

A CALL TO PARTNERSHIP

to Improve Care Coordination for Older Californians

IMPROVING TECHNOLOGY



Using technology better is key to bridging silos and achieving integrated health and social services at scale.

This is one of three documents describing Archstone Foundation's theory of change around integrating health and social services to improve the health and well-being of older Californians and their caregivers. We will pursue this goal through coordinated investments in our core strategies of promoting Teams, enhancing Training, and improving Technology.



Our Vision for Better Care

Archstone Foundation's mission is to improve the health and well-being of older people and their caregivers throughout California. Our vision is for all older Californians to have access to high-quality coordinated care that effectively integrates health and social services. We believe these integrated services should be culturally competent, client-centered, comprehensive, collaborative, coordinated, connected, and compassionate. We envision that care for older adults places them and their families at the center of a care team, to ensure their care preferences and goals are met. Central to our mission, vision, and core work is a commitment to justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion and a belief that addressing the intersecting issues of ageism, racism, sexism, and ableism is the only way to achieve high quality, integrated care for all people.

Understanding Our View of Technology

Our Teams, Training, and Technology approach recognizes that each area relies on the others and must work together to create top-quality care for older people. To that end, data exchange technologies facilitate teamwork, make training easier and more efficient, and empower coordinated care. Caring for people with complex needs, preferences, and goals that change over time requires an ability to both give and get up-to-date information from care teams while keeping the person and family at the center. Technology that facilitates the exchange of information can remove barriers between healthcare and social services, enabling real time sharing of information and a common care plan.

Building a Technology Infrastructure Supports Quality Team Care and Training

Our Technology grantmaking will focus on promoting the adoption of technologies that facilitate teamwork and empower older adults and their families to direct their own care. Archstone Foundation can utilize its partnerships with other organizations and past lessons as tools to advance the technological infrastructure central to achieving better health and wellness for older adults and their caregivers in California.

Technology can remove barriers between healthcare and social services and promote equitable, inclusive, and impactful sharing of information and data that enhances care coordination and improves the effectiveness of programs.

Utilizing the Power of Technology

Thoughtful implementation of technology and corresponding workflows is essential to resolving many healthcare challenges. And our past work has shown the power of technology, specifically information technology, to improve care coordination in older adults.

*After Archstone Foundation funded the Ventura County Area Agency on Aging's **Ventura County Fall Prevention Coalition** in 2007, the coalition created of an automatic electronic system that alerts agency staff whenever emergency medical services are dispatched for an older adult who has fallen. Data from these notifications has enabled the agency to provide better care by offering services – including home inspections and fall reduction classes – to people when they need it. The system enabled better care coordination by improving the efficiency of existing fall prevention programs.*

*The complex task of medication and treatment management provides another example of technology's potential. The difficulty in managing medications using devices not designed with the patient at the center is exacerbated when patients are older and highly likely to be taking an array of medicines. Medication errors are too common and often have devastating consequences. **Partners in Care Foundation**, a longtime grantee, disseminates nationwide the evidenced-based HomeMeds model it developed. It provides health care workers who make home visits with a database system that identifies potential medication errors and makes available a consulting pharmacist to resolve issues with prescribers.*

Addressing Geographic Disparities

The concentration of older Californians tends to be highest in rural, inland counties.¹ Rural residents use fewer preventative health services than their urban and suburban counterparts. Effective teamwork is undoubtedly critical to helping older adults living in remote areas, and information technology can be crucial to overcoming distance and transportation challenges. Solutions include increasing access to broadband internet, hardware, and training.

