

impact report

Safe & Healthy Aging

Goal: To help seniors and people with disabilities stay independent and safe in their homes.

We're helping seniors have a better quality of life. With a rapidly growing senior population in Dane County, United Way has been keenly interested in helping our older adults live healthy and independent lives. The senior population in Dane County is estimated at 55,387 for residents age 65 and older (2012), representing 11% of the total population. It is projected to grow 103% (to 112,642 residents) by 2030, and will represent 18% of the total population.¹ In 2010, we brought together experts in the community (Safe and Healthy Aging Delegation) who identified Adverse Drug Events and Falls as two acute, yet preventable health triggers that caused alarming rates of emergency room visits and hospitalizations of older adults. **We set a community level goal to reduce the rate of Adverse Drug Events (ADE's) and Falls among older adults by 15% by 2015.** We have plunged ahead and made significant progress toward this goal by creating partnerships in the community and bringing awareness to the vitality of preserving our most seasoned population.

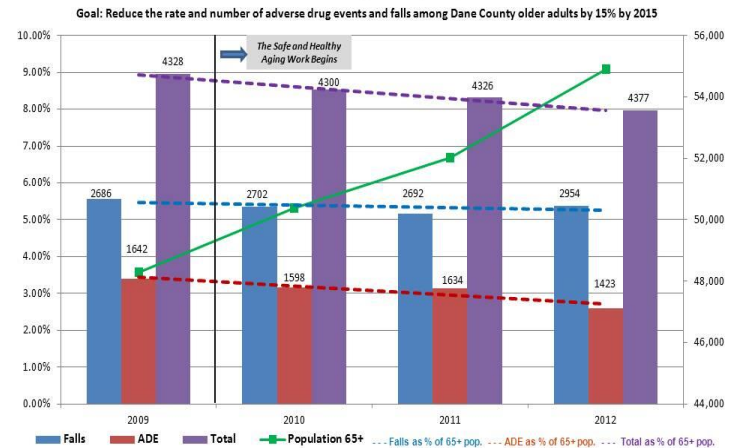
Results

Our results are positively impacting seniors in Dane County. From 2010 through 2012, we had an 11% decrease in total emergency room visits and hospitalizations of adults 65+ as a *percentage of the total 65+ population*. While the population of men and women rose from about 48,500 to 55,000 (13% increase), the number of falls remained constant and the number of adverse drug events fell by 219 incidents (14%).

From 2010 to 2012, there was an 11% decrease in total emergency room visits and hospitalizations of adults 65+ due to Adverse Drug Events (ADEs) and Falls as a percentage of the total 65+ population.



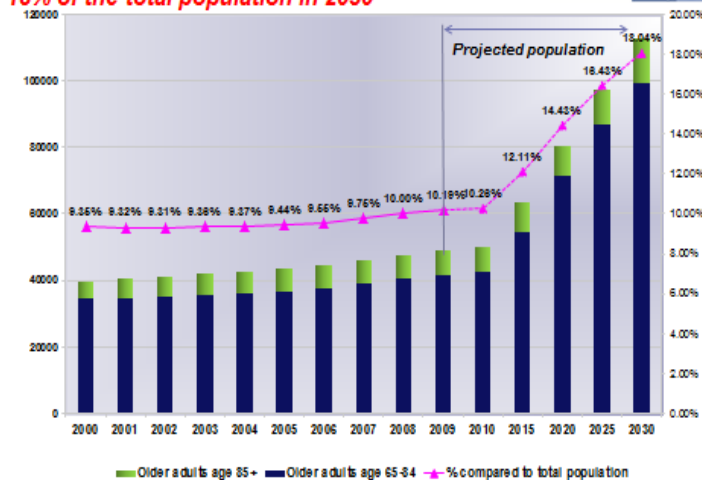
Dane County Emergency Room Visits & Hospitalizations among older adults as a result of Adverse Drug Events (ADEs) and Falls



Goal: Reduce the rate and number of adverse drug events and falls among Dane County older adults by 15% by 2015

Source: Wisconsin inpatient/emergency department public use datasets as reported by Databay Resources, LLC Navigate; American FactFinder

Senior population is projected to represent 18% of the total population in 2030



* Source: WI Dept of Health, WI Dept of Administration

Our 4 major strategies are:

- 1. Identify & Assess:** We have identified and assessed the risks for ADE's and falls by developing a program of comprehensive medication reviews through qualified pharmacists, implementing an in-home assessment that is performed by trained volunteers, engaging physicians and medical communities in creating a falls risk assessment, and creating an easily accessible tool for seniors and informal caregivers to assess the risks of ADE and falls.

¹ Wisconsin Department of Health/ Wisconsin Department of Administration (2010)

2. **Improve Connections:** Connecting physicians and health care providers with community based organizations creates a continuum of care for older adults to improve their safety and health conditions.
3. **Provide Access to Resources:** Unpaid caregivers play major roles in improving the choices made by seniors that lead to safer and healthier lives. We are providing them the necessary tools and resources help them understand the risks and educate them on the prevention of adverse drug events.
4. **Educate the Community:** Wisconsin ranks second in the nation for the number of older adults who die from falls. In collaboration with local media and corporate partners, we executed a community-wide campaign to increase education about the awareness of the dangers of ADEs and falls. Through traditional and non-traditional media outlets, we have and continue to educate the public that falls and ADEs are **not** a normal part of aging and lead to an increased negative patient outcomes and medical costs.

Our goal is to reduce the rate of Adverse Drug Events and Falls among Dane County Older adults by 15% by 2015.

Comprehensive Medication Reviews

We have provided extensive outreach to low-income seniors that has resulted in hundreds receiving Comprehensive Medication Reviews (CMRs) at 14 focal points throughout Dane County. CMRs allow a senior to spend up to an hour with a pharmacist in a private room to review their prescribed drugs, evaluate over-the-counter medications, discuss symptoms, and determine whether the combination may create an adverse drug event. Between October 2011 and December 2013, we provided 541 comprehensive medication reviews to older adults and of these older adults, 50% received at least one therapy recommendation from a Wisconsin Pharmacy Quality Collaborative (WPQC) pharmacist. The average age of seniors served was 77.5 and they were taking a worrisome average of 13.35 medications, which exposes them to 100% chance of experiencing an Adverse Drug

Event. A total of 571 recommendations were made by pharmacists to their physicians. After the review is completed, the pharmacist follows-up with the physician of the senior client to provide the recommendations and concerns that were brought up during the review. Our results show that seniors are benefiting from comprehensive medication review services. A consistent comment heard at events is that seniors appreciate the full hour that they spend talking to the pharmacist.

Safety Assessments for the Elderly (S.A.F.E. at Home Program)

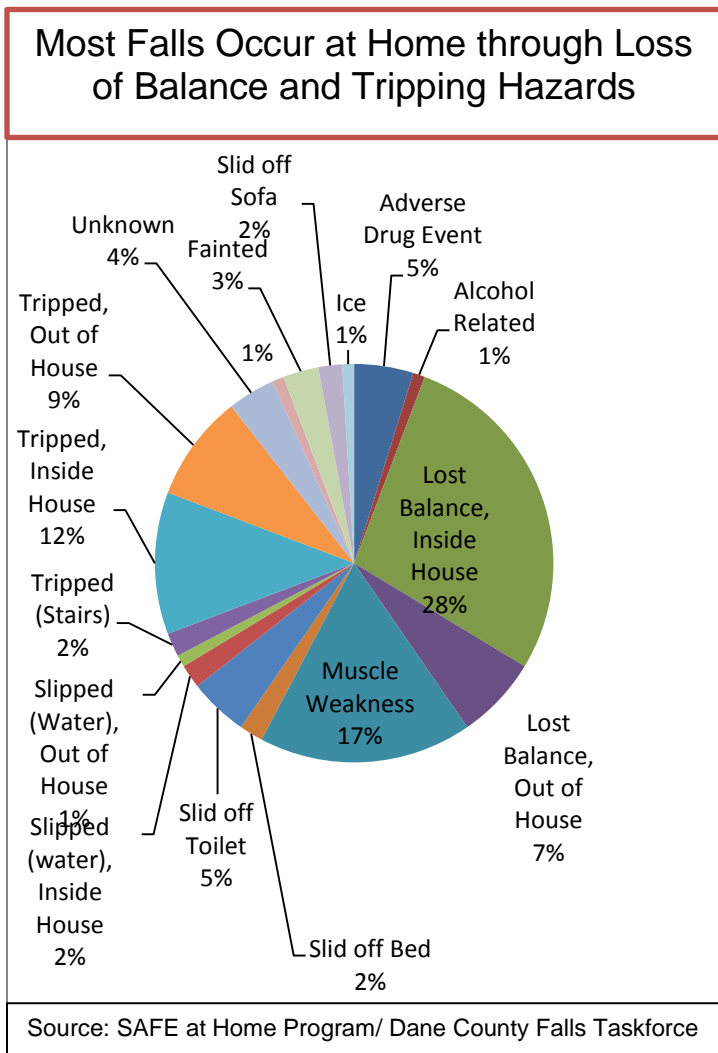
Research has shown that physiological limitations and hazards in the home environment are two of the major causes of falls in the home. The S.A.F.E. at Home program has proven to be very effective as it involves an initial safety assessment, followed by six months of follow-up phone calls to ensure recommendations receive proper follow-up. This program is available to Dane County residents aged 65 years and older at risk for adverse drug events and falls in their home. Upon referral, an intake evaluation is conducted to determine eligibility, a client is screened for fall risk, and medical information and historical fall information is collected. The program is coordinated and administered by a masters-prepared medical social worker with extensive experience in older adults. Once identified as being eligible, a personalized home assessment is conducted by a trained volunteer in collaboration with the client. The assessment consists of an interview, environmental assessment, and client demonstration. The volunteer evaluates the home for potential adverse drug events by medication organization and observing out-of-date medication, and makes modification recommendations to the client.

