Advance Long and Productive Lives

Optimize engagement of the older adults in productive roles: Working, Volunteering and Caregiving.
Age Drain

At the population level
  • Bankrupt national budget
  • Strain health care system
  • Overburden younger population

At the individual level
  • Dependency
  • Depression
  • Dementia
Another Reality: Age as Asset

Age as Asset
- Capacity of older adults is increasing
- Society can not afford “age drain” perspective; productive engagement is necessity, not a luxury
- This capacity is part of a solution to demands of population aging; untapped resource

Inequity and Disparities
- Health, social, and economic persist
- Eliminating disparities is critical to ensure productive engagement across the life course
Positive outcomes: older adults, families, communities, society

- More experienced workers, volunteers, & caregivers
- Less reliance on post-employment income
- Stronger civic society through increased involvement in civic service & volunteering
- Bolster health (postpone physical, psychological, and cognitive declines)
- Fulfill desire for generativity and purpose
- Intergenerational reciprocity
- Highlights the need for improving health and economic trajectories among younger generations
# Policy Recommendations

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<tr>
<th>Employment</th>
<th>Caregiving</th>
<th>Volunteering</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Promote flexible work arrangements, especially via evidence</td>
<td>• Expand participant-directed Medicaid LTSS (enable direct payment to caregivers)</td>
<td>• Strengthen Senior Corps via CNCS</td>
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<td>• Support job transitions: In and out of market</td>
<td>• Pass the Social Security Caregiving Credit Act</td>
<td>• Fully implement Serve America Act’s call to increase older AmeriCorps members</td>
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<td>• Strengthen Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)</td>
<td>• Strengthen Family and Medical Leave Act</td>
<td>• Provide incentives to volunteers (tax breaks, stipends): private and religious organizations</td>
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<td>• Target older adults for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)</td>
<td>• Strengthen Employee Assistance Programs to support caregivers in the workforce</td>
<td>• Establish new norms for being involved in service as a phase of retirement</td>
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Cross-Cutting Issues

Life-course Perspective on Social Determinants of Productive Engagement

Discrimination: Ageism, Racism, Sexism, Homophobia

Inequity

Transition Between Roles

Inclusion of Vulnerable Populations
Partnerships

• Active Academic Centers to date
  – Center for Social Development & Center for Aging, Washington University
  – Center for Innovation in Social Work & Health, Boston University
  – Center on Aging & Work, Boston College

• National Policy & Practice Leaders to date
  – Brian Lindberg, Public Policy Advisor, GSA consultant
  – Linda Harootyan, National Strategist, Harootyan
  – Bob Harootyan, Senior Service America, Inc.
  – Michelle Putnam, Simmons College
Emerging Products

  1. A five-fold increase in the size of volunteer service programs—such as AmeriCorps, SeniorCorps, the U.S. Peace Corps, and YouthBuild—over the next decade.
  2. Public investments in volunteer infrastructure to enhance participation by low-income and minority populations of all ages.
  3. Rigorous research to document impacts of volunteer programs on the health, social, and economic conditions of volunteers as well as the people served.

• Gonzales, et al.: Integrating healthy equity and productive aging perspectives to guide efforts to improve health of an aging population, *AJPH*
  1. Policies and practices to improve health across life-span
  2. Implications for social workers, public health & allied professions