While high-speed internet use has increased dramatically among Californians—from 55 percent in 2008 to 91 percent in 2021—it still lags among older adults, households earning less than \$20,000 annually, those without a high school diploma, those whose first language is Spanish, and those who identify as having a disability.² Additionally, according to the 2016 Health and Retirement Study, internet usage is significantly lower among older adults in the suburbs and rural areas than their urban counterparts, and also lower among Blacks and Hispanics than among non-Hispanic white older people.³ Internet availability is a necessary precursor


to fully participating in the health information exchange options that allow patient access to, and agency in, their own health information and care plan. So, while the steady expansion of high-speed internet access is extremely promising, special attention needs to be paid to these racial and rural disparities. In shaping our Technology portfolio, we will continue exploring how to do so. As internet adoption and access continues increasing, funding that targets historical disparities has the potential to close the persisting gaps in access.

Interweaving Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Principles

Justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion have special meaning when considering the role of technology. Consider the challenge of “place” disparities. Access to broadband internet, availability of hardware and software, and convenience of relevant training and support can be highly dependent on geography, compounding the problems that older Californians in rural and economically disadvantaged areas have in getting coordinated care. The Foundation is looking at how these affect health outcomes, care experience, quality, and health equity, and examining how we can implement systems change through Technology grants.⁴

To reduce these disparities, our grantmaking is guided by three principles:

- We will consider the demographic mix and elements of human difference, and intentionally prioritize persons from disadvantaged racial and ethnic groups, LGBT populations, people with disabilities, and women.
- We will advocate for assessment of disparities in outcomes.
- We will intentionally include a variety of expertise from grantees and the community, so we can reasonably expect disparities will be reduced through the work we support.



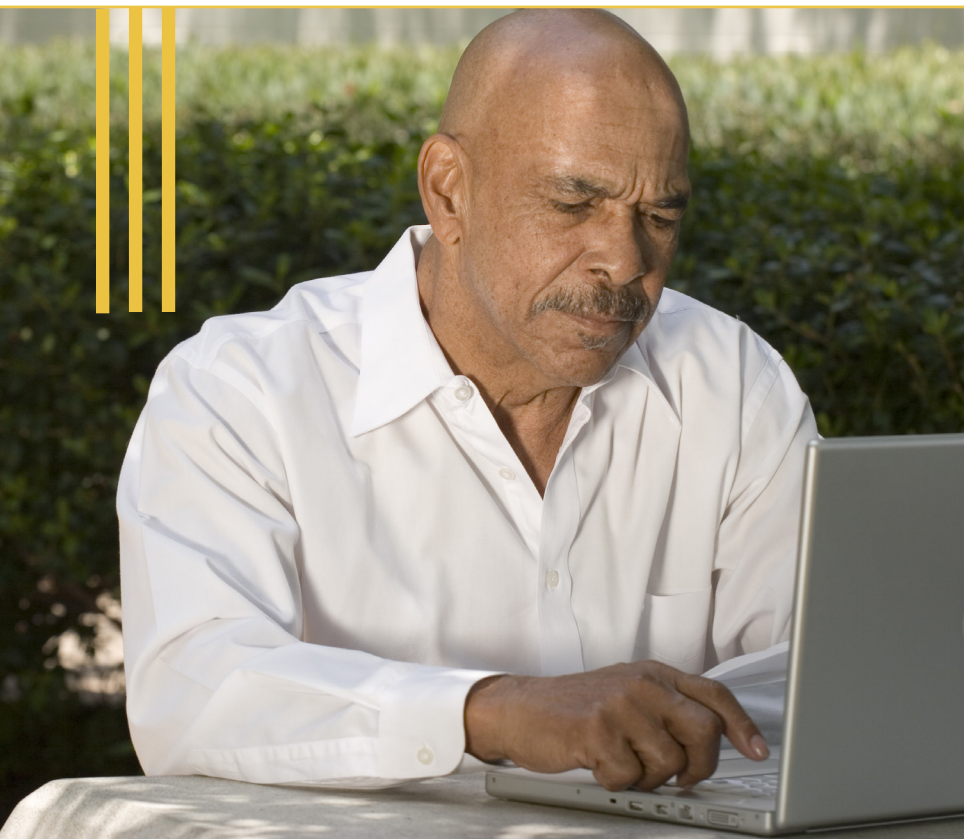
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Opportunities in the Field

Archstone Foundation is keenly interested in capitalizing on recent government efforts to improve digital technology infrastructure, including the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the state's Access to Technology for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities grants. Finding novel ways to leverage these funds can catalyze system-level and cross-sector changes that connect social services with health care to make lasting changes at scale. Enabling our partners to realize these benefits may mean providing funding for evaluations, partnerships, grant writing assistance, and coverage of other indirect costs.

