

Extension Eldercare

<http://fcs.tamu.edu/families/aging/index.php>

Relevance

- Texas has the fourth largest population in the nation of adults over age 65. The fastest-growing segment of this population within Texas and across the U.S. is adults over age 85.
- While more than 2 million Texans – almost 10 percent of the state’s population – are over 65, only 5 percent of that number live in residential care facilities. Estimates show that 10 percent of those over 65 living in the community require substantial aid that is provided by family members.
- Falling continues to be one of the leading causes of accidental death in the U.S. among older adults.
- In 2000, there were approximately 270,000 Texans suffering from Alzheimer’s Disease. That number is expected to reach nearly 500,000 by 2025.
- Although the 65 and older population only makes up about 12 percent of the U.S. population, they account for more than 33 percent of the prescription drug use.
- Families provide an estimated 80 percent of care to older adults, with the remaining 20 percent provided by formal community agencies and institutional facilities.
- Texas has the second largest number in the U.S. of grandparents rearing their grandchildren.
- Estimates show that Texas has approximately 2.1 million caregivers, who provide more than 2.2 billion hours of care valued at more than \$22 billion.



Response

Eldercare Conferences. Texas AgriLife Extension Service continues to sponsor and/or actively participate in eldercare conferences throughout the state. Conferences exist on a county or multi-county basis, often offering continuing education units to attendees. Participants in these conferences report learning new information and skills related to eldercare as a result of attending.

- Additional resources and suggestions for conference topics may be found at: http://fcs.tamu.edu/families/aging/elder_care/caregiver_support_websites.php.

Grandparents Raising Grandkids. Texas AgriLife Extension Service, in partnership with multiple agencies throughout Texas, provides education and support to grandparents rearing their grandchildren. In counties across the state, Extension sponsors or helps to coordinate conferences and workshops on a variety of topics, including parenting skills, legal issues, social support, and support groups.

- Support resources may be accessed through the Grandparents Raising Grandkids website: <http://grandparentsraisinggrandkids.tamu.edu>.

Fall Prevention in the Home. The *Fall Prevention in the Home* program includes an Extension-produced video in English and Spanish. Scenes in the video feature elders in their homes in six high-risk situations, as well as effective ways to make slight modifications to the home environment to reduce the risk of falling.

- Fall Prevention in the Home: Changes for Healthy Living (video)
 - Audio/Visual Resource Library: <http://av-library.tamu.edu/> BVHS 2264

- For purchase (\$40.00):
<http://agrilifebookstore.org>
 – English: SP-176
 – Spanish: SP-176S
- Additional resources are available through the Fall Prevention for Older Adults website: http://fcs.tamu.edu/families/aging/fall_prevention/index.php.

Memory Loss. *Living with Change: Caring for Someone with Memory Loss* is a comprehensive Alzheimer’s Disease program developed in cooperation with the North Central Texas Chapter of the Alzheimer’s Association. Topics include the nature of Alzheimer’s Disease, the cost of the disease, resources available to manage the disease, and best practices for patients and their family members. This program has also been used to provide Type 1 Continuing Nursing Education Units in partnership with Vernon College and other groups, such as hospital districts.

- Additional resources may be accessed through the Extension Eldercare website: http://fcs.tamu.edu/families/aging/elder_care/index.php.

Medication Management. *Medication Management – The Prescription for a Healthier You!* is a program that helps older adults and their caregivers understand the importance of complying with instructions for taking medications as well as how to properly and safely sort and store their medications. If the individual is able to better manage his or her medications, not only can health be improved but costs may be reduced from the lack of need for more/further treatment.

Training for this program and all materials associated with it are available for download in English and Spanish from http://fcsagents.tamu.edu/family_life/aging/medmgmt/index.php.

eXtension – a National Initiative. Texas AgriLife Extension Service is a partner with the other land-grant colleges and universities and their Extension agencies supporting the national eXtension initiative. Specifically, our resources in eldercare contribute to the Family Caregiving content area of eXtension.

Whether anticipating becoming a caregiver in the future or in the middle of a caregiving journey, the eXtension Family Caregiving website has information to help. The site provides valuable information to assist with a variety of needs, including health, nutrition, housing, employment, and finances.

AgriLife Extension’s partners in this endeavor specifically include, but are not limited to, University of Wisconsin–Extension, K-State Research and Extension, North Carolina State University Extension, as well as colleagues at USDA-CSREES.

- Visit <http://www.extension.org/family+caregiving> to see what resources are available and how they might be used in your area.

Results

Eldercare conferences provided more than 2,700 educational contacts, both professional – including but not limited to nurses to social workers to long-term care administrators and activity directors – and non-professional, of whom 63 percent were female. Ethnic group membership included 71 percent Caucasian, 6 percent African-American, and 18 percent Hispanic/Latino. Many of these conferences offered continuing education through various professional accrediting boards, totaling nearly 300 hours. All of these conferences provided information relevant to the work and professional development of professionals in the field of aging.

The medication management program provided more than 550 educational contacts, of whom 69 percent were female. Participants ($n=573$) reported gaining new knowledge from the session (91 percent), including but not limited to learning how medications affect older bodies (98 percent), how to safely sort and store their medications (97 percent), and how to talk to their health provider about prescription medications (97 percent).

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