



## State Program in Action:

### Minnesota: New Partnership Increases Participation in Education and Exercise Programs Across the State

More than 50% of Minnesota's older adults (aged 50 years and older) have been diagnosed by a doctor or other health professional with a form of arthritis. To address this burden, the state's Arthritis Program, with support from CDC, initiated a new partnership with the Elderberry Institute's Living at Home Block Nurse Program to increase participation in self-management education and exercise programs and expand intervention programs across the state. The Elderberry Institute's Living at Home Block Nurse Program is a community service program that helps older adults remain in their homes as long as possible.



Through this partnership, the Minnesota Arthritis Program has made remarkable progress in dramatically increasing the numbers of program participants, leaders, and exercise program instructors. Geographic reach of programs has also widened. In 2005, only 14 of the state's 87 counties had arthritis intervention program leaders; by 2006, there were program leaders in 50 counties.

As the aging population rapidly increases, the Minnesota Arthritis Program has adopted a systems approach to expand intervention services to those most in need. By embedding their intervention activities in a program that serves similar target populations and shares overlapping goals, the Arthritis Program has effectively linked more people with programs and expanded the reach of services.

As states and CDC focus on meeting *Healthy People 2010* goals related to improving the quality of lives for people living with arthritis, partnering with existing programs such as the Block Nurse Program is an important strategy for reducing health care costs and the burden of arthritis.

For more information and references supporting these facts, please visit [www.cdc.gov/nccdphp](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp) or [www.cdc.gov/arthritis](http://www.cdc.gov/arthritis).

## Effective Strategies and Promising Approaches

- The Arthritis Self-Help Course, developed at Stanford University, is a 6-week course that teaches people how to manage their arthritis and lessen its effects. In one study, arthritis pain declined by 20% and costly physician visits were reduced by 40% among people who completed the course. However, courses are not offered in all areas of the United States. Making the Arthritis Self-Help Course and programs such as the Chronic Disease Self-Management Program, which addresses arthritis along with other chronic diseases, a routine part of health care for people with arthritis should help reduce arthritis-related pain and health care costs.
- Increasing public awareness about the importance of early diagnosis should increase appropriate management for arthritis.
- Getting the message out about the benefits of healthy weight and moderate physical activity can help people with arthritis.

## Hope for the Future

CDC is working with the Arthritis Foundation and other partners to improve quality-of-life for adults with arthritis and to change people's knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors related to self-management.

The *National Arthritis Action Plan: A Public Health Strategy* was developed by CDC, the Arthritis Foundation, the Association of State and Territorial Health Officials, and 90 other organizations to address the growing problem of arthritis. It provides a blueprint for reducing pain, activity limitations, and disability among people with arthritis, as well as for preventing certain types of arthritis. By implementing the goals of the action plan, CDC and its partners are moving toward achieving the first-ever arthritis-related national objectives outlined in *Healthy People 2010*.

### CDC Funding for State Arthritis Programs, Fiscal Year 2008