Several state government programs may materially impact opportunities on which Archstone Foundation can capitalize with Technology grants. The [California Master Plan for Aging](#) provides the groundwork for funding new healthcare delivery models. [California's Health and Human Services Data Exchange Framework](#) will establish the first-ever statewide data-sharing agreement through a standard set of policies and procedures to guide health information exchange among health care entities, government agencies, and social service programs beginning in 2024. CalAIM is a five-year effort to strengthen Medi-Cal (California's Medicaid) by targeting population-based approaches, prevention, and whole-person care. And the [California Department of Health Care Services Gap Analysis and Multi-Year Roadmap](#) aims to assess the limits of home and community-based services, managed long-term services, and support programs and networks.

Finally, today's health information exchange landscape provides ample opportunity for significant impact through Technology grants. As illustrated by the rapid increase in telehealth during the pandemic, new forms of health information exchange remain a significant need for older Californians. Challenges include a lack of highspeed internet networks and other hardware and an absence of policies and standards to ensure the secure and efficient exchange of health data.



The existing technology access landscape is full of disparities, for individuals as well as providers. Some providers, such as acute care hospitals, continue to benefit from the federal Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health Act of 2009, the Medi-Cal EHR Incentive Program, the California Health Information Exchange Onboarding program, and other sources of government funding. But health information technology adoption and data exchange capabilities are lagging among the health and human services providers ineligible for such funding. These disparities offer a significant opportunity for impactful grantmaking.

Funding Principles and Opportunities

Our initial strategic plan – and subsequent collaboration with Manatt Health Strategies on a strategic landscape, opportunities assessment, and funding priorities [review](#) – continue to inform our approach. Our work with Manatt was critical to our understanding of health information exchange and will be significant in informing how the portfolio moves forward.

Archstone Foundation is highly interested in funding collaborations and partnerships, research and evaluations, and pilot programs that connect health and social services to older adults through health information technologies.

To that end, opportunities for future Technology grants may come from organizations proposing to:

- *Seek research and evaluation efforts that quantify, better identify, and explain the data exchange and technology-enabled service gaps and resource needs to facilitate cross-sector team-based care for older adults.*
- *Fund programs that test technology-enabled services and data exchange interventions that improve team-based care and better integrate and coordinate care across health and human services providers.*
- *Develop partnerships with philanthropies, state agencies, and others to leverage funding and expertise in order to identify promising programs and opportunities and evaluate outcomes for their populations of focus.*

We look forward to partnering with community-based nonprofits, local and state entities, health systems, and others to bring Archstone Foundation's vision of integrated care to fruition. By joining with a wide range of thought partners and grantees and turning these plans into programs and initiatives, we will improve care coordination, reduce health disparities, and make a measurable difference to the health and well-being of older Californians and their caregivers.



1 <https://www.ruralhealthresearch.org/assets/2200-8536/rural-communities-age-income-health-status-recap.pdf>

2 <https://www.cetfund.org/action-and-results/statewide-surveys/2021-2/>

3 <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35196918/>

4 <https://www.manatt.com/insights/newsletters/health-highlights/closing-the-digital-health-disconnect-a-blueprint>



We Want to Hear from You!

If you are promoting the adoption of technologies that facilitate teamwork between health care and social services providers and empower older adults and their families to direct their care, please [visit our website](#) to learn how you can partner with us.