The S.A.F.E. at Home program has had extraordinary results in helping senior avoid falls. It has had particularly noteworthy success helping seniors avoid falls who have had a previous history of falls. From October 2011 through December 2013, 593 in home safety assessments have been completed. Out of these assessment came 1593 recommendations with 899 of these recommendations being completed (56.3% of recommendations made were fulfilled after follow-up). Of the seniors served, the fall rate from participants who had fallen post assessment was

17.2% which is much lower than the national average of 50%.

	Yes	No	Total	Fall Rate
Previously Fell	88	186	274	32.12%
No	14	305	319	4.39%
Total	102	491	593	17.20%

In addition, The S.A.F.E. at Home Program has been working closely with the Dane County Falls Task Force to coordinate efforts to reduce falls. The chart below is a clear indication of the need for a combined effort that not only includes an in home safety assessment, but also a concerted effort to engage participants in the multiple exercise options Dane County has to offer.



Falls Prevention

United Way of Dane County has been engaging seniors ages 65 and older in the community by offering multiple exercise options through our partner agencies. Many of these classes include Balancing Classes, Walking Club, Stretch and Strength and Tai Chi. In 2013, we served 468 seniors.

The more we market our programs in the community, the better the results that we will see in regards to seniors served in Dane County.

Engaging Partners

The Safe and Healthy Aging Mobilization plan highlights critical research evidence and learnings from the Delegation and outlines the blueprint of strategies that United Way has been charged with implementing over a five years span to improve safe and healthy aging in Dane County. Engaging partners has been a part of these strategies:

- 60 community-based pharmacists at 30 Wisconsin Pharmacy Quality Collaborative pharmacies trained in Comprehensive Medication Reviews offer this extensive service to at-risk low-income older adults ages 65 and older
- A volunteer corps provides in-home safety assessments (S.A.F.E. at Home program) through Home Health United
- Area Agency on Aging of Dane County and 14 focal points were engaged and trained to offer Comprehensive Medication Reviews at senior coalitions/senior centers.
- Partner agencies providing falls prevention classes such as Balancing, Stretch and Strength, Tai Chi and Walking Clubs

Educating the Community

In partnership with WISC-TV, Midwest Family Broadcasting and Wisconsin State Journal, a public awareness campaign educated the community on how to better manage their medications and seek resources through United Way 2-1-1. We have extended this education beyond the general population to providing professional development and training to healthcare professionals to increase their ability to recognize risk factors, engage in prevention activities and improve inter-professional communication and collaboration to coordinate patient care for seniors. Through our partnership with the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Pharmacy, we have produced a distance learning webinar for the pharmacy community for Continuing Education Credit. Content of the webinar includes information on ADE's, the importance of identifying geriatric symptoms, and identification of community resources for pharmacists to utilize.

The School of Nursing has also offered this same distance learning webinar to nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and nursing students. In addition to producing materials that will be archived and available for reference use, United Way has also hosted a successful Case Management Symposium that educated Case Managers/ Social Workers on the severity and impact of ADE's in the aging population.



Our on the ground efforts have garnered the many successes named along with the following which has made a huge impact in the medical community: presentations and outreach to parish nurses in Dane County, participation in the annual Parish Nurse and Wisconsin Nursing Association conferences, and production of new marketing materials, which include brochures and medication

wallet cards, that have been distributed to pharmacies, senior centers, and clinics.

How can you help?

Here are the ways that you could become involved with this work:

If you're interested in signing up for a comprehensive medication review for yourself or a loved one, please contact United Way 2-1-1 who will guide you to an upcoming comprehensive medication review day at a senior center. You may also ask for a list of our partnering pharmacies that provide this service at a location near you. This service is free for low-income seniors.

SAFE at Home Volunteers needed. We are seeking volunteers to assist the SAFE at Home program by conducting home safety assessments to help Dane County residents ages 65 and older stay safely in their homes for as long as possible. Volunteers will be provided training from Home Health United professionals. **Please visit** volunteeryourtime.org or call 211.

To learn more about the Safe and Healthy Aging please contact Toya Johnson, Community Impact Director at (608) 246-5499 or visit our website at <https://www.unitedwaydanecounty.org/safe-and-healthy-aging-initiative/>

A cross-sector partnership is in place

