older adults spend much more of their time in their homes than their younger counterparts.</p> <p>Preserving and expanding innovative, affordable and appropriate housing options was identified as important determinant of health for older New Yorkers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene a multi-sectoral workgroup to review existing rent regulations and housing policies and programs as well as existing housing stock through an age-friendly lens (including legal, financial and design elements) to promote appropriate housing for older New Yorkers while keeping housing viable for landlords (use as a resource existing reports such as AARP's report <i>Increasing Access: Designing for Visitability</i> and American Institute of Architects' universal design guides. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ NYAM ○ American Institute of Architects

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<p>Older New Yorkers have difficulty navigating existing health and human services. Two key challenges have been identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of information about what is available • Fragmentation of service systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine the feasibility of implementing or enhancing care coordination models <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Social Work Leadership Institute of NYAM
<p>New York’s population is rapidly aging the need to support and expand the geriatric service delivery workforce was identified.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to promote and enhance strategies to increase entry into Geriatrics/Gerontology fields (e.g., through efforts such as major foundations, funded education initiatives, loan forgiveness, incentives and advertising) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Create a New York State alliance based on the national coalition to implement the Institute of Medicine workforce recommendations in <i>Retooling for an Aging America: Building the Healthcare Workforce</i>
<p>The lack of multiple and age-friendly sources for information impedes older New Yorkers ability to access opportunities and services.</p> <p>The most popular information sources for older New Yorkers are local and free.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and dedicate space for information for older adults (kiosks, bulletin boards, mobile carts) in their communities. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ BID Association • Assess if/how neighborhood banks can take on a more proactive role in information dissemination for older adult customers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New York Bankers Association • Convene a meeting between those who run many of the existing information databases to explore possible ways of linking information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ OATS, AARP, HITE, NY Cares • Improve access to information about senior discounts to cultural institutions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Alliance for the Arts and DFTA
<p>In order to reach older adults in New York City, information must be designed in age-friendly and inclusive ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • multiple languages • using a variety of media (radio, TV, Internet, etc.) • accessible (e.g., address visual and hearing impairment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disseminate guides on communicating effectively with visually impaired people. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lighthouse International will share exiting guides ○ BIDs will distribute these types of materials to businesses in their local communities
<p>Older adults report that technology is both an opportunity and a challenge for them. The ability to use and access technology is becoming essential for information access.</p> <p>Key barriers to training and use for older adults have been identified: affordability, availability, and lack of training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand technology training programs for older adults <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ OATS, seniors centers, the NYPL, and DFTA

