

Senior Centers in North Carolina

Need increased and recurring General Purpose Funding that has a *potential for greater return on investment* by preventing health issues and thus lowering future healthcare costs.

PREVENTING ISOLATION

Loneliness and isolation are associated with poor health outcomes such as cardiovascular disease, dementia, poor sleep, increased illness, poor physical and mental health, depression, and suicide.

Social isolation is a major problem among the elderly.

Most centers provide 15+ regular weekly activities and 10+ special events per year.

PROMOTING HEALTH

Evidence based self-management programs provide potential cost savings \$553-\$801/person.

99% of senior centers offer health promotion services.

A growing number offer evidence-based health promotion programs.

Other diverse fitness classes accommodate most fitness levels.

PROMOTING VOLUNTEERISM

The benefits of volunteerism are enormous to the volunteer and the community being served.

The average senior center has 115 volunteers, most 60 or older.

IMPROVING ACCESS TO VITAL SERVICES

A coordinated service delivery system helps older adults remain independent, reduces hospitalizations, costs and improves patient outcomes. The most successful is the "no wrong door" system in which a focal point, such as senior centers, provides access through one location.

The average senior center provides access to 25 services; either onsite or through case assistance.

Bolded data comes from the 2014 Senior Center Capacity Survey, provided by Dr. Mary Anne Salmon at the UNC CARES.

From the 2018 North Carolina Senior Tar Heel Legislature priorities sheet:

Increase funding for Senior Centers by an additional \$300,000 in recurring funds. There are 163 Senior Centers in 97 counties that provide programs and services to enhance the health and wellness of older adults. These services are of significant benefit to help elders remain independent, thus delaying their potential for costlier services or housing options. Senior Center General Purpose money is vital to support critical center operations.

