

Reframing Aging in Rural Adirondack and North Country Communities

**Age-friendly Communities Network Awareness Campaign
Developed by the Caregiving Working Group of the North Country**

**Facilitated by Mercy Care for the Adirondacks
2023 - 2025**



Age-friendly Communities Awareness Campaign Purpose

To be a voice for Adirondack and North Country Elders to raise awareness about their extraordinary contributions and unique caregiving needs to empower Older Adults to age in place more successfully in North Country communities.

Campaign Goals

- ◆ **Enhance deeper understanding of the value Older Adults contribute to our rural Adirondack and North Country Communities, while at the same time, advocating for programs and services to empower them to age in place more successfully.**
- ◆ **Raise awareness among local community leaders about the value Elders bring to our communities, the desire most people have to age in place for as long as possible in their own homes, and to empower North Country Communities to become more age-friendly for people of all ages.**
- ◆ **Advocate further development of equitable health, aging, and community services to meet the needs of people of all ages in our rural, mountain communities.**
- ◆ **Promote deeper understanding of Social Determinants of Health.**

Campaign Objectives

- ◆ **Empower North Country Communities to seize the opportunity to contribute to the development of the Master Plan for Aging in New York State being developed by New York State Department of Health and New York State Office for the Aging.**
- ◆ **Collaborate with community stakeholders.**
- ◆ **Foster multigenerational relationships to strengthen North Country Communities - good places to grow up and grow old successfully.**
- ◆ **Collaborate with other statewide county initiatives, as well as with health, human, and aging services organizations.**

Age-Friendly Communities Stakeholders and Champions in the North Country:

- Academic Institutions and Schools
- Local Businesses
- Chambers of Commerce
- Nonprofit Organizations
- Community Coalitions
- North Country Regional Economic Development Council
- County Offices for the Aging
- Private Foundations
- Elected Officials
- Visitors
- Faith Communities
- Volunteers
- Government Agencies
- Year-Round and Seasonal Residents
- Health and Human Service Agencies

A Focus on the North Country

Older adults living in the North Country region of New York State experience unique caregiving challenges such as long distances from services and cold and severe winters. Because of inadequate home and community-based services, as well as a lack of diverse options for residential care, it is more essential than ever that our Adirondack Communities succeed in becoming more age-friendly. As the older population increases and the younger population decreases, fewer family member caregivers will be available.

Economic Value and Community Contributions

	Social Security (65+)	Own	No	
	<u>Annually</u>	<u>Home</u>	<u>Mortgage</u>	<u>Rent</u>
Clinton	\$200,676,000	77%	68%	23%
Essex	\$112,431,200	81%	26%	19%
Franklin	\$116,676,000	79%	26%	21%
Hamilton	\$21,948,000	88%	79%	12%
St. Lawrence	\$266,628,000	80%	74%	20%
Warren	\$221,004,000	77%	62%	23%
Washington	\$160,320,000	82%	66%	18%

2015-2040 Rapidly Growing Aging Population in the Region (Growth/Decline by Age)

	Under 18	18 - 44	45 - 59	60+
Clinton	-318	-2,732	-1,180	+8,206
Essex	-82	-2,010	-600	+4,247
Franklin	-570	-1,046	-874	+3,605
Hamilton	+109	+492	-359	+83
St. Lawrence	+122	-1,613	-2,216	+6,172
Warren	+2,775	+2,563	-329	+10,943
Washington	+826	+1,135	-153	+9,344

North Country Volunteer Rates 55+

	Volunteers	x	Hours	=	Annual Contribution
Clinton	5,301		2,814,831		\$78.8 Million
Essex	2,564		1,361,484		\$38.0 Million
Franklin	3,284		1,743,804		\$48.8 Million
Hamilton	321		170,451		\$4.7 Million
St. Lawrence	7,109		3,774,879		\$105.7 Million
Warren	4,193		2,226,483		\$62.3 Million
Washington	4,018		2,133,558		\$59.7 Million

State of Older New Yorkers

3.5 million New Yorkers are currently aged 65+. This is by far the most rapidly growing segment of the population.

By 2040 New York Adults 65+ will increase by 25%, and New York Adults 85+ will increase by 75%.

Older adults are living longer and healthier lives, and the numbers are growing. New York's total population is over 19 million, and the state ranks 4th in the nation in the number of adults over 60.

Cost Savings from Home Care

Allowing flexibility in the number of hours of care, and the services provided, home care offers a more cost-effective approach for the state to fund. Home care for older adults receiving 40 hours of care per week costs \$28,705 less, or 30% less, than a nursing home.

While nursing care may still be needed for some who require a high level of care, the state would save significantly by building pathways through which older adults can access care from their own homes and communities, rather than moving to a nursing home.

For older adults who require fewer hours of personal support (20 hours/week), home care costs \$33,280 less, or 65% less, than a nursing home.



Having flexibility in the number of hours of care, and services provided, home care offers a more cost-effective approach for the state to fund.

Six Percent of New York's nursing home residents are considered "low care" - the state could save as much as \$500 million simply by expanding home care to better serve these older adults at home.

Older adults will have a growing need for care and assistance on daily tasks, while maintaining a preference for staying in their homes. Home Care provides a solution to the care needs of these New Yorkers while also representing a cost-effective solution.

New York State could save as much as \$500 million simply by expanding home care to better serve older adults in need at home.

Annual Cost of Care (on average) Service Infrastructure vs Medicaid

Annual Nursing Home Cost: \$95,265
Annual Home Care Cost: \$49,920

Potential Solutions

Home Care Workforce Shortage Crisis

- ◆ Advocate for affordable, accessible, available, and adequate home care for all who need it, regardless of payer.
 - ◆ Higher pay with benefits.
 - ◆ Predictable work schedules.
 - ◆ Pathways to career advancement.
 - ◆ Mileage reimbursement for traveling to and from care receivers' homes.
 - ◆ “Five-Year Caring Heart” Recognition and Appreciation bonuses.
 - ◆ Five-year retention bonus renewable for another five-year period.

Age-friendly Communities Initiatives

- ◆ Collaborate with organization, town, county, and state-funded project leaders to incorporate age-friendly communities components in their infrastructure projects.
 - ◆ Accessibility for people of all ages and abilities
 - ◆ Transportation
 - ◆ Open spaces and parks
 - ◆ Housing projects
 - ◆ Economic and Tourism projects
 - ◆ Complete streets

Community Empowerment

- ◆ Engage with your local community leaders.
 - ◆ Seek in-person meetings with Mayors, Supervisors, Town Councils and Village Boards.
 - ◆ Meet with your local School Superintendents; identify multigenerational projects.
 - ◆ Collaborate with other civic, social, or caregiving organizations.
 - ◆ Request in-person meetings with your local hospital and healthcare organizations.
 - ◆ Present the Campaign goals to Elders in your community and ask for their help in “spreading the word”.

Inadequate home care services result in preventable health crises for individuals.

“This aging trend will continue, fueled largely by the baby boomers, and in little more than a decade, adults in the U.S. will outnumber children for the first time in history.”

~The Sun Community News
Editorial, April 22, 2023



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