

Cabinet on Aging

Meeting Minutes: February 12, 2025

Commissioners Fortman and welcomed the Cabinet members, staff, and presenters. The agenda for this meeting included Cabinet updates and information statewide initiatives focused on Alzheimer's disease and related dementias. The goal was to highlight the number and types of partnerships and collaborative activities happening and additional opportunities to support and promote dementia risk reduction, early detection and diagnosis, promote the quality of life and well-being of people with dementia and their caregivers.

Cabinet Updates

- The Cabinet is offering a new round of mini-grant funding to Maine's Age-Friendly communities that align with the goals of the Cabinet on Aging. For ease of application, the Cabinet is using the same application as the 2025 AARP Community Challenge application process through University of Maine's Center on Aging. Application period closes March 5, 2025.
- With the support of Maine DOL, the Cabinet has finalized a research project in partnership with the Cutler Institute at the University of Southern Maine/CAPRA, to better understand the motivations and barriers older workers face in remaining in or reentering the workforce and opportunities for action. This work will be completed in 2025.
- Two housing reports of interest have recently been released.
 - GOPIF, DECD, and MaineHousing recently released a follow-up study by HR&A to identify State actions that further address housing production and costs, available [here](#).
 - MaineHousing released the 2025 outlook summary of the state of housing and housing-related issues in Maine. The report combines data from national and state agencies and organizations to examine the health of housing and employment markets, housing affordability trends, and homelessness trends, available [here](#).

Presentations

Marissa Romano, the Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias Program Manager at the Maine CDC, presented on the state's BOLD infrastructure act programming and the Healthy Brain Initiative Coalition work in the State. Maine is currently in year 2 of the five-year BOLD cooperative agreement and involved active collaboration with a variety of partners to address dementia-related priorities across the state to support implementation of the federal grant (BOLD) workplan and [The Maine State Plan on ADRD](#). The presentation slides are included as part of these minutes.

Sharon Foerster, the Senior Program Manager for AgingME2 at UNE provided information on Maine's Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program (GWEP). This work is funded through HRSA and is led by UNE in partnership with many others, including UMaine's Center on Aging, as well as

collaborative activities with health systems, community-based organizations, and Age-Friendly communities. A main goal of this work is to educate and train primary care and geriatrics workforce to create a more Age-Friendly (AF) and Dementia-Capable health system in Maine, which includes empowering older adults to take part in their health care. The presentation slides are included as part of these minutes.

James Moorhead, the Healthy Aging Services Manager at OADS, reported on the final evaluation findings on Respite for ME, the pilot program that provides an annual benefit of \$5,171 for services that directly benefit care partners. There were various positive findings in terms of outcomes on care partners' physical and mental well-being, including improvements in the ability to continue in the workforce. The Department plans to amend its existing Respite Care program, adopting Respite for ME's successful features and aligning the program with the federally funded National Family Caregiver Support Program to simplify program administration. The presentation slides are included as part of these minutes. Also see the [DHHS blog post](#) summarizing the report and its findings.

Next meeting: April 9, 2025, from 2-3. Please check the Cabinet on Aging webpage for any changes or updates. Anyone wishing to be put on the distribution list for meeting notices can email Elizabeth.Gattine@maine.gov