



Wellness 50+

*By and for you and your neighbors
in Washington County*



With support from:



Why Wellness 50+?

10,000

boomers reach
age 65 each day

1 in 5

Minnesotans will
be 65+ by 2030

40%

of Washington
County residents
will be 50+ by 2025

69%

of Minnesotans
age 65+ are obese
or overweight

45%

people 65+ have
two or more
chronic conditions

75%

of health care spend-
ing is on people with
chronic conditions

52%

people 55 and older
have no retirement
savings

23%

people with incomes of
< \$35,000 report fair or
poor health

Health-related issues have a negative impact on
quality of life for all of us.

Health care costs are **unsustainable**—for this
generation and future generations.

The idea:

Foster citizen-led initiatives to create sustainable change that will increase wellness in Washington County

The Vital Aging Network (VAN) supports Wellness 50+ community-based initiatives to achieve the following:

- **Increase the awareness among people 50+** in the community about opportunities for self-care and its importance.
- **Implement projects** that enable older adults to make measurable changes in attitudes/practices likely to contribute to better health outcomes.
- **Build community** among participants and others to promote wellness.
- **Increase the capacity** of community members to provide ongoing leadership for wellness-related initiatives.
- **Ensure that the Wellness 50+ initiative can be sustained** during and after the three-year initiating phase.



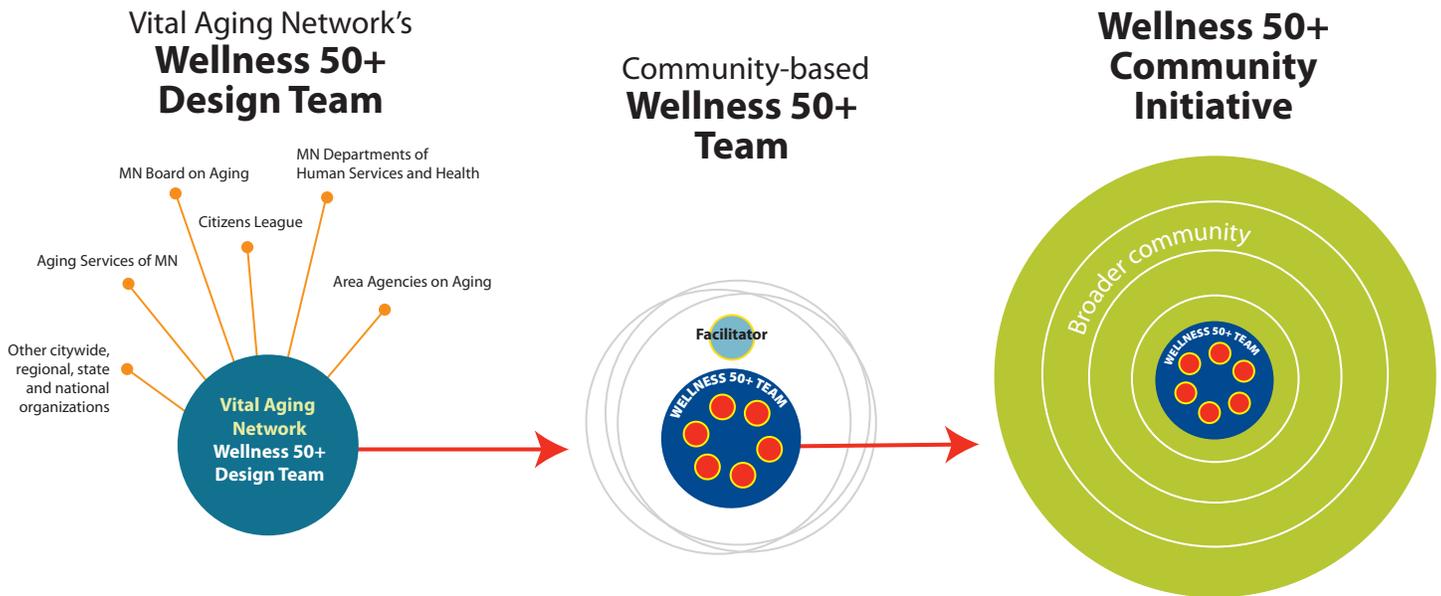
Wellness 50+ Initiatives in Five Communities

VAN will work with local leaders to identify and recruit community members who want to provide leadership for an initiative to improve health and well-being for themselves and others in their community. None of us can do it alone, but together we can do remarkable things.

Wellness 50+ puts planning and implementing in the hands of community members and, as a result, the initiatives produce innovative solutions that are tailored to each community's specific needs. The initiatives make real change that can be sustained over time.

VAN builds the capacity of Wellness 50+ leadership teams to shorten their path to success. Content includes basics of wellness, working as a team, engaging community members, deepening leadership skills, implementing projects, measuring impact and creating a sustainable initiative. VAN convenes teams for cross-community learning and provides marketing, evaluation, fundraising and other administrative support.

The **Vital Aging Network** (VAN) promotes self-determination, civic engagement and personal growth for people as they age. VAN achieves its mission by providing education, leadership development and opportunities for connection. Founded in 2001 as part of the University of Minnesota, today VAN is an independent nonprofit organization. VAN is led by volunteers—people interested in living vital lives and contributing in vital communities.



How it works

Wellness 50+ initiatives are led by self-directed teams that engage an ever-expanding cross-section of community members to:

- Map existing community assets
- Build relationships among individuals and organizations in the community
- Engage community members in setting priorities
- Plan and implement activities that support positive changes in behaviors
- Work together as a community to improve the health and well-being of people 50+

Through its network of organizations and individuals with expertise in community change and wellness, the Vital Aging Network connects the Wellness 50+ Teams with local, regional, state and national resources.

Why join a Wellness 50+ Team?

- **Be a force for positive change**
- **Use your skills and talents**
- **Build your community leadership skills**
- **Join a dynamic team of peers**
- **Do engaging and important work**
- **Improve your own well-being and that of others in your community**

“For change to be sustained, it has to involve and be led by the people who are living in the community.”

—Dr. John Gaventa,
Citizen-Led Sustainable Change
Vibrant Canada

If you live in Washington County, MN, and would like to participate in the Wellness 50+ initiative in your community or would like additional information, contact us.

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