

Nearly 1 in 5 Americans 65 or older experiences symptoms of depression.

Often occurring with chronic illness and other losses later in life, depression can negatively affect older adults' quality of life and ability to function.

Healthy IDEAS ensures older adults get the help they need to manage symptoms of depression and live full lives.

Our Story

Healthy IDEAS was initially developed by Baylor College of Medicine's Huffington Center on Aging as part of the Model Programs Project sponsored by the National Council on Aging (NCOA) and funded by the John A. Hartford Foundation. An extensive demonstration was subsequently funded by the U.S. Administration on Aging to further enhance and evaluate the program. Baylor College of Medicine and the Houston Center for Quality Care and Utilization Studies at the Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Affairs Medical Center conducted the evaluation of Healthy IDEAS for the Administration on Aging.

Care for Elders provided management and staff support for the development and local implementation of Healthy IDEAS during its demonstration phase. Care for Elders is a Houston-based partnership of more than 80 organizations committed to increasing access to services, improving quality of care and enhancing the quality of life for older adults. Care for Elders and Baylor College of Medicine now manage the dissemination of Healthy IDEAS to potential adopters.



Addressing Depression in Older Adults

Healthy IDEAS: Identifying Depression, Empowering Activities for Seniors



TO LEARN MORE

For more information on implementing Healthy IDEAS or to pursue training opportunities, visit <http://www.careforelders.org/healthyideas>.

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Healthy IDEAS



Proven Impact

Healthy IDEAS is a national model with measurable results and demonstrated benefits for older adults, service providers and community mental/behavioral health practitioners.

FOR OLDER ADULTS:

- Fewer symptoms of depression
- Decreased physical pain
- Better ability to recognize and self-treat symptoms
- Improved well-being through achievement of personal goals

FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS:

- Expanded capacity to address depression
- Better communication and stronger partnerships with mental health providers
- Opportunity to deliver a proven, successful program that addresses critical client needs
- Improved staff knowledge and confidence in helping clients

FOR COMMUNITY MENTAL/BEHAVIORAL HEALTH PARTNERS:

- Increased opportunity to work with diverse populations of older adults
- Strengthened connections to community agencies
- Greater opportunity to reach and help underserved older adults



How it Works

Healthy IDEAS (Identifying Depression, Empowering Activities for Seniors) is an evidence-based program that integrates depression awareness and management into existing case management services provided to older adults.

HEALTHY IDEAS IMPROVES QUALITY OF LIFE BY:

- **Screening** for symptoms of depression and assessing their severity
- **Educating** older adults and caregivers about depression
- **Linking** older adults to primary care and mental health providers
- **Empowering** older adults to manage their depression through a behavioral activation approach that encourages involvement in meaningful activities

Why Healthy IDEAS?

Healthy IDEAS brings together community service providers, the mental/behavioral health community and healthcare practitioners to provide a low-cost, practical way for addressing depression among older people.

Healthy IDEAS is a proven program that can be flexibly integrated into the regular routines of existing staff. Special training and detailed tools to deliver the program are available at minimal cost. Healthy IDEAS can be used with older adults of any age, race or economic status.

Healthy IDEAS also offers an opportunity to create or strengthen partnerships between public and private service providers, funding organizations, and academic institutions to achieve meaningful and significant benefits for older adults and their families.

“Healthy IDEAS was the answer to our prayers. We knew we wanted to address depression and this was an evidence-based intervention with proven results. Healthy IDEAS fits well into our case management program and really helped reduce our clients’ depression and pain.”

PROGRAM DIRECTOR,
Sheltering Arms Senior Services, Houston, TX



Recognition

The U.S. Administration on Aging has designated Healthy IDEAS as an evidence-based program and recommends it for nationwide replication. Healthy IDEAS has also received a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Science to Service Implementation Award in the mental health category.