

Friends Foundation for the Aging – Grant Proposal Form

Date: 3/11/24

Organization: Rise

TIN & Formal organization name: 222405087 Community Action Service Center

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Amount Requested: \$10,000

Project title: Enhancing Health and Well-being Among Underserved Seniors

Summary Description:

Rise seeks funding to improve senior immigrants' well-being, focusing on Spanish-speaking individuals over 60 who utilize our English Language Learning (ELL) classes and pantry services.

1. What is the problem you have identified?

While engaging directly with our English Language Learning (ELL) class participants, a keen intern at Rise unearthed a substantial barrier to healthcare access that had previously gone unnoticed. This barrier was not one of availability but rather of accessibility and comfort. Many seniors, especially those who are undocumented, expressed a deep-seated fear of seeking health services in formal settings. However, a silver lining emerged as these seniors displayed a surprising openness to receiving health-related information within the safety and familiarity of their ELL classes. This crucial observation unveiled a unique opportunity to bridge the gap between healthcare services and our senior immigrants, underscoring the potential of our language education program and classroom space as a conduit for health education and access.

Just as our intern's discovery shed light on an unaddressed need, Rise aims to leverage this insight to contribute meaningfully to the upcoming Mercer County Community Needs Health Assessment. By integrating health services into our ELL curriculum, we address an immediate gap in healthcare access for senior immigrants and set the stage for a broader understanding and documentation of health needs within this community.

2. What is the solution you propose to address the problem?

The solution is to integrate health education and services into our existing ELL programs and with our senior food pantry recipients. We aim to offer health screenings, partnerships with and

education from healthcare providers, and create supportive community networks to improve health outcomes and access.

An integral part of our strategy involves the health initiative coordinator collaborating with the Greater Mercer Public Health Partnership team. This partnership aims to provide access to our clients and detailed program data for the next Community Health Needs Assessment. By highlighting the specific needs of our senior immigrant population, we anticipate generating additional resources and attention to this underserved group. This collaboration will bolster our current initiative and pave the way for future programs and funding opportunities to enhance community health.

Program Clarification: It's important to highlight that, to date, our efforts to integrate health education into our English Language Learning (ELL) classes have only touched a small fraction of the seniors we can serve. Our program, still in its infancy and led by the initiative of an intern, has yet to extend its benefits to most seniors in our Rise service community.

The additional funding requested is essential for formalizing and expanding our health integration program and extending our reach to a broader segment of our senior population. To date, many seniors, particularly those most vulnerable and in need of these services, have yet to be engaged by our program.

3. What actions will you take?

1. Direct Integration of Health Services into ELL Classes: Offering health education sessions, screenings, and services within the ELL classroom setting, leveraging trust and rapport between instructors and students.
2. Culturally and Linguistically Tailored Health Education: Utilizing health education materials and sessions in Spanish, ensuring that all communications are sensitive to cultural nuances and accessible to our primary audience.
3. Partnerships with Local Healthcare Providers: Strengthening collaborations with organizations such as Henry J. Austin Health Center, Zufall Health, Ivira's Pharmacy, NJ Charity Care, and Crossroads4Hope to provide a wide range of health services directly to our ELL participants.

4. Utilizing Trusted Spaces for Health Services: Beyond educational sessions, transforming ELL classrooms into temporary clinics for health screenings and consultations, ensuring a safe and non-intimidating environment for our seniors.
5. Recruitment of senior food pantry recipients to classroom health workshops and provide culturally sensitive materials and access.
6. Documentation and Collaboration with the Greater Mercer Public Health Partnership (GMPHP): An essential action item involves coordinating efforts with GMPHP to document senior immigrants' localized health needs systematically. This collaboration aims to enhance the visibility of these needs within the broader public health landscape, securing additional support and informing future health interventions.

4. Describe the population to be served.

The primary focus of our initiative is to serve low-income adults over 60 living in poverty in Eastern Mercer County. This initiative is designed to integrate health education and services into two critical areas of our outreach: our English Language Learning (ELL) programs and our food pantry services.

Clarification of Target Population: Our target population is 280 Hispanic adults. Of these, approximately 10% are currently enrolled in our ELL classes. Note that when we refer to the "documented" population, we are speaking of those adults who are registered clients of Rise regardless of their immigration status.

5. Are there partners/collaborators for implementation or funding? Who? Has the solution been tried by other organizations?

Partners who have been collaborating with Rise and/or expressed interest in participating: Henry J. Austin Health Center serves primarily low-income populations, offering a broad range of medical services accessible to those who might otherwise struggle to afford healthcare. Their services could ensure that the health needs of low-income and undocumented seniors are met, from routine health maintenance to management of complex health conditions.

https://www.linkedin.com/posts/henry-j-austin-health-center_it-takes-a-village-to-ensure-that-everyone-activity-7171592925972156417-PBnB/?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop&fbclid=IwAR1ojw466YavLzltmRvSZXPDSF_kHbsw5mam0BdoiDYFa0rGCFFhyXe7Sek

Crossroads4Hope specializes in providing resources, support, and education for individuals and families affected by cancer. Their expertise in handling the emotional and social aspects of cancer

care could greatly benefit seniors navigating their cancer journey, offering a compassionate community and resources to improve their quality of life and well-being.

Ivira's Pharmacy is a Local collaborator for medication management, prescription services, and health education workshops.

Capital Health is a regional healthcare system that could provide access to specialized medical services and health screenings necessary for senior health management.

Greater Mercer Public Health Partnership will document localized immigrant needs for the Community Health Needs Assessment and help to identify resources and future partners.

These partners offer a multi-faceted approach to addressing health disparities among impoverished seniors, leveraging a mix of direct healthcare services financial assistance programs, and creating new support networks.

Programs that combine healthcare with educational and community services often see improved health outcomes due to increased accessibility and the provision of comprehensive care. While the exact model and partners may vary, leveraging existing community trust and infrastructure to improve health access and outcomes for vulnerable senior populations is a proven approach.

With no other organizations explicitly targeting this demographic in our area, our initiative should include direct health services, assistance navigating the healthcare system, language support, and advocacy for undocumented individuals.

6. How will you know your actions are having an impact? How will you measure outputs and outcomes?

Success will be evaluated through metrics such as the number of senior health services provided within ELL classes, participants in health education programs from the Pantry, improvements in health literacy among participants, feedback from seniors on ease of access and comfort in receiving services, and observed changes in health-seeking behaviors. Inclusion in the upcoming Community Health Needs Assessment will also be favorable.

Clarification Measurement of Health Literacy Improvement: We plan to assess health literacy improvements through pre- and post-program surveys to gauge participants' understanding of key health topics, ability to navigate and locate care and resources with our local healthcare system, and instill confidence in making informed health decisions.

7. Simple Budget

Total Funding Request: **\$10,000**

Friends Foundation for the Aging will primarily cover the costs of materials and healthcare consultancy. Rise will be responsible for classroom hosting, teacher compensation, insurance, and additional operational costs.

Health Education Materials: **\$900** To **reproduce** culturally and linguistically tailored health education materials, facilitating effective learning and engagement among our senior participants.

Clarification -Challenge: Shortage of Hard Copy Educational Materials: The majority of the adults over 60 we serve, especially those living in poverty and those enrolled in our English Language Learning (ELL) programs, show a marked preference for, or necessity of, hard copy materials over digital formats.

This reliance on hard copy materials has led to a situation where Rise has had to make numerous copies of the limited printed materials provided by our partners to meet the demand. (e.g., discount medication lists from a local pharmacy).

Healthcare Consultant Services: **\$9,100** To hire a specialized healthcare consultant for 5 hours per week at \$35 per hour, responsible for curriculum development, health service coordination, and providing expert guidance on senior health issues